

Golden Dawn

Name: Golden Dawn

Type of Organization:

- Political party
- criminal

Ideologies and Affiliations:

- Neo-fascist
- neo-Nazi
- ultra-nationalist

Place of Origin:

Greece

Year of Origin:

1985

Founder(s):

Nikolaos Michaloliakos

Places of Operation:

Greece, Australia, United States

Overview

Executive summary:

Golden Dawn is a now-defunct Greek neo-Nazi party that rose from a marginal role in Greek politics to become the third-largest political force in the country in the wake of the 2008-09 global financial crisis and the subsequent implementation of severe austerity measures. Party members have been involved in hundreds of acts of violence against immigrants and leftists across Greece. After a murder investigation from 2013 implicated at least one Golden Dawn Member of Parliament (MP) and several other members, further investigation into the political party—including through photos, videos, and phone records in the prosecutor’s case file—revealed a group whose members have illegally possessed firearms and explosives, and participated in money laundering, human trafficking, aggravated assault, and protection rings. One ex-member of Golden Dawn has claimed that the party discussed plots to overthrow the Greek government using “tanks.”¹ After a five-year trial, Greece’s courts declared Golden Dawn a criminal organization and convicted its leaders for a multitude of crimes in October 2020.²

Golden Dawn was founded in the 1980s by neo-Nazi [Nikolaos Michaloliakos](#). The party has long used strongly racist and anti-Semitic rhetoric, and the ancient Greek symbol used by Golden Dawn closely resembles the Nazi swastika. In particular, the party has focused its platform on opposing immigration and immigrants; its campaign slogan during the 2012 Greek general election was “So we can rid this land of filth.”³

For over two decades, the party enjoyed negligible support, securing less than 1 percent of the vote in local, national, and European elections. However, after the 2008-09 global financial crisis and the Greek government’s subsequent imposition of severe austerity measures that caused widespread unemployment and poverty, Golden Dawn’s electoral success improved dramatically.

As welfare provision and public services were dramatically rolled back in recent years due to the austerity measures, Golden Dawn worked to fill this gap. The party provided a range of social services—particularly to poverty-stricken working-class families—including soup kitchens, medical advice, “Greek-only” blood banks, and donations of food and clothing. The exclusive availability of these services to Greek citizens led Athens Mayor George Kaminis in 2013 to refer to them as “soup kitchens of hatred.”⁴

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In the 2012 Greek general election, Golden Dawn secured just under 7 percent of the countrywide vote, which translated into 18 seats in the Greek parliament and made the party the fifth-largest political force in Greece. Since then, Golden Dawn had been able to maintain its electoral success in successive local and European elections and even increased its share of the vote.⁵ In 2014, Golden Dawn was elected to the European Parliament, taking three of 21 available seats for Greece. However, one elected Member of the European Parliament (MEP)—Eleftherios Synadinos—resigned from Golden Dawn in April 2018 and founded the Patriotic Radical Union (PAT.R.I.E.). He resumed his MEP function as a non-attached member.⁶ Following the result of the European elections in 2014, Golden Dawn constituted the third-largest political force in Greece. In the September 2015 elections, Golden Dawn again finished third in Greece’s general elections, despite key leaders having to run for office behind bars.⁷ In July 2019 national elections, however, Golden Dawn won less than 3 percent of the vote and failed to meet the mandated voter threshold to send representatives to the Greek parliament.⁸

Golden Dawn long matched political action with violence, with its members taking part in hundreds of violent attacks. Golden Dawn members are also suspected of responsibility for the murders of two immigrants.⁹ Beginning in 2014, Golden Dawn tried to soften its image, attempting to rebrand itself as a nationalist organization and claiming that prior Golden Dawn references to the Nazi Party were “youthful indiscretions.”¹⁰ In order to appeal to more middle-class voters, Golden Dawn candidates in subsequent European elections included university professors, lawyers, surgeons, businesspeople, and a former NATO commander. However, despite these cosmetic image changes, Golden Dawn’s violent attacks against immigrants and leftists continue.

The murder of anti-fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas in September 2013 by Golden Dawn member Giorgos Roupakias triggered widespread outrage across Greece and led to a government-led crackdown on the group. As the Greek constitution does not permit banning political parties, the government attempted to limit the group’s activities and funding through criminal investigations and prosecutions. In February 2015, a judicial panel charged 69 key party leaders—including several MPs—with belonging to a criminal organization, as well as possession of illegal weaponry, extortion, bodily harm, and murder. On March 20, 2015, all detained Golden Dawn members were released because Greek law allows for a maximum pre-trial detention period of 18 months.¹¹ The trial commenced on April 20, 2015, and a verdict was reached on October 7, 2020.¹²

As the criminal investigations have led to a discontinuation of Golden Dawn’s state funding for the party—previously a major source of the party’s income—Golden Dawn sought to explore international avenues to widen its reach and to attract funding by opening offices in the United States and Canada where large Greek diaspora communities exist. Golden Dawn also used the trials to present itself as the victim of state repression.¹³ On November 6, 2019, party leader and founder Nikos Michaloliakos took the stand for the first time. He denied charges of running a criminal organization and claimed the accusations were a political tactic to denigrate and dismantle Golden Dawn.¹⁴

After a five-year trial, on October 7, 2020, the Athens Appeals Court declared Golden Dawn a criminal organization and found 13 of its leaders guilty of running a criminal organization. More than 68 defendants, including the entire group’s leadership, faced charges of operating a criminal organization while posing as a political group, attempted murder, possession of weapons, and employing violence to remove political rivals, migrants, and communists. The trial was the largest court hearing of Nazis to have taken place since the Nuremberg trials of 1945 to 1949 where 24 major political and military leaders of Nazi Germany were brought to trial before the International Military Tribunal. According to the *Guardian*, the case file included hundreds of incriminating videos and more than 6,000 documents of testimonies describing Golden Dawn’s organizational structure and activities which glorified Nazi culture.¹⁵

In total, the court convicted 50 people—including 18 former Golden Dawn politicians—for membership in a criminal organization.¹⁶ Additionally, Giorgos Roupakias was convicted with murdering anti-fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas, and 15 other members were convicted of conspiracy in the killing of Fyssas. Other convictions include five members found guilty of the attempted murder of an Egyptian fisherman, and four others convicted of grievous bodily harm for an attack on communist trade unionists.¹⁷ Party leader Nicholas Michaloliakos was sentenced to 13 years in prison. Other leaders receive sentences ranging from five to 13 years.¹⁸ While the verdict did not formally ban the organization, Golden Dawn’s failure to meet the 3 percent threshold in Greece’s 2019 parliamentary elections and the subsequent October 2020 shut down of the group’s local offices have effectively rendered Golden Dawn defunct.¹⁹

Doctrine:

Golden Dawn openly advocated national socialism, racism, and anti-Semitism. Hitler, the Third Reich, Rudolf Hess, the Waffen SS, and the swastika were Golden Dawn’s idols and emblems and appeared repeatedly in its publications and rallies.²⁰ In 1987, Golden Dawn leader Nikolaos Michaloliakos wrote in the party magazine, “We are the faithful soldiers of the National Socialist idea and nothing else.”²¹ Even as

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recently as 2012, Michaloliakos denied the Holocaust: “I have read a lot of books casting doubts on the number of six million Jews... There were no ovens, no gas chambers, it’s a lie.”²²

In Golden Dawn’s ideology, the absolute enemy of the nation—indeed, of the entire planet—was the United States and liberalism. This theory was based on notions of the “cultural superiority” of an “Orthodox Greek nation” threatened by “Western bourgeois culture” and a supposed “Jewish conspiracy.”²³ Correspondingly, the real “friends of the nation” were considered to be Russia, Serbia, and other Orthodox Christian countries, the Arabs, who are “oppressed by Zionism,” and every right-wing regime worldwide, as long as it is an enemy of the United States and Israel. But like other right-wing extremist parties, Golden Dawn was also fighting the purported “Islamification” of Greece and Europe.

Special notice should be made of the participation of Golden Dawn members in ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica in 1995. Golden Dawn sent some of its members to join the so-called “Greek Volunteer Guard” to fight on the side of the Bosnian Serbs led by Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić.²⁴ After the massacres at Srebrenica, this “Guard” triumphantly raised the Greek flag side-by-side with the Chetnik flag.²⁵

Golden Dawn campaigned on a strongly anti-immigration platform, using racist slurs openly and regularly. For example, in a 2012 interview, two parliamentarians demanded that only people with “Greek blood” should be allowed to participate in elections.²⁶ The party’s xenophobia was coupled with an apparent fundamental contempt for liberal democracy. In 2012, Golden Dawn MP [Ilias Kasidiaris](#) made international headlines when he physically attacked two female left-wing MPs on a live talk show because they had criticized Golden Dawn.²⁷ When Golden Dawn leader Nikolaos Michaloliakos briefly appeared in parliament in June 2014 for a vote to strip him of his immunity from prosecution on further charges, he verbally abused other MPs. Outside of the parliament, hundreds of Golden Dawn supporters sang the national anthem and insulted MPs, shouting “Scum! Traitors!”²⁸

Beginning in 2014, Golden Dawn sought to soften its image in order to appeal to a bigger spectrum of voters. During the 2014 European elections, for example, many of Golden Dawn’s candidates were middle-class professionals, including university professors, lawyers, surgeons, businesspeople, and a former NATO commander.²⁹ When Golden Dawn organized public events, it began rejecting the neo-Nazi label and preferred to present itself as a “nationalist” and “patriotic” organization (although there were exceptions to this practice).³⁰ Partly due to Golden Dawn’s agitation, brutal attacks on immigrants and other hate crimes (mainly against leftists) became common phenomena in Greece.³¹

Greek neo-Nazis also engage in social action—but only for “real Greeks.”³² They have established an expansive outreach program that provides services to the elderly in impoverished areas and distributes food and clothing to the needy (termed by Athens Mayor George Kaminis as “soup kitchens of hatred”),³³ drawing comparisons to [Hezbollah](#) by party leaders themselves.³⁴ As welfare services such as health care provided by the state were drastically rolled back due to the country’s austerity measures, Golden Dawn tried to fill the gap—for example, by establishing a network of doctors that provide medical advice to impoverished families.³⁵

Organizational Structure:

According to a report by a Greek prosecutor, Golden Dawn’s leadership structure was similar to a “military-type operational force whose members attack mainly immigrants.”³⁶ Inspired by the *Führerprinzip* prominent in Nazi ideology, Golden Dawn’s leadership structure was strictly hierarchical.³⁷ Consequently, Greek prosecutors argued that Golden Dawn’s leadership orchestrated the violent attacks carried out by members of the group.³⁸

In 2013, the *Guardian* reported that members of the Greek armed forces had been training “Golden Dawn hit squads,” paramilitary-like structures that allegedly encompass up to 3,000 members.³⁹

In October 2020, a Greek court declared Golden Dawn to be a criminal organization and convicted 50 people—including 18 former Golden Dawn politicians—for membership in a criminal organization.⁴⁰ While the verdict did not formally ban the organization, Golden Dawn’s failure to meet the 3 percent threshold in Greece’s 2019 parliamentary elections and the subsequent October 2020 shut down of the group’s local offices effectively rendered Golden Dawn defunct.⁴¹

Among those convicted in October 2020 was former Golden Dawn spokesman Ilias Kasidiaris. In June 2020, prior to his conviction, Kasidiaris formed “Greeks for the Fatherland,” a.k.a. the Hellenes party. In a video posted on YouTube, Kasidiaris claimed the new party was a movement for the “national preservation and revival of Hellenism.”⁴² The party maintained many of the same platforms endorsed by Golden Dawn,

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particularly the focus on ending illegal immigration. By August 2021, the group was reported to have over 20,000 registered members.⁴³ In May 2023, Greece's supreme court ruled the Hellenes party was clearly the "successor" to Golden Dawn and banned the party from participating in the country's June 2023 parliamentary elections.⁴⁴

Financing:

Public funding originally constituted an important source of financing for Golden Dawn. For example in 2013, 873,000 euros in Greek state funding had been allocated to the party. However, following a vote in parliament in October 2013, state funding for Golden Dawn was cut off due to the ongoing investigation by state prosecutors as to whether Golden Dawn is a criminal organization.⁴⁵

Golden Dawn declined to shed light on its funding sources, stating simply that it was funded by supporters.⁴⁶ Journalist Dimitris Psarras alleged that Golden Dawn has received financial support from like-minded groups in Europe and Russia.⁴⁷ Golden Dawn also used its satellite offices to raise money and donations for its cause. In September 2014, the London-based *Guardian* reported that Golden Dawn's Australian branch had raised money through an unregistered charity called Voithame Tin Ellada (VTE).⁴⁸

Recruitment:

Golden Dawn employed a range of strategies to recruit members, including grassroots mobilization and participating in neighborhood initiatives. It attracted widespread appeal, boasting thousands of members and attendants at Golden Dawn rallies.⁴⁹ Golden Dawn also worked to appeal to Greek expatriates, including those living in Australia, Canada, and the United States.⁵⁰ The group also recruited online. According to its website in 2015, Golden Dawn New York aims "to counter the lies and propaganda against Golden Dawn in the English speaking world by providing official translations of Golden Dawn articles."⁵¹ Golden Dawn New York's website has since been shut down.

Within the country, Golden Dawn heavily focused on recruiting from Greece's youth population. The group used gyms, athletic clubs, and martial arts clubs as grounds for recruiting youths. It actively recruited at high schools, and even stands accused of launching an indoctrination course called "national awakening," aimed at children ages 6-10.⁵² These sessions have included lessons on neutral subjects like ancient Greek history and the Christian faith. However, according to Greece's education ministry, the course was a blatant form of manipulation, aimed to instill a sense of Greek supremacy. The competing Greek party Syriza accused Golden Dawn of "brainwashing little tots with Nazi propaganda."⁵³ Educators and commentators have also noted similarities to the Nazi method of indoctrination.

In 2011, Golden Dawn opened an office in Heraklion, the capital of Crete. For years, party members approached young people "in cafes and the gym, presenting themselves as family and protectors. They took them for coffee and gave them lessons on Greek history." Following the 2013 murder of Pavlos Fyssas, local teachers made an effort to teach history in a less nationalistic manner as well as discuss and confront fascist ideology in the classroom. More than 50 schools also organized an anti-fascist festival. In April 2018, militant activists destroyed Golden Dawn's office in Heraklion, causing them to leave the island.⁵⁴

Golden Dawn had a youth club, Galazia Stratia (Blue Army), which used bribes to recruit younger members. It handed out cellphones to students, claiming that the kids need access to phones in order to protect themselves from neighborhood crime. They even aim to appeal to Greek youth through music. As of 2013, two of Golden Dawn's members of parliament were musicians, and had used music to propagate violent and hateful messages. One MP was the bass player in a band that praised Hitler's Auschwitz death camp in one song, and had another song called "Speak Greek Or Die."⁵⁵ Members of the Galazia Stratia were also regular participants and instigators of soccer hooliganism. Analysts believed that strong emotional ties to a soccer team help create a sense of identity and belonging that is particularly appealing to disaffected youth. In November 2017, hooligans of the Thessaloniki PAOK soccer club insulted and attacked local Pakistani Muslims who publicly celebrated the birth of the Prophet Mohammed.⁵⁶

In public platforms, Golden Dawn propagated an extremist Greek supremacy ideology at the exclusion of the country's immigrants, homosexuals, and religious and ethnic minorities. The group appeared to have capitalized on the immigration crisis to curry favor with the population. One Golden Dawn MP said, "There are no legal migrants in Greece, not even one."⁵⁷ The party's 2012 election slogan was similarly xenophobic and ominous: "So we can rid this land of filth."⁵⁸ Golden Dawn has also benefitted from the country's financial crisis. In line with its nationalist, supremacist ideology, the party refused to accept any austerity measures from Greece's creditors, endearing the group to the mainstream Greek population.⁵⁹

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Training:

During the highly publicized Golden Dawn trial, prosecutors painted Golden Dawn as a criminal organization posing as a political party.⁶⁰ In doing so, the prosecution pointed to evidence of military training and attack battalions that, according to one ex-member of Golden Dawn, were preparing “to overthrow the Greek government.”⁶¹ Evidence from the prosecutors showed Golden Dawn members in military clothing wielding knives, swords, handguns, rifles, and even a bazooka.⁶² According to the ex-member of Golden Dawn, “They kept telling us that we’ll break into the parliament with tanks.”⁶³

According to the ex-member—serving as a witness in the trial against Golden Dawn MPs—Golden Dawn even recruited a butcher in order to train its members in the art of using a knife effectively so they could learn to “neutralize opponents.”⁶⁴ The butcher also allegedly supplied guns to Golden Dawn members.⁶⁵

Also Known As:

- National Dawn⁶⁶
- Popular Association – Golden Dawn⁶⁷
- ?????? ????????? – ?????? ?????⁶⁸
- ?????? ?????⁶⁹

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Golden Dawn

Key Leaders



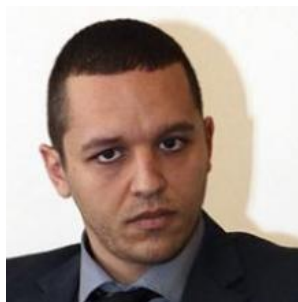
Nikolaos Michaloliakos

Leader of Golden Dawn



Christos Pappas

Former member of Greek Parliament, alleged deputy leader of Golden Dawn



Ilias Kasidiaris

Golden Dawn spokesperson and former member of Greek Parliament

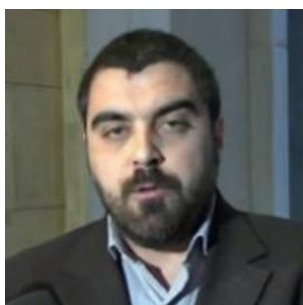


Ilias Panagiotaros

Golden Dawn Member of Greek Parliament



Giannis Giannopoulos



Artemis Mattheopoulos

Golden Dawn Former Member of Greek Parliament



Georgios Epitideios

Golden Dawn Former Member of European Parliament



Lampros Fountoulis

Golden Dawn Former Member of European Parliament



Eleytherios Synadinos

Member of European Parliament affiliated with the Patriotic Radical Union (PAT.R.I.E.), resigned from Golden Dawn in 2018



Theodoros Koudounas

Member of Golden Dawn's central committee



Ioannis Vouldis

Member of Golden Dawn's central committee

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoyA4tttwhv&ab_channel=%CE%97%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%82%CE%9A%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%A

- November 6, 2019:** Party leader and founder Nikos Michaloliakos takes the stand for the first time.
 He denies charges of running a criminal organization and claims the accusations were a political tactic to denigrate and dismantle Golden Dawn. Michaloliakos denies he was associated with the killing of anti-fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas in 2013. If found guilty, Michaloliakos faces up to 20 years in prison for his part in the killing. Source: "Michaloliakos takes the stand in Golden Dawn trial," Ekathimerini, November 6, 2011, <https://www.ekathimerini.com/246179/article/ekathimerini/news/michaloliakos-takes-the-stand-in-golden-dawn-trial>.
- July 13, 2019:** Golden Dawn EU MP Ioannis Lagos defects from the party to become an independent.
 Golden Dawn calls on Lagos to relinquish his parliament seat since he was elected on the Golden Dawn platform. Source: Agence France-Presse, "Greek neo-Nazi in EU parliament defects from Golden Dawn party," Times of Israel, July 14, 2019, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/greek-neo-nazi-in-eu-parliament-defects-from-golden-dawn-party/>.
- July 7, 2019:** Golden Dawn wins only 2.9 percent of the vote in Greek parliamentary elections, failing to meet the country's 3 percent threshold.
 As a result, Golden Dawn wins no seats in the elections. The party pledges to pursue a recount. Sources: Renee Maltezou, "Golden Dawn loses its luster as Greeks reject militant far-right," Reuters, July 8, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-election-golden-dawn/golden-dawn-loses-its-luster-as-greeks-reject-militant-far-right-idUSKCN1U31ND>; Demetris Nellas, "Greece: Extreme right party seeks recount after poll flop," Associated Press, July 8, 2019, <https://apnews.com/9df66723489b4260a2500adbaf9e919>.
- May 26, 2019:** Greece holds elections for representation to the European Parliament.
 Golden Dawn receives 4.8 percent of the vote and receives two seats in the European Parliament. Source: "The Latest: Salvini says populists will control 150 EU seats," Associated Press, May 26, 2019, <https://apnews.com/article/ap-top-news-elections-france-international-news-marine-le-pen-d09a7028c0f04c60bd604b4bd8056a0f>.
- Golden Dawn expels Constantinos Barbarousis, Member of the Greek Parliament, after being indicted on charges of treason for promoting a military coup and the arrest of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras during a Parliament's plenary session.
 Source: Ousted Golden Dawn member Barbarousis given until Wednesday to prepare his defense," Ekathimerini, June, 18, 2018, <http://www.ekathimerini.com/229759/article/ekathimerini/news/ousted-golden-dawn-member-barbarousis-given-until-wednesday-to-prepare-his-defense>.
- Eleftherios Synadinos, an elected MEP, resigns from Golden Dawn and creates the Patriotic Radical Union (PAT.R.I.E.).
 He resumes his MEP function as a non-attached member at the European Parliament. Sources: "Golden Dawn MEP Leaves Party, Becomes Independent," *National Herald*, April 21, 2018, <https://www.thenationalherald.com/197952/golden-dawn-mep-leaves-party-becomes-independent/>; "MEPs," European Parliament, accessed January 8, 2019, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/search/advanced?name=&groupCode=&countryCode=GR&bodyType=ALL>.
- March 9, 2016:** One of Golden Dawn's MEPs is expelled from the plenary session after a racist outburst, calling Turks "dirty and polluted" and "like wild dogs."
 Source: Maïa De La Baume, "Greek MEP booted out for calling Turks 'wild dogs'," Politico, March 9, 2016 <https://www.politico.eu/article/greek-mep-booted-calling-turks-barbaric-wild-dogs-european-parliament-golden-dawn-racism/>.
- March 31, 2017:** Golden Dawn's headquarter in Athens is attacked by a group armed with sledgehammers, batons, helmets, and firebombs.
 No one is injured. Source: Lizzie Dearden, "Golden Dawn: Greek far-right party's headquarters attacked with sledgehammers," *Independent*, March 31, 2017, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/golden-dawn-offices-attack-sledgehammers-greek-far-right-party-greece-athens-paint-rush-hour-a7659481.html>.
- Golden Dawn wins third place in Greece's parliamentary elections with 6.99 percent of the vote.
 The party sends 18 representatives to Greece's 300-member parliament. Sources: Helena Smith, "Neo-fascist Greek party takes third place in wave of voter fury," *Guardian* (London), September 20, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/21/neo-fascist-greek-party-election-golden-dawn-third-place>; Demetris Nellas, "Greece: Extreme right party seeks recount after poll flop," Associated Press, July 8, 2019, <https://apnews.com/9df66723489b4260a2500adbaf9e919>.
- April 20, 2015:** The first court session takes place but is immediately adjourned.
 The trial is characterized by delays, inefficiencies, and public sector strikes. A verdict is expected for 2020. Sources: Omaira Gill, "Greece's Golden Dawn trial going nowhere fast," *Deutsche Welle*, April 20, 2016, <https://www.dw.com/en/greeces-golden-dawn-trial-going-nowhere-fast/a-19197580>; Patrick Strickland, "Greek prosecutors say Golden Dawn 'stalling' as trial drags on," *Al Jazeera*, October 12, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/10/greek-prosecutors-golden-dawn-stalling-trial-drags-181012123009018.html>.
- A judicial panel charges 69 defendants—including 18 Golden Dawn MPs—with belonging to a criminal organization, as well as possession of illegal weaponry, extortion, bodily harm, and murder.
 Source: Omaira Gill, "Greece's Golden Dawn trial going nowhere fast," *Deutsche Welle*, April 20, 2016, <https://www.dw.com/en/greeces-golden-dawn-trial-going-nowhere-fast/a-19197580>.
- Golden Dawn comes third in the elections, earning 17 seats in Greece's parliament.
 Source: Laurence Peter, "Greek elections: Jail fails to deter far-right Golden Dawn," *BBC News*, January 26, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-eu-30980002>.
- In the state prosecutor's file against Golden Dawn MPs, one witness alleges that Golden Dawn recruited a butcher in order to train its members in the art of using a knife effectively so they could learn to "neutralize opponents."
 Source: Yiannis Baboulias, "Greece's Neo-Nazis Were Scarier Than Anyone Imagined," *Foreign Policy*, November 13, 2014, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/11/13/greeces-neo-nazis-were-scarier-than-anyone-imagined/>.
- Greek state prosecutor Isidoros Doyiakos orders all Golden Dawn MPs to face trial.
 Source: Helena Smith, "Greek prosecutor orders all Golden Dawn MPs to face criminal trial," *Guardian* (London), October 16, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/16/greece-golden-dawn-mps-tried-criminal-offences>.

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- **September 16, 2014:** The annual report by the Greek national police's internal affairs department identifies several police force members with links to Golden Dawn, claiming that those individuals turned a blind eye to offenses committed by the group. Source: "Police report identifies officers with ties to Golden Dawn," ekathimerini.com, September 29, 2014, http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_ws1e1_1_17/09/2014_542992.
- **May 22, 2014:** In elections for the European Parliament, Golden Dawn secures 9.4 percent of the vote in Greece and takes three of 21 available seats for Greece.
While Golden Dawn currently does not affiliate with any faction in the European Parliament due to the party's violent neo-Nazism, it previously held membership in the European National Front. Source: "Results of the 2014 European elections," European Parliament, accessed October 4, 2014, <http://www.results-elections2014.eu/en/country-results-el-2014.html#table03>.
- **May 18, 2014 - May 22, 2014:** In local elections, Golden Dawn emerges as the third-largest political force nationally.
Source: Helen Smith, "SS songs and antisemitism: the week Golden Dawn turned openly Nazi," *Guardian*, June 7 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/07/greece-golden-dawn-fascism-threat-to-democracy>.
- Because of a possible ban on Golden Dawn's participation in European elections in May 2014, 200 Golden Dawn supporters register a new political party, National Dawn.
Source: Kerin Hope, "Greece: Golden Dawn plans for election race as leaders face jail," *Financial Times*, February 7, 2014, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/917c4244-8fe2-11e3-ae9-00144feab7de.html#axzz3EoMqvrSL>.
- Three additional Golden Dawn politicians are arrested and accused of holding key roles in a criminal organization responsible for a range of violent attacks on immigrants and opponents. The trial of Golden Dawn members begins in early 2015. Source: Karolina Tagaris and Gina Kalovyra, "Three more Greek far-right party MPs ordered held awaiting trial," Reuters, January 12, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/12/us-greece-dawn-lawmakers-idUSBREA0B0JS20140112>; "Greece's far-right Golden Dawn spokesman jailed pending trial," *Deutsche Welle*, July 10, 2014, <http://www.dw.de/greeces-far-right-golden-dawn-spokesman-jailed-pending-trial/a-17775525>.
- **November 1, 2013:** Two members of Golden Dawn are shot in Athens.
The murders are thought to be an act of retaliation following the fatal stabbing of anti-fascist rapper Pavlos Fyssas in September 2013. Source: Renee Malteizou, "Greeks fear more violence after Golden Dawn members shot dead," Reuters, November 2, 2014, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/11/02/uk-greece-killing-idUKBRE9A106120131102>.
- **October 23, 2013:** The Greek parliament votes to cut off Golden Dawn's public funding.
Source: Renee Malteizou and Harry Papachristou, "Greece cuts off state funding to far-right Golden Dawn party," Reuters, October 22, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/22/us-greece-goldendawn-funding-idUSBRE99L1I120131022>.
- **October 16, 2013:** The Greek parliament votes to strip six Golden Dawn MPs of immunity from prosecution, allowing criminal investigations to deepen.
Source: Renee Malteizou, "Greek parliament strips immunity of six Golden Dawn lawmakers," Reuters, October 16, 2013, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/16/us-greece-goldendawn-idUSBRE99F0PN20131016>.
- **October 2, 2013:** Three senior Golden Dawn MPs—Ilias Kasidiaris, Ilias Panagiotaros, and Nikos Micho—are released pending trial on criminal charges.
A fourth Golden Dawn MP, Ioannis Lagos, remains in detention. Kasidiaris is released on bail of 50,000 euros. Source: Renee Malteizou and Yorgos Karahalidis, "Greece's Golden Dawn lawmakers freed before trial," Reuters, October 2, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/02/us-greece-goldendawn-free-idUSBRE9910EM20131002>.
- **September 28, 2013:** Greek police arrests Golden Dawn leader Michaloliakos, party spokesman Kasidiaris, and 13 other leading members on charges of forming a criminal organization. They are investigated for manslaughter, assault, extortion, bombings, and money laundering. The arrests and charges against members of the group constitute some of the most significant steps that can be taken against Golden Dawn, since the Greek constitution does not permit banning political parties in Greece. Source: Helen Smith, "Golden Dawn leader charged with heading a criminal gang," *Guardian*, September 28, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/28/greece-golden-dawn-leader-charged-criminal-gang>; Dionyssis G. Dimitrakopoulos, "The political consequences of a Greek rapper's murder," *openDemocracy*, September 30, 2013, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/dionyssis-g-dimitrakopoulos/political-consequences-of-greek-rapper%E2%80%99s-murder>.
- **September 23, 2013:** An inquiry is launched over claims that members of Greece's armed forces were involved in training Golden Dawn hit squads.
According to the public order minister, "five senior police officers—the heads of the special forces, internal security, organised crime, firearms and explosives, and a rapid-response motorcycle division—had been moved to other posts pending investigations." In addition, the southern and central Greece police commanders step down from their posts citing personal reasons. Source: Helen Smith, "Greece launches inquiry into claims Golden Dawn trained by armed forces," *Guardian*, September 24, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/23/greece-inquiry-golden-dawn-armed-forces>.
- **September 17, 2013:** Leftist musician Pavlos Fyssas is stabbed to death near the port of Athens.
The attacker is later arrested by the police and states that he was a member of Golden Dawn. Source: Nektaria Stamouli, "Greek killing prompts fears of political violence," *Wall Street Journal*, September 18, 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323308504579082922836516330>.
- **October 23, 2012:** Golden Dawn MP Ilias Kasidiaris reads aloud in parliament passages from the anti-Semitic forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.
Source: Cnaan Lipshiz, "'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' read aloud in Greek Parliament," Jewish Telegraphic Agency, October 26, 2012, <http://www.jta.org/2012/10/26/news-opinion/world/protocols-of-the-elders-of-zion-read-aloud-in-greek-parliament#ixzz3Ft21Nmoy>.
- **June 17, 2012:** In Greek general elections, Golden Dawn receives 6.9 percent of the vote and 18 seats.
In the run-up to the elections, Golden Dawn had vowed "to 'clean' Greece of immigrants" and to put landmines on Greece's borders in order to stop illegal immigrants from entering the country. Source: Marcus Walker, Marianna Kakaounaki, "Greece Struggles to Outlaw Its Golden Dawn Fascist Party," *Wall Street Journal*, December 4, 2013, <http://www.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303281504579219983801909944>; Jon Stone, "Golden Dawn's third place in the polls is not all it seems," *New*

Golden Dawn

Statesman, November 1, 2012, <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2012/11/golden-dawns-third-place-polls-not-all-it-seems>.

- **November 7, 2010:** Nikolaos Michaloliakos is elected to the Athens City Council and Golden Dawn secures over 5 percent of the vote in local elections.
Michaloliakos introduces himself to the city council with a Nazi salute. Source: Roxani Roushas, "Understanding the electoral breakthrough of Golden Dawn in Greece: A demand and supply perspective," International Migration Institute Centre on Migration, Policy & Society, Working Paper 112, 9, <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/wp/wp-83-14.pdf>; Renee Maltezou, "Analysis: Secretive far-right party taps into Greeks' anger, fear," Reuters, April 25, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/25/us-greece-election-dawn-idUSBRE8300YE20120425>.
- **October 4, 2009:** The Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok) emerges victorious from Greek elections, securing 44 percent of the vote.
Source: "Greece's Socialist win snap pool," BBC News, October 5, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/8289674.stm>; "Greece Early Parliamentary Elections, 4 October 2009: OSCE/ODIHR Election Assessment Mission Report," OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, December 23, 2009, 23, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/greece/41001?download=true>.
- Golden Dawn re-launches as a political party.
Source: Yiannis Baboulias, "Who is Nikolaos Michaloliakos?" *London Review of Books*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2013/10/03/yiannis-baboulias/who-is-nikolaos-michaloliakos/>.
- Periandros, who violently attacked Greek student Dimitris Kousouris in 1998, is sentenced to 12 years in prison.
Source: Roxani Roushas, "Understanding the electoral breakthrough of Golden Dawn in Greece: A demand and supply perspective," International Migration Institute Centre on Migration, Policy & Society, Working Paper 112, 9, <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/wp/wp-83-14.pdf>.
- Golden Dawn essentially reorganizes itself as the short-lived nationalist party the Patriotic Alliance.
Source: Yiannis Baboulias, "Who is Nikolaos Michaloliakos?" *London Review of Books*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2013/10/03/yiannis-baboulias/who-is-nikolaos-michaloliakos/>.
- News media allege that Periandros, who had violently attacked a student in 1998, was able to evade arrest for several years due to Golden Dawn's connections to the police force.
Source: Areti Athanasiou, "Α????????? ?????? ??? '????????'," *Ta Nea*, April 17, 2004, <http://www.tanea.gr/relatedarticles/article/4332198/?iid=2>.
- Student Dimitris Kousouris is violently attacked by a high-ranking member of Golden Dawn named Periandros.
Allegedly, Kousouris was attacked because he had "insulted" the Greek flag. Source: Roxani Roushas, "Understanding the electoral breakthrough of Golden Dawn in Greece: A demand and supply perspective," International Migration Institute Centre on Migration, Policy & Society, Working Paper 112, 9, <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/wp/wp-83-14.pdf>.
- - : Following poor results in several elections, Golden Dawn seeks to contest elections as part of alliances of nationalist parties.
Source: Roxani Roushas, "Understanding the electoral breakthrough of Golden Dawn in Greece: A demand and supply perspective," International Migration Institute Centre on Migration, Policy & Society, Working Paper 112, 9, <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/wp/wp-83-14.pdf>.
- Despite Golden Dawn's openly Nazi character and long history of violence, the Greek state recognizes it as a legal political party in 1993.
Source: "Golden Dawn: the rise and fall of Greece's neo-Nazi party," *The Week [U.K.]*, October 2, 2013, <http://www.theweek.co.uk/europe/55407/golden-dawn-rise-and-fall-greeces-neo-nazi-party>.
- Nikolaos Michaloliakos leaves the EPEN and founds Golden Dawn.
Source: Yiannis Baboulias, "Who is Nikolaos Michaloliakos?," *London Review of Books*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2013/10/03/yiannis-baboulias/who-is-nikolaos-michaloliakos/>.
- **June 14, 1984:** The EPEN gains 2.3 percent of the vote in the European elections and thereby secures one seat in the European Parliament.
Source: Richard Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy* (London: C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 1987), 185.
- Nikolaos Michaloliakos becomes one of the leaders of the youth wing of the National Political Union (EPEN), which was founded by then-imprisoned Georgios Papadopoulos, leader of the military junta that ruled Greece from 1967 to 1974. Source: Yiannis Baboulias, "Who is Nikolaos Michaloliakos?" *London Review of Books*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2013/10/03/yiannis-baboulias/who-is-nikolaos-michaloliakos/>.
- - : Nikolaos Michaloliakos begins to publish the fascist publication Golden Dawn (Greek: Chrysi Avgi).
The front cover of one issue shows a picture of Adolf Hitler. Source: Yiannis Baboulias, "Who is Nikolaos Michaloliakos?" *London Review of Books*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/blog/2013/10/03/yiannis-baboulias/who-is-nikolaos-michaloliakos/>.
- Nikolaos Michaloliakos is convicted for "carrying illegal weapons and explosives as a member of a far-right group" and spends a short time in prison.
There, he meets members of the Greek military junta including Georgios Papadopoulos, the junta's former leader who ruled the country from 1967 to 1974. Source: Dina Kyriakidou, "Special Report: Greece's far-right party goes on the offensive," Reuters, November 12, 2012, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/11/12/us-greece-crisis-dawn-idUSBRE8AB09F20121112>.

Golden Dawn

Violent history:

Golden Dawn MPs have personally been implicated in attacks and murders. In June 2012, Golden Dawn MP and spokesperson Ilias Kasidiaris physically assaulted two female left-wing politicians while being filmed on Greek TV show Good Morning Greece.⁷⁰ In September 2013, one Golden Dawn member stabbed leftist musician Pavlos Fyssas to death. Ioannis Lagos—a Golden Dawn MP—was implicated in Fyssas’s murder, and prosecutors claim that he directed the murder himself.

These are not lone incidents. Throughout the early 2010s, Golden Dawn members were recorded carrying out the majority of documented racist crimes in Greece.⁷¹ Attacks committed by Golden Dawn members have ranged from stabbings, aggregated assaults, and murders. They were carried out both by individual members of Golden Dawn acting alone as well as those acting in a group.

- **December 17, 2018:** The Holocaust memorial in Thessaloniki is vandalized and besmeared with a swastika painting for the fourth time in 2018. Previous attacks have been attributed to far-right supporters, including those from neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn.⁷²
- **May 21, 2018:** Approximately two dozen people attack Thessaloniki’s Mayor Yiannis Boutaris at a public event, throwing him on the ground and kicking him repeatedly. Police subsequently arrest four men, among them an off-duty police officer. As Boutaris is reviled by extreme nationalists, authorities blame the beating on “extreme-right thugs.”⁷³
- **April 23, 2018:** Violent clashes between a Greek far-right group, riot police, and migrants rage on the island of Lesbos, leaving several people injured. Asylum seekers are protesting against their prolonged stay in the overcrowded registration camp, when far-right extremists insult and throw objects at them.⁷⁴
- **February 26, 2018:** A group of suspected neo-Nazis and Golden Dawn members storms the anti-fascist Favela Free Social Center in Piraeus, wielding iron bars, setting off flares and besmearing the walls. Five people are injured. Party leader Nikolaos Michaloliakos denies Golden Dawn’s involvement.⁷⁵
- **November 1, 2017:** A prosecution lawyer in an ongoing Golden Dawn trial is attacked outside Athens police headquarters by Golden Dawn supporters.⁷⁶
- **April 1, 2017:** A student is heavenly beaten and seriously injured allegedly by members of Golden Dawn.⁷⁷
- **November 18, 2016:** Golden Dawn members are suspected of attacking a refugee camp with Molotov cocktails and rocks on the Greek island of Chios.⁷⁸
- **August 24, 2014:** Golden Dawn members attack a gay couple in Athens, seriously injuring one of them.⁷⁹
- **September 17, 2013:** Leftist musician Pavlos Fyssas is stabbed to death near the port of Athens. The attacker is later arrested by the police and states that he was a member of Golden Dawn.⁸⁰
- **September 15, 2013:** Golden Dawn MP Ilias Panagiotaros interrupts a World War II remembrance event in the small town of Meligalas. He grabs the microphone, shouts, and shoves elderly townspeople.⁸¹
- **July 21, 2013:** Six members of Golden Dawn pose as police officers and enter a house lived in by migrant workers in Tavros to check their papers. When the migrants ask for help from a police car, the Golden Dawn members begin beating the migrants. They steal the migrants’ wallets and work permits.⁸²
- **February 7, 2013:** Members of Golden Dawn gather outside Medicin du Monde clinic in Perama and threaten staff and patients.⁸³
- **2013:** At least 100 attacks are attributed to Golden Dawn.⁸⁴ Investigations revealed that Golden Dawn regularly sends “militias” to attack migrants. A witness admits that he had participated several times in attacks with 50 to 60 motorcycles. Two neo-Nazis had sat on each motorcycle, and the ones sitting in the back “had a stick and beat on each Pakistani he could catch,” the witness says.⁸⁵
- **November 15, 2012:** Members of Golden Dawn threaten to burn down the house of an immigrant family who was behind in their rent payments. The police only arrive after the group has left, and the group returns the following night to repeat their threats.⁸⁶
- **November 1, 2012:** Around 150 people, including an unidentified number of high-ranking members of Golden Dawn, attack migrants and damage migrant shops.⁸⁷
- **October 12, 2012:** A 21-year-old Egyptian is attacked by four members of Golden Dawn. He is severely beaten with chains and bitten by a dog. The attacks leave him blind.⁸⁸

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- **September 7, 2012:** Two Golden Dawn MPs and approximately 50 group members attack migrant street vendors at a festival in Rafina. Two Golden Dawn members pretend to be immigration officers and asked to see documents while the group destroys stalls.⁸⁹
- **August 25, 2012:** In the courtyard of the Greek parliament, Golden Dawn MP Dimitri Koukoutsis attacks the president of the Pakistani Community Association, Javed Aslam, and Vasiliki Katrivanou, an MP from the left-wing Syriza party.⁹⁰
- **August 23, 2012:** Members of Golden Dawn confronts police over the transfer of immigrants awaiting deportation to an army base in Corinth. They threaten to turn off the water supply to the base. Later, two immigrants were stabbed.⁹¹
- **July 7, 2012:** A group of Golden Dawn members attack Pakistani immigrants outside their house in Nikaia.⁹²
- **June 7, 2012:** On a morning television show, a high-profile member of Golden Dawn, Ilias Kasidiaris, physically assaults female politicians Rena Dourou and Liana Kanell. He throws water in Dourou's face and slaps Kanell after she protested his assault on Dourou.⁹³
- **June 12, 2012:** Golden Dawn members violently attack Egyptian fisherman Abou Zeid Mubarak.⁹⁴
- **May 2011:** A Bangladeshi immigrant is murdered by members of Golden Dawn.⁹⁵

⁷⁰ "Golden Dawn, NYC (short documentary dir. Richard Ledes) 2014," YouTube video, 29:40, posted by "richardledes," June 10, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdCEY2uNk8&feature=youtu.be>.

⁷¹ "Profile: Greece's far-right Golden Dawn party," BBC News, October 1, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-24346993>.

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⁷³ Tasos Kokkinidis, "Greek Police Arrest 4 Over Violent Attack on Thessaloniki Mayor," Greek Reporter, May 21, 2018, <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/05/21/greek-police-arrest-four-in-violent-attack-of-thessaloniki-mayor/>; Tasos Kokkinidis, "Police Officer Among Suspects of Mob Attack Against Greek Mayor," Greek Reporter, May 25, 2018, <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/05/25/police-officer-among-suspects-of-greek-mayor-mob-attack/>.

⁷⁴ Niki Kitsantonis, "'One of the Hardest Nights': Violence Erupts Between Greeks and Migrants," *New York Times*, April 24, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/24/world/europe/greece-lesbos-refugees.html>; Philip Chrysopoulos, "Extreme Right-Wing Group Attack Migrants on Lesbos (video)," Greek Reporter, April 23, 2018, <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/04/23/extreme-right-wing-group-attack-migrants-on-lesvos-video/>.

⁷⁵ Tasos Kokkinidis, "Neo-Nazis Attack Greek Anti-Fascist Center, Injure 5," Greek Reporter, February 26, 2018, <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/02/26/neo-nazis-attack-greek-anti-fascist-center-injure-5/>; Carolin Philipp, "Griechenland: Renaissance des Faschismus," *Missy Magazine*, October 11, 2018, <https://missy-magazine.de/blog/2018/10/11/griechenland-renaissance-des-faschismus/>.

⁷⁶ Tasos Kokkinidis, "Lawyer in Golden Dawn Trial Attacked by Neo-Nazis in Athens," Greek Reporter, November 1, 2017, <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2017/11/01/lawyer-in-golden-dawn-trial-attacked-by-neo-nazis-in-athens/>.

⁷⁷ "Student brutally attacked allegedly by Golden Dawn members," Keep Talking Greece, April 1, 2017, <https://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2017/04/01/student-brutally-attacked-allegedly-by-golden-dawn-members/>.

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⁸⁰ Nektaria Stamouli, "Greek killing prompts fears of political violence," *Wall Street Journal*, September 18, 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB1000142412788732308504579082922836516330>.

⁸¹ Marcus Walker and Marianna Kakaounaki, "Greece struggles to outlaw its Golden Dawn Fascist party," *Wall Street Journal*, December 4, 2013, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303281504579219983801909944>.

⁸² "Golden Dawn attack home of migrants," The city at a time of crisis: Map of attacks on migrants in Athens, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/125>.

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⁸⁴ "Profile: Greece's far-right Golden Dawn party," BBC News, October 1, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24346993>.

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⁸⁶ "Threats to damage house of migrant family," The city at a time of crisis: Map of attacks on migrants in Athens, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/167>.

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⁸⁸ "21 year old blinded by attack by four Golden Dawn members," The city at a time of crisis: Map of attacks on migrants in Athens, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/26>.

⁸⁹ "Golden Dawn members, led by one MP attacks migrants street vendors in Rafina," The city at a time of crisis: Map of attacks on migrants in Athens, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/38>.

⁹⁰ "Golden Dawn physically attacks visiting president of Pakistani Community Association and Syriza MP in parliament courtyard," The city at a time of crisis: Map of attacks on migrants in Athens, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/41>.

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⁹⁵ Helen Smith, “Greek prime minister calls for calm after murder of leftwing musician,” *Guardian*, September 19, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/19/greek-prime-minister-golden-dawn>.

Associations:

Ties to Extremist Entities:

- **Forza Nuova**
Golden Dawn has attended various festivals with the Italian far-right extremist party Forza Nuova.⁹⁶ The two groups have marched together both in Greece and in Italy. Golden Dawn MP Artemis Mattheopoulos serves as Deputy Chairman of the Alliance for Peace and Freedom, an organization run by Forza Nuova leader Roberto Fiore.⁹⁷
- **Jobbik**
Golden Dawn reportedly has close links with the Hungarian neo-Nazi party Jobbik and its former leader Gabor Vona.⁹⁸

Ties to Other Entities:

- **Casa Pound**⁹⁹
In November 2013, Casa Pound allegedly held a meeting in Rome, which two senior members of Golden Dawn attended, one of which was Apostolos Gkletsos, a former MP and member of Golden Dawn's Central Committee. The outcome of the meeting allegedly signaled the emergence of a potential alliance between Casa Pound and Golden Dawn.¹⁰⁰
- **British National Party**¹⁰¹
Nick Griffin, the leader of the far-right British National party (BNP), travelled to Athens on January 10, 2014 to offer his support to Golden Dawn in the face of the Greek government's crackdown on the group.¹⁰² Griffin also stated that he was looking to build an alliance of five far-right parties after the European parliamentary elections in May 2014. Griffin said that the description of Golden Dawn as a neo-Nazi party were a "ridiculous smear."¹⁰³

Ties to Individuals:

According to a website linked to Golden Dawn, the leader of the organization, Nikolaos Michaloliakos, received a letter from Alexander Dugin, a professor at Moscow State University and former Kremlin adviser. In the letter, Dugin, who is also one of the architects behind Putin's "Eurasian" ideology, called for an open exchange between Golden Dawn and his Moscow-based think tank and positively noted Golden Dawn's geopolitical views. Michaloliakos has allegedly expressed support in the past for closer ties with Russia.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁶ Anthee Carassava, "Far-Right Festival in Greece Will Proceed as Planned, Party Says," *New York Times*, August 10, 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/08/10/international/europe/10greece.html>.

⁹⁷ "Together for a Europe of Free Nations – The Alliance for Peace and Freedom moves forward in Brussels," Alliance for Peace and Freedom, February 21, 2015, <https://alliancepeacefreedom.wordpress.com/>.

⁹⁸ Far-right Hungarian who faced calls to be banned from Britain because of his views arrives in London for rally amid protests," *Daily Mail* (London), January 26, 2014, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2546296/Far-right-Hungarian-faced-calls-banned-Britain-views-arrives-London-rally-amid-protests.html>.

⁹⁹ Katerina Nikolaus, "Greece's Golden Dawn opens Italian branch," *Digital Journal*, November 13, 2012, <http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/336773>.

¹⁰⁰ Alfio Bernabel, "Golden Dawn links with Italian fascists," *Searchlight*, January 28, 2014, <http://www.searchlightmagazine.com/archive/golden-dawn-links-with-italian-fascists>.

¹⁰¹ Natharlie Savaricas and Charlotte McDonald-Gibson, "Just what Greece didn't need: BNP leader Nick Griffin seeks Golden Dawn alliance," *Independent*, January 10, 2014, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/just-what-greece-didnt-need-bnp-leader-nick-griffin-seeks-golden-dawn-alliance-9052662.html>.

¹⁰² Matthew Taylor, "Nick Griffin offers strident support to Golden Dawn on visit to Greece," *Guardian*, January 10, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jan/10/nick-griffin-support-golden-dawn-greece>.

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¹⁰⁴ Mitchell A. Orenstein, "Putin's Western Allies," *Foreign Affairs*, March 25, 2014, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/141067/mitchell-a-orenstein/putins-western-allies>.

Golden Dawn

Media Coverage:

Analysis of Group

Golden Dawn has attracted increasing international media coverage since it successfully entered parliament following the 2012 Greek general election. Much of the media attention has focused on the party's continued electoral success in the context of severe austerity measures, its openly neo-Nazi character, and its violent attacks against immigrants and leftists. However, as the party's gains are almost exclusively viewed as a product of the financial crisis, the potential longer-term impact of Golden Dawn's social and welfare activities and its international undertakings and links to far-right organizations appears underexplored at times.

Although Golden Dawn was founded nearly 30 years ago, the group hardly featured in international media coverage until the Greek general elections in 2012, when the party—to the surprise of analysts and the political establishment—was able not only to dramatically increase its share of the vote but to secure 18 seats in the Greek parliament. International observers and media commentators were alarmed that an ultra-nationalist party which openly models itself after the Nazis and advocates for mining Greece's borders to keep out immigrants was so successful in a national election. In a BBC article in October 2012, former "Newsnight" editor Paul Mason echoed the consensus of much of the international press regarding Golden Dawn's success. He drew parallels between modern Greece and Germany during the Weimar Republic, arguing that Golden Dawn's rise was fueled by "hopelessness" and "inertia" and must be understood in the context of the financial crisis and the effects of the severe austerity measures that Greece had to endure. Though Mason rejected a direct comparison to the political and economic context of the Weimar Republic, he argued that "[W]hile the crisis may be on a scale weaker than the one that collapsed [...] in Greece, the forces holding democracy together may also be weaker."¹⁰⁵

International commentators were careful not to overstate the importance of Golden Dawn's 2012 electoral success, with *The New York Times* pointing out that "the group is still far from being a major threat to [Greek Prime Minister Antonis] Samaras's party, or to his fragile three-party coalition government."¹⁰⁶ However, the fascist, violent, and aggressive character of the group and its leaders was emphasized by most media outlets. Reuters's Dina Kyriakidou pointed out the inherent contradiction of denying being a neo-Nazi organization while at the same time "openly adopting similar ideology and symbols"¹⁰⁷ and the *Guardian* described an incident during which the "high-profile neo-Nazi MP" Ilias Kasidiaris physically attacked two left-wing female politicians during a live talk show. With sharp irony, the *Guardian*'s Helen Smith described Kasidiaris as "the most vocal opponent of suggestions that Chrysi Avgi [Golden Dawn] is a violent organisation with a history of attacks on society's most vulnerable not least Greece's burgeoning population of immigrants."¹⁰⁸

Following a string of attacks on migrants across Greece during 2012 and 2013—for many of which Golden Dawn has been alleged to be responsible—international media outlets investigated Golden Dawn's growing appeal among segments of the Greek population despite its violent reputation. As state welfare assistance was rolled back dramatically following the implementation of austerity cuts, Reuters pointed to Golden Dawn's moves to fill the void. "Part of its [Golden Dawn's] appeal is down to the sort of welfare work that Hamas, the Palestinian party, does in Gaza. Golden Dawn distributes food in poor neighborhoods, helps old ladies get money safely from ATMs—and has also set up a Greeks-only blood bank."¹⁰⁹

While the rise of Golden Dawn was repeatedly explained in the context of stringent austerity measures and widespread poverty and unemployment, international media outlets gave less attention to the international dimension of Golden Dawn's activities. Thus, the connections of the organization to Russian President Vladimir Putin were not widely picked up even though *Foreign Affairs* magazine highlighted that Golden Dawn "is thought to receive funds from Russia."¹¹⁰ The *Guardian* noted Golden Dawn's efforts to open offices across Europe and in the United States, quoting a Golden Dawn expert who stated, "Golden Dawn is not like other parties in Greece. From its beginnings, in the early 80s, it always had one eye abroad."¹¹¹

Following the murder of left-wing rapper Pavlos Fyssas in 2013 by a member of Golden Dawn, media outlets have closely followed government efforts to prosecute the organizations leadership and crack down on racist violence. While the government-led action has generally been viewed as successful in curtailing the activities of the group, Golden Dawn's electoral success at the recent European elections indicates that they are still popular among voters. This adds more pressure on the government to successfully prosecute Golden Dawn's leader Michaloliakos and other members of the group during their upcoming trial. However, the *Wall Street Journal* has already speculated that "the evidence so far probably isn't enough" to allow for the group to be banned.¹¹²

Golden Dawn

While western media interest in the activities of Golden Dawn has significantly increased over the last two years, much media analysis has remained limited to linking the group's success to the consequences of severe austerity measures. Accordingly, Golden Dawn's ascent is predominantly viewed as a product of the financial crisis.

¹⁰⁵ Paul Mason, "Love or nothing: The real Greek parallel with Weimar," BBC News, October 26, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-20105881>.

¹⁰⁶ Liz Alderman, "Right-Wing Extremists' Popularity Rising Rapidly in Greece," *New York Times*, September 30, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/01/world/europe/amid-greeces-worries-the-rise-of-right-wing-extremists.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

¹⁰⁷ Dina Kyriakidou, "Special Report: Greece's far-right party goes on the offensive," Reuters, November 12, 2012, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/11/12/us-greece-crisis-dawn-idUSBRE8AB09F20121112>.

¹⁰⁸ Helen Smith, "Greek Golden Dawn MP assaults female politicians on talkshow," *Guardian*, June 7, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jun/07/greek-golden-dawn-mp-assaults-females-tv>.

¹⁰⁹ Dina Kyriakidou, "Special Report: Greece's far-right party goes on the offensive," Reuters, November 12, 2012, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/11/12/us-greece-crisis-dawn-idUSBRE8AB09F20121112>.

¹¹⁰ Mitchell A. Orenstein, "Putin's Western Allies," *Foreign Affairs*, March 25, 2014, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/141067/mitchell-a-orenstein/putins-western-allies>.

¹¹¹ Helen Smith, "Greece's neo-Nazi Golden Dawn goes global with political ambitions," *Guardian*, April 1, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/01/greece-golden-dawn-global-ambitions>.

¹¹² Marcus Walker, Marianna Kakaounaki, "Greece struggles to outlaw its Golden Dawn Fascist party," *Wall Street Journal*, December 4, 2013, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303281504579219983801909944>.

Golden Dawn

Rhetoric:

Nikolaos Michaloliakos, July 7, 2019

“We are sending a message to our enemies and so-called friends: Golden Dawn is not finished; get over it. The fight for nationalism continues. We return where we became strong: on the streets and squares, in a tough struggle against Bolshevism and the coming savage capitalism.

...

“Hail victory!”¹¹³

Ilias Panagiotaros, April 2014

“[Hitler is a] great personality, like Stalin.”¹¹⁴

Ilias Panagiotaros, April 2014

“Until 1997, [the] international association of doctors, and I don't know what, considered homosexuality a sickness, illness, which it is.”¹¹⁵

Ilias Panagiotaros, 2013

“Golden Dawn wants to become, and will become, like Hezbollah in Lebanon, which is in effect a second government that helps even the last of its poor citizens (...).”¹¹⁶

Nikolaos Michaloliakos, August 2012

“We feel disgusted in the parliament. If they want us to, we can abandon it at any given moment and take to the streets. There, they shall see what the Golden Dawn is really about, they will see what battle means, they will see what struggle means, they will see what bayonets sharpened every night mean.”¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Demtris Nellis, “Far-right Greek party crashes out of Parliament,” Associated Press, July 7, 2019, <https://www.apnews.com/c10782a0c6324824a76dd23dac6b8499>.

¹¹⁴ Helena Smith, “Greece’s Golden Dawn party describes Hitler as ‘great personality’,” *Guardian*, April 16, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/16/greece-golden-dawn-hitler>.

¹¹⁵ Helena Smith, “Greece’s Golden Dawn party describes Hitler as ‘great personality’,” *Guardian*, April 16, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/16/greece-golden-dawn-hitler>.

¹¹⁶ Palash Ghosh, “We Seek To Become Like Hezbollah: Greece’s Neo-Nazi Golden Dawn MP,” *International Business Times*, May 23, 2013, <http://www.ibtimes.com/we-seek-become-hezbollah-greeces-neo-nazi-golden-dawn-mp-1276743>.

¹¹⁷ Yiannis Baboulias, “Greece’s Golden Dawn Isn’t a Political Party – It’s More like a Criminal Gang,” *Guardian*, September 4, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/sep/04/greece-golden-dawn-not-political-party>.