



Renewing Diaspora Studies in Greece: a Research Agenda

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Summary

- Greece's fiscal crisis has energized its relationship with its diaspora in the last several years, after decades of decline, as well as reshaping the diaspora itself due to the massive crisis-driven migration.
- We argue that a Diaspora Studies Center needs to be established in Greece, or an existing one reconfigured, that would be able to pursue a comprehensive study of the diaspora & homeland relationship with a particular focus in the domains of politics, the economy and philanthropy & volunteerism.
- We explore the comparative advantage of such a Diaspora Studies Center in researching primarily homeland actors, processes and events that have a bearing on the diaspora & homeland relationship.
- Such a Center could also investigate how economic, political and public health & natural crises, that break out in Greece, catalyze the diaspora & homeland relationship.
- Such a Center should also be adequately funded both to maintain a core of senior and junior researchers in the domains of politics, the economy and philanthropy & volunteerism and in order to fulfill its convening and dissemination mission via holding regular events such as lectures, workshops and conferences, which facilitate networking and partnerships between resident and international scholars.

Introduction

Greece's relationship with its Diaspora has achieved remarkable prominence in the last several years after decades of decline. Following Greece's entry in the European Community (EC) in 1981, the country became increasingly reliant on European transfers to sustain rising levels of affluence. The importance of diaspora remittances declined in importance both relatively and absolutely. Despite or even because of entry in the EC, later to be renamed the European Union (EU), the Greek economy did not become highly competitive in international terms and remained inhospitable to outsiders, be they Diaspora Greek investors or purely foreign ones. Underperformance in key domains such as higher education also led to a steady brain drain of highly accomplished Greeks. At the mass level, though, Greeks became one of the least mobile populations in the EU, as the country combined a fairly uncompetitive pace of life with a convivial and affluent lifestyle. Thus, the diaspora experience receded from the collective imagination of the resident Greek population. Relatedly, Greek diaspora studies in Greek state universities became a scholarly backwater either dealing with issues of marginal importance or increasingly focusing, post 1989, with in-migration of foreigners to Greece.

The fiscal crisis completely transformed this state of affairs. The forceful, even brutal realization that Greece will need to earn a living via an internationally competitive economy, and the robust institutions that underpin international economic competitiveness, placed at the forefront the role of diaspora Greeks in all facets of Greek collective life: as well-capitalized investors or influential managers in multinationals capable of injecting much needed funding and know-how in the Greek economy; as highly accomplished academics with the skills and outlook necessary to revamp a sclerotic state higher education system; as knowledgeable technocrats willing to upgrade key aspects of state performance; as philanthropists, keen to throw a lifeline to cash-strapped but vital state and private, non-profit organizations in education, public health, social welfare and the arts.

Concurrently the crisis generated the third largest migration wave in Greece's bicentennial history as an independent nation-state, of close to half a million, mostly highly educated individuals, who emigrated by and large to EU countries such as Germany and the UK. This migration wave: a) has allowed a critical population cohort to acquire income, skills and values not readily available to crisis-hit Greece; b) at the same time denying them from their homeland in their capacity as taxpayers, citizens and economically active agents; c) but also raising at the top of Greece's political agenda the ways through which the diaspora can be induced to reengage with Greece via the institution of the expatriate vote.

Regrettably, these momentous events and processes have not received the scholarly investigation that they deserve in Greece. A brief overview of the diaspora studies field in Greece reveals the reason why. The Institute for Migration and Diaspora Studies at the University of Athens has mostly focused, in the recent past, in in-migration to Greece. The Center of Intercultural and Migration Studies of the University of Crete, which is under the University's Department of Primary Education, has a focus on the education of the Greek Diaspora, an important but inevitably narrow theme. The University of Macedonia has established a commendable track record on research on brain drain prior and during the crisis and on Greeks from the Former Soviet Union but without being able to adopt a comprehensive diaspora research agenda. Individual scholars from other institutions, such as the University of Athens and Panteion

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University, have made important contributions on such issues as the diaspora and Greece’s foreign policy and diaspora engagement at the subnational level. Such extremely worthwhile contributions have not been integrated, however, in a holistic research agenda seeking to address the main drivers of the diaspora & homeland relationship over time¹.

The consequence of such fragmentation has meant that during this transformative decade in diaspora & homeland relations, the resident research community has not been able to create the evidence base and range of interpretations needed to inform public debate and policy makers. Relatedly, there has not been a research entity, possessing the institutional ambition and requisite resources, to generate and disseminate research on the diaspora & homeland relationship in much a way as to have, itself, an impact on the evolution of this relationship.

This essentially twin failure can only be remedied, in the view of the author, by a well-funded Diaspora Studies Center the remit of which would be the single-minded research of the diaspora & homeland relationship in all its main facets. The creation of such a Diaspora Studies Center – the rationale of its existence, the main pillars of its research output, its complementarity with other research domains, its comparative dimension, its indicative output and needed capabilities – is the subject matter of this policy brief.

The Diaspora and Greece are mutually constituted – and should be researched, in Greece and elsewhere, on the basis of that assumption

The Diaspora and Greece are mutually constituted to varying degrees and it is incumbent on a Diaspora Studies Center in Greece to make its own contribution to this process of mutual constitution – by focusing on the impact of actors resident in Greece, events taking place in Greece and processes unfolding in Greece on the diaspora & homeland relationship.

“...it was the crisis’ severity, and what it revealed of the imbalances and the shortcomings of the Greek economic model, that determined the composition of the new diaspora.”

BREXIT will one way or another affect the UK Greek community and thus ultimately influence the latter’s interaction with Greece. US tax exemptions of cross-border philanthropic giving by US nationals affects the capacity of Greek-Americans to donate to institutions and causes in Greece. Germany’s attraction to Greek medical professionals shapes the know-how and expertise that they might be able to bring back to Greece in the future.

We thus briefly review here indicative features of the other side of the coin, so that we can illuminate the vital contribution that a Diaspora Studies Center in Greece can make by specializing on the homeland aspects of mutual constitution.

Beginning with Greece’s fiscal crisis itself, it was the crisis’ severity, and what it revealed of the imbalances and the shortcomings of the Greek economic model, that determined the composition of the new diaspora, with approximately half a million Greeks deciding

¹ On brain drain before and during the fiscal crisis see, Labrianidis, L. (2014) ‘Investing in Leaving: the Greek Case of International Migration of Professionals’, *Mobilities*, Volume 9, Issue 2; On Greeks from the Former Soviet Union see Voutira, E. (1991), ‘Pontic Greeks Today: Migrants or Refugees’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Volume 4, Issue 4; on the impact of the Greek diaspora on Greece’s national security and foreign policy see Conostas, D.C., Platias, AG., eds, (1993) ‘The Greeks In Comparative Perspective’, Springer; on the engagement of diaspora communities at the subnational level see, Chryssanthopoulou, V., (2009) ‘Reclaiming the Homeland: Belonging among Diaspora Generations of Greek Australians from Castellorizo’, *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Volume 18, Issue 1/2.

to emigrate in the last decade. Currently, and in the future, it will be choices in Greece in the realm of fiscal policy as well as on institutional reforms across a wide range of domains, that will shape the nature and extent of the diaspora's interaction with Greece: with options ranging from lack of engagement, to transnational interaction to permanent return. In sum, acts of omission or commission in Greece itself have shaped in the past, and will shape in the future, both the size and the composition of the diaspora itself and the nature of its relationship with Greece. Relatedly the ND ruling party. Introduced in November 2019 a constitutional amendment, complemented by secondary legislation of December 2019, that facilitates the exercise of the right to vote by those voters who happen to be outside Greece on election day. This legislative action has created a new, global as much as highly diverse, electoral constituency in Greek national politics, even if it is of highly uncertain size in terms of its propensity to vote in general elections. By doing so it has created the incentives for Greece's main parties to integrate this constituency in Greece's democratic contestation.

The gradual expansion of Greece's tax base, under pressure by Greece's creditors, and in particular the introduction of property tax, has turned tens if not hundreds of thousands of diaspora Greeks, whether citizens of the Hellenic Republic or not, into taxpayers of the Republic, a development with obvious political implications for the diaspora & homeland relationship. To the extent that further such expansion of the tax base takes place, e.g. via the taxation of global income, the political and fiscal implications for the diaspora & homeland relationship will rise commensurately. The Greek state has also been increasing its cross-border reach via digitization, a leading policy priority of the current ND government, which facilitates interaction between diaspora Greeks and their homeland, a development that is also deserving of evaluation.

“...reforms in the critical higher education and public health sectors, or their absence thereof, will accelerate or stymie respectively brain circulation and brain gain patterns.”

A thicket of government decisions taken – or avoided – will determine whether diaspora investors and entrepreneurs located in such centers as London and Boston, will significantly engage in rendering internationally scaleable high tech firms established in Greece, shaping in turn their own career and business trajectories. Such decisions include the lowering of the personal tax income and social contribution burden, the significant increase in state spending in a national research prioritization strategy and ambitious governance reforms in the country's higher education and research institutes universe.

Likewise, reforms in the critical higher education and public health sectors, or their absence thereof, will accelerate or stymie respectively brain circulation and brain gain patterns as well as the generation of diaspora philanthropic inflows to Greece's universities and hospitals.

It is the quality and orientation of key cabinet appointments by the Prime Minister in such Ministries as of Foreign Affairs, Education, Development and Investments, Culture as well as his own diaspora-specific policy stance, that will render – or not - diaspora actors, be they wealth holders, high level executives of MNEs, technocrats, academics, philanthropists as strategic allies of his hegemonic enterprise: through their ability to lend to the government such resources as money, expertise, privileged access to important non-Greek decision makers, and their own personal reputation.

It is the commitment in resources, as well as the effective utilization of such resources, in the teaching of the Greek language and appropriately adapted curricula in schools abroad run by the Ministry of Education that will have an impact on the ability of diaspora communities abroad to reproduce themselves as Greek diaspora

communities; and thus engender, particularly via language proficiency, the propensity of people of Greek descent living abroad to engage with Greece. And it is the ability of the Ministry to interact decisively, through policy instruments and judicious resource allocation, with such actors as Greek Orthodox authorities, diaspora philanthropists, diaspora community organizations, diaspora linguists and educators, that will complement – or not – the impact of the schools abroad under its own supervision and control.

Actors resident in Greece and events and processes unfolding in the country which are meaningfully important for the diaspora & homeland relationship are not limited to the domains of national politics and the central government, as is the case with the above examples. Local governments are important as they can call upon the loyalties of their diaspora communities of origin, in order to catalyze investment, tourist and charitable flows of diaspora origin to their subnational jurisdictions and to specific locales in these jurisdictions, such as islands, mountain regions, towns and villages. Greek manufacturers, in search for export markets to compensate for the crisis-induced decline in domestic demand, can activate relationships with diaspora importers in large host markets to assist their export strategies. Leaders of Greek NGOs and non-profits, in such sectors as education and social welfare, can invite to their boards influential diaspora personages and build-up diaspora-centric fundraising offices in order to solicit diaspora charitable contributions.

“...research work on the diaspora & homeland relationship will be in itself an important factor in the process of mutual constitution of Greece and its diaspora.”

In this list, that goes on and on, the comparative advantage of a Diaspora Studies Center in Greece is both obvious and indispensable. It is researchers located in Greece that are best able to investigate the Greek party politics, public policies and interest group incentives and conflicts that have played in the past, and will play in the future, a decisive role in the evolution of diaspora & homeland relations. Furthermore, it is such researchers that can best integrate in policy relevant research, for stakeholders resident in Greece, the findings of scholars of the Greek diaspora, living and working on the important host countries such as Germany the UK, the US and Australia, on the evolution of Greek diaspora communities. Inevitably, such research work on the diaspora & homeland relationship will be in itself an important factor in the process of mutual constitution of Greece and its diaspora: by providing the evidence base as well as the related arguments that are the makings of public discourse, political contestation and policy making in Greece as much as in the multiple ‘agoras’ of Greece’s diaspora communities.

Mutual diaspora & homeland constitution and recurrent crises

We dedicate special attention to crises taking place in Greece as they constitute events, and engender processes, that carry with them a transformative potential in the relation of the diaspora with its homeland.

“...crises are recurrent and, more often than not, significant for diaspora & homeland relations as they provide the ‘pull’ to domestic actors and the ‘push’ to diaspora ones.”

Each crisis is unique, some crises are global in nature and origin and some are specific to a state or subnational entity, a region, a city or an island. What, however, cannot be gainsaid is that crises are recurrent and, more often than not, significant for diaspora & homeland relations as they provide the ‘pull’ to domestic actors and the ‘push’ to diaspora ones, that combined engender diaspora & homeland engagement.

Military conflicts in the 20th century provide the most powerful examples of the role of crises in the interaction of Greece’s diaspora communities with the homeland: Greek-Americans returning to Greece to fight in the Balkan wars of 1912-1913; the Greek—American community providing vital aid to Greece under occupation and ravaged by

the civil war in the 1940s; Greek-Americans helping Greece to maintain a military equilibrium with Turkey through their lobbying in the US Congress after the invasion of Cyprus in 1974.

The last fifteen years have been jam-packed with crises, as well, which have had a material impact on diaspora & homeland relations: the Iliia fire in 2006 which generated more than 200 million euros in donations from diaspora and homeland actors²; the fiscal crisis which was referenced above; the coronavirus pandemic where diaspora public health technocrats' and clinicians' advice, as well as the testimonials of diaspora Greeks living in host countries hit by the pandemic, played an important role in the shaping of the response to the pandemic both by the Greek government and the populace³; the crisis in Greco-Turkish relations, engendered by the issue of natural resource exploitation in the South East Mediterranean, which has revived the Greek-American lobby.

Thus, the history of each and every crisis that Greece goes through cannot be fully narrated in the absence of the significant diaspora subplot. Nor indeed can the diaspora's evolution be understood, at least in some of its most important facets, without an investigation of crises in Greece, be they natural disasters, public health emergencies or geopolitical conflicts.

Importantly, as crises fall and recur under such specific categories, they also suggest that an important mission of a Diaspora Studies Center in Greece would be to investigate and recommend what the engagement of the diaspora should be – and can be if appropriate policies are being implemented – in each main crisis category.

The pandemic has highlighted how Greece can benefit, in its response to a public health crisis, by the insight and experience of Greek public health technocrats, epidemiologists and clinicians, thus raising the issue of how informal home and diaspora networks can be institutionalized and secured as a state resource available to be utilized during a public health crisis; the philanthropic response to the Iliia fire raises the issue of how the Greek national and local governments can, likewise, institutionalize sub-national commitment, so that the role and resources of sub-national diaspora communities can be maximized to meet the post-recovery challenge presented by highly localized natural disasters; the involvement as well as potency of the Greek-American lobby raise the issue of both alignment and impact, i.e. how can policy makers and actors in Greece and in the Greek-American community understand each other's position so that they jointly devise strategies that balance the imperatives of diaspora mobilization with the imperatives of national security as defined by Greece's democratically elected government.

The Three Research Pillars: Politics, Economy, Philanthropy and Volunteerism

A Diaspora Studies Center in Greece with a focus on applied policy need not reinvent the wheel and can very well adapt the three-pillar approach privileged by the 'Diaspora and Development' literature, the three pillars being politics, the economy and

² See indicatively, Pentaraki, M., (2014) 'The class impact of post disaster restoration policies: the example of Iliia, Greece and the need for a politics of disaster', *International Social Work*, Volume 56, issue 6.

³ See, <https://www.kathimerini.gr/1069437/article/epikairothta/ellada/amesh-analysh-diaspora-kai-pandhmia>

philanthropy & volunteerism⁴. A careful review of developments in Greece in these three domains suggests some of the main themes within each pillar that will need to be addressed in the months and years ahead.

Politics

In Politics, we start with the above-mentioned facilitation of the vote of Greek citizens residing abroad at the day general elections are being held in Greece_a political event that has created a field of inquiry, namely the internationalization of party politics in order to court the diaspora voter. Investigating party motivations on the passage of the legislation itself is a first step, as it can tell us a lot on particular party assumptions on the preference of the diaspora voter as well as on wider party strategies that are either accommodated or discomfited by the inclusion of the diaspora in the participation in national general elections. Additionally, we need to establish what are the actual steps, programmatic and operational, that Greece's main parties have taken, and will be taking in the future, in order to court the diaspora vote.

We then move to bureaucratic politics and inter-ministerial cooperation and competition, so that we can find out whether particular ministries and government agencies are fit for purpose, in terms of their ability to pursue stated diaspora policies. Conversely, if ministries and agencies are not fit for purpose, we need to ask what does such inadequacy reveal in terms of genuine governmental intent, bureaucratic resource scarcity and / or conflicting aims due to non-compatible priorities of distinctive diaspora and homeland constituencies. For instance, is the MFA's General Secretariat of Greeks Abroad (GSGA) under the present government's ambitious diaspora policy agenda designed to perform the 'dignified' aspects of a diaspora policy, to utilize Walter Bagehot's distinction, catering to traditional diaspora constituencies such as the church and community associations? Will other ministries and agencies such as those of Economic Development & Investments, and Education be pursuing the 'efficient' aspects of the government's diaspora policy? To the extent that such a division really exists, is it really policy-optimal, considering that the 'dignified' aspects might be in clash with the 'efficient' ones, as in the case of the government ministries which are called upon to aggressively pursue diaspora philanthropy, an objective that might clash with the church authorities' abroad – a primary 'client' of GSGA – jealous monopolization of diaspora philanthropists?

“...a political event that has created a field of inquiry, namely the internationalization of party politics.”

Finally, we move into aspects of public policy that have a distributional impact as they either involve funding allocations or access to state institutions. Does this government really differ from its predecessors in terms of choosing trade-offs between current and future consumption? In particular, does it privilege state transfers, particularly via pensions, over longer-term demand boosting, via lowering the personal income tax and social contribution burden in order to contain and reverse brain drain effects, thus raising Greece's long-term growth potential? Is the government willing to confer power, on meritocratic grounds, in the running of state institutions such as hospitals, universities and museums, which will catalyze brain circulation dynamics or does it privilege the award of prestigious and influential appointments to resident party insiders?

⁴ For a useful primer on the diaspora and development nexus, and its policy implications, see Agunias, D., and Newland, K., (2011) 'Developing a Road Map of engaging diasporas in Development', *International Organisation for Migration / Migration Policy Institute*.

Economics

In the economic domain the focus should be, as mentioned above, on tracing and evaluating the impact of diaspora actors in three fields, namely exports, FDI and the growth potential of Greece's high-tech sector. These three fields are prominent, first due to structural realities of the Greek economy, as a small, open economy of the EU. Second, due to policy commitments undertaken by successive Greek governments with Greece's creditors, as with the case of the Greek state's concessions and privatization programme. Third, by the common ground engendered by Greece's fiscal crisis, that Greek capitalism needs to transition to an export-oriented, high-value added economic model and leave behind its previous, domestic-oriented economic model.

On exports we need to assess whether the traditional role of the diaspora, due to the nostalgia trade of its diaspora communities, as a gateway to important host country markets for mostly Greek food and drink exports, such as Germany and the US, carries greater potential than in the past. We note, in that regard, the greater extroversion of Greek manufacturing, due to the crisis-induced decline in domestic demand. Also, potentially important, is the arrival on the scene of second-generation diaspora Greeks, more sophisticated and wealthier than their forebears, as in the case of the Greeks of Germany or first-generation diaspora Greeks migrating to both traditional and new markets for Greek exports, such as the Gulf countries and China.

On FDI, we need to look at how diaspora wealth-holders have responded to the disposal of a range of assets primarily by the Greek state and secondarily by resident economic actors under distress – financial institutions and firm owners in the main. Indicative examples are the Hellenicon concession developed by the Latsis-controlled, Lamda Development, and the Thessaloniki Port Authority concession acquired by the Savvidis-led consortium of investors, diaspora capitalists originating from Switzerland and the Russian Federation respectively. We also need to assess how top managers of major MNEs, of Greek origin, across a variety of sectors have responded to the crisis and the need for Greece to repurpose its economic model, through shaping the investment decisions of the MNEs they have a leadership position in. Most prominent such examples of MNEs led by diaspora Greeks pursuing business strategies in Greece based on the country's either historical or evolving comparative advantage, is in the former case the decision of André Calantzopoulos, CEO of Phillip Morris international, to invest in a cigarette manufacturing facility in Greece, so as to take advantage of the quality of the country's oriental tobacco and related skill-base, and of the decision of CEO of Pfizer, Albert Bourla, to set up an IT lab in his birthplace of Thessaloniki so as to take advantage of the availability of IT talent produced mostly by his alma mater, Aristotle University. We need to engage in process tracing, in order to evaluate the distinct impact in such investment decisions of both homeland and diaspora actors. On the basis of such process tracing and with the help of analytical frameworks imparted by the international literature, we can establish whether and how this relationship between diaspora wealth-holders and top managers of MNEs and the Greek economy can be institutionalized.

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On the internationalization of Greece's high-tech firms, we need to look into how the crisis has shaped high tech firm formation by releasing skilled personnel from safer forms of employment, mostly IT firms supplying the Greek state hit by cuts in state procurement. The growth in the volume of resources channeled to Greek high-tech firms – EU and Greek specialized funding such as seed finance and private equity, joined philanthropic & local government support via the setting up of incubator facilities – has also been important, driven by the recognition among various stakeholders that the

Greek economy needs to become more knowledge-intensive. Last but not least, strengthening societal validation of such outward-looking, knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship could also have played a role in the inflow of highly skilled personnel to the Greek high-tech sector. These factors inducing the creation of a cohort of high-tech firms, has fitted with existing high-tech diaspora enclaves, well-connected with Greece and deeply familiar with now famed diaspora & homeland trajectories in high tech firm formation in such countries as Israel, India and Taiwan. Deserving of mention are Ivy League Alumni Associations in Greece, particularly that of MIT, and the way they have interfaced with high-tech Greek entrepreneurs, diaspora personalities involved in high tech and Greek policy makers up to the Prime Minister himself.

Philanthropy and Volunteerism

In philanthropy and volunteerism, we need to evaluate whether the well-established transnational philanthropic sector, mainly originating from shipping, can further expand under a reconfigured by the fiscal crisis state & Third Sector relationship as well as strengthen its ranks by the inclusion of diaspora philanthropists previously inactive in Greece. A critical factor in that regard is the question of whether transnational and diaspora philanthropy will pursue associational action in order to advocate for the range of reforms in state governance and fiscal policy that can catalyze further transnational and diaspora philanthropic flows. This has not been the case thus far, as these mostly shipping-endowed philanthropic foundations have failed to create an association of foundations that would systematically articulate and promote a coherent pro-philanthropy agenda in Greece. Consequently, if these philanthropic foundations continue focusing on pursuing their individual interests with the state, through customized side deals facilitating the priorities of individual foundations, we must then fall back, analytically speaking, on political will and strategizing as the sole factor in catalyzing, or not, diaspora philanthropy to Greece.

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A Synthesis of the Three Pillars

We must emphasize that the domains of politics, economics and philanthropy & voluntarism are inherently interpenetrated not only generally but also in the case also of diaspora & homeland relations. Such interpenetration requires from a Diaspora Studies Center in Greece to be resolutely inter-disciplinary and to collaborate with scholars and study centers and departments, in Greece and abroad, on the basis of such interdisciplinarity.

For example, a fiscal policy capable of arresting and reversing brain drain effects, by boosting Greece's high tech sector, it will maximize opportunities for the diaspora to invest in such a sector; resolute emphasis on meritocratic appointments in key state institutions is a sine qua non for greater transnational and diaspora philanthropic inflows to the Greek state sector; the expansion of the tax base of the Greek state to Greeks abroad, either via the property tax or a global income tax policy, will have a bearing on the legitimacy of the diaspora vote in Greece and of the engagement of diaspora Greeks with Greek domestic politics; an accelerated programme of state assets disposals, by drawing to Greece an ever increasing volume of diaspora investment will very probably spill-over into the philanthropic domain, for reasons of legitimation as well as appreciation of a homeland which has proven to be positively disposed towards the diaspora wealth-holder.

How would a Diaspora Studies Center interact with well-developed research domains in Greece?

A Greek Diaspora Studies Center will be highly complementary with well-developed research domains in Greece, thus being able to enrich, and be enriched by, existing research commitments and research staff located in the country. Indicatively:

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- In European Studies, the survey of the brain drain and gain phenomenon is inextricably connected with such issues as the EU’s freedom of movement and the debate on North-South transfers within the EU (who transfers what to whom). The actual or potential impact of important diaspora communities in major EU member -countries and their relationship with Greece, such as the community in Germany, also merits investigation from a European Studies perspective.
- In Security and Foreign Policy studies, the evolution of the Greek-American lobby is significant in terms of identifying sources of contact of Greek foreign and national security policy while also being a factor that needs to be assessed in the interpretation of Turkish national security and foreign policy (as indeed the successful Greek-American lobby in the 1970s influenced Turkey’s determination to strengthen its self-sufficiency in military equipment).
- In Social Anthropology, Culture, and Religion, productive lines of inquiry can be pursued such as on Greek Orthodoxy in Greece and abroad, and how they influence each other; on values transmission from diaspora communities to Greece, both at the mass and at the family unit levels, particularly in view of the crisis-driven migration of the last decade; and on the state of governance of Greek language instruction abroad and its impact on the reproduction and evolution of Greek identity among diaspora communities.
- In Migration Studies, there are substantial opportunities in adding to the focus on in-migration the focus on out-migration particularly from a comparative South East European perspective, where we can build on the longstanding commitment, to Greece’s surrounding region, by Greek state university departments and research institutes.

In Economics, well-developed research efforts on Greek export and FDI-attraction underperformance can take on board the diaspora factor, in order to evaluate future trends in these two domains. Likewise, the thorough literature on Greek fiscal policy on taxes, social contributions and pensions is well-positioned to evaluate the feasibility and roadblocks on the way to a brain gain-friendly fiscal policy stance.

A Comparativist Approach

As there is no state without a diaspora, diaspora studies are richly comparative and include both developed and developing states. Indicatively, the term ‘brain drain’ was coined in the UK in the post WW II period and reflected concerns that the US, with its better funded universities, was attracting UK scientists in increasing numbers⁵.

⁵ Giannoccolo, P. (2009) ‘The Brain Drain: A Survey of the Literature’, *Universita degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca, Department of Statistics*, Working Paper No. 2006-03-02

Likewise, political scientists specializing on the US, a country better known for the ethnic communities that it hosts rather than its own diaspora, have developed a robust literature on Democrat and Republican strategies designed to attract the US expatriate vote and political donations⁶.

From a regional perspective, migration from Central and South East European countries to Northern European countries is also a very significant phenomenon⁷. Consequently, a Greek Diaspora Studies Center would be resolutely comparativist and internationalist in its approach in order to take advantage of research conducted on a wide-range of homeland and host-land pairings.

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The issue of the diaspora vote has generated a substantial scholarly debate due to the rise of transnationalism worldwide as has the development by various homeland states of state mechanisms and policies designed to harness diaspora resources to government and state priorities⁸. The concept of social remittances and of institutional distance provide helpful tools with which to analyze the possibilities and limitations in the engagement of Greek diaspora scientists, technocrats and organizations in policy making in Greece.⁹

In the domain of the economy, we note work done on how diaspora portfolio investors might have differentiated risk perceptions from the generic international portfolio investor, on how diaspora networks in the IT sector have been critical to the development of homeland IT enterprises and, more generally, how the experience of present-day transnationalism confers structural power to elite diaspora businessmen and managers.¹⁰ The literature on the role of diaspora communities in the export performance of homeland enterprises is also relevant as is that of the role of diaspora ethnic business networks in FDI taking place in homelands¹¹.

In philanthropy we cannot but highlight the work done on Jewish-American philanthropy in Israel, by far the most well-researched category of diaspora philanthropic investment, both in terms of comprehensiveness of the relevant surveys and the qualitative analysis of the dynamics shaping the relationship between the

⁶ See indicatively, Dark III, T., (2003) ‘Americans Abroad: The Challenge of a Globalized Electorate’, *PD: Political Science and Politics*, Volume 36, Issue 4.

⁷ On migration from the Balkans see Triantafyllidou, A. and Gropas, R., (2014) ‘Voting with their feet: Highly Skilled Emigrants from Southern Europe’, *American Behavioral Scientist*, Volume 58, issue 12.

⁸ On the diaspora vote see Bauböck, R. (2010) Studying Citizenship Constellations, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Volume 36, issue 5; on state – diaspora relations see Gamlen, A. (2014) ‘A. Diaspora Institutions and Diaspora Governance’, *International Migration Review*, Volume 48, Issue 1.

⁹ See, Levitt, P., (1998) ‘Social Remittances: Culture as a Development Tool’, *International Migration Review*, Volume 32, Issue 4, pp. 926-948 and Brinkerhoff, J., (2011) ‘David and Goliath: Diaspora Organisations as partners in the development industry’, *Public Administration and Development*, Volume 31, Issue 1.

¹⁰ See indicatively, Schimmelpfennig, A. and Gardner, E.H., (2008) ‘Lebanon-Weathering the Perfect Storms’, *IMF Working Paper*; Saxenian, R., (2005) ‘From Brain Drain to Brain Circulation: Transnational Communities and Regional Upgrading in India and China’, *Studies in International Comparative Development*, Volume 40, Issue 2; and Lessinger, J., (2003) ‘Indian Immigrants in the United States – The Emergence of a transnational population’, in *Culture and Economy in the Indian Diaspora*, edited by Parekh, P., Singh, G., Vertovec, S., Taylor and Francis.

¹¹ On homeland exports and the diaspora see indicatively, Aleksynska, M., Peri, G., (2012) ‘Isolating the network effect of immigrants on trade’, *Discussion Paper Series, No 6941, IZA* and Bettin, G., Lo Turco, A., (2012) ‘A Cross-Country View on South-North Migration and Trade: Dissecting the Channels’, *Emerging Markets Finance & Trade*, Vol 48, Issue 4; on the diaspora and FDI see, Leblanq, D., (2010) Familiarity breeds investment: diaspora networks and international investment, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 104, Issue 3, pp. 584-600.

diaspora grantor and the homeland grantee¹². That being said, diaspora philanthropy has engaged scholarly attention, generally speaking, and drawing in an increasing number of diaspora and homeland pairings, from which research on Greek diaspora philanthropy to the homeland can benefit¹³.

What will a renewal of diaspora studies in Greece entail in terms of indicative outputs, capabilities and resources?

A renewal of diaspora studies in Greece, located in a single Diaspora Studies Center would generate discussion papers and reports which will be internally reviewed and which will seek to be timely and high-impact in terms of their policy relevance and ability to generate public interest. Of course, researchers employed or collaborating with the Diaspora Studies Center can always opt to pursue, in parallel, more time-consuming publications in peer review journals.

Such a Diaspora Studies Center should have convening power, i.e. the ability to hold workshops and conferences so that scholars resident in Greece and abroad could be able to exchange views and network between themselves and such stakeholders as business leaders, journalists, state officials and of course politicians.

The Center should also be able to maintain and upgrade an effective presence in the web so that its findings can achieve maximum dissemination.

In terms of staffing the Center, other than its Director, will need to be able to fund mature and junior researchers in the three key domains of politics, economics and philanthropy & volunteerism, so that research domain continuity and comprehensiveness are maintained.

Below we select ten themes, for indicative purposes, where a Diaspora Studies Center can deliver reports and discussion papers which are policy-relevant and which we can expect to be impactful:

1. A benchmarking report, relating best practices in terms of the design of the state apparatus and the selection of state policies to the actualities and potentialities of the Greek diaspora & homeland relationship. Countries providing benchmarks could be, indicatively, Ireland, Italy, India, Israel and Estonia.
2. A review and analysis of party programmes and positions, stated in parliamentary debates, on the homeland's relation to the Diaspora

"...ten themes, for indicative purposes, where a Diaspora Studies Center can deliver reports and discussion papers which are policy-relevant and which we can expect to be impactful."

¹²Fleisch, E. Sasson, Th, (2012) 'The New Philanthropy: American Jewish Giving to Israeli Organizations', *Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University*; Fleisch, E. (2014) 'Israeli NGOs and American Jewish Donors: The Structures and Dynamics of Power Sharing in a New Philanthropic Era', *Brandeis University*, unpublished PhD Thesis.

¹³ See indicatively, Johnson, P., (2007) 'Diaspora Philanthropy: Influences, Initiatives and Issues', *The Philanthropic Initiative Inc, and the Global Equity Initiative*, Harvard University; Sidel, M., (2008) 'A Decade of Research and Practice of diaspora philanthropy in the Asia Pacific Region: the State of the Field', University of Iowa Working Paper; and Anheier, H. K., and List, R (2000). 'Cross-border Philanthropy-An Exploratory Study of International Giving in the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany and Japan'. Centre for Civil Society, the John Hopkins University.

3. Lessons learned and mistakes identified from the Iliia fire and the Molyviatis Fund ¹⁴in soliciting diaspora philanthropic support for the purpose of natural disaster recovery and reconstruction.
4. An analysis of the driving forces behind the revival of the Greek-American lobby and of whether these forces can produce an enduring alignment with Greece's national security and geopolitical priorities.
5. A network analysis of the diaspora scientists and clinicians engaged by their counterparts resident in Greece for the development and evolution of coronavirus public health and clinical protocols adopted by the Greek state and lessons for the future mobilization of Greece's scientific diaspora in the event of a crisis which requires a highly sophisticated, evidence-based policy response.
6. A survey of Greek exporters utilizing diaspora networks to facilitate their export performance in key markets and recommendations for institutionalizing the involvement of diaspora importers in the export policies of Greece's key food and drink sectors.
7. A survey of top management of Greek origin at leading MNEs, through such databases as LinkedIn, of their perception of Greece as an investment destination and of policy-templates such as that of Ireland and Irish-American executives, on how to interact with the managerial diaspora in order to promote Greece's FDI objectives.
8. Surveying actors and patterns in Greek-American philanthropy with the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and having as a template similar surveys of Jewish-American philanthropy based on public sources (mainly Internal Revenue Service databases).
9. Assessing the diaspora as a benefactor to Greece of non-Greek art and cultural artefacts – e.g. the Iolas, Kostakis, Goulandris collections endowed to the nation - and identifying the associated past mistakes and policy challenges so that more such diaspora collections can find their future home in Greece.
10. Assessing the diaspora's role in portraying and disseminating speculation on future global trends as they relate to in Greece, from Peter Diamandis' Singularity University's activities in Greece to the Greek print media's popularizations of the scientific breakthroughs of Greece's academic diaspora.

¹⁴ The Molyviatis Fund, named after the prestigious retired diplomat who headed it, was the vehicle created by the then ND Government to receive and distribute donations in excess of 200 million euros from diaspora and resident philanthropists and corporations to assist the recovery of the Iliia region after the catastrophic forest fire of 2006 that took place there.

Concluding Remarks

Greece's fiscal crisis has transformed the diaspora & homeland relationship both in actual and potential terms.

The crisis engendered the third largest migration wave in the bicentennial history of Greece as a nation-state. By so doing, the crisis has both enriched the diaspora in qualitative and quantitative terms and made the braindrain / braingain policy issue one of the key policy challenges confronting Greece's polity and society.

Relatedly, the crisis by catalyzing inflows of capital, expertise and values to Greece originating in the pre-crisis diaspora has raised the question of what type of institutional reforms and arrangements can be implemented to purposefully build upon and accelerate these inflows, in order to advance Greece's welfare.

Consequently, a well-resourced Diaspora Studies Center in Greece has a major opportunity both to analyze these processes and produce the policy-relevant research that can itself be a catalyst in the further development of the diaspora & homeland relationship.