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Grexit News and Stock Returns

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Abstract

During the first eight months of 2015, there was an ongoing debate about whether or not Greece should remain in the euro area. Using an event study approach, we quantify the effects of Grexit-related statements made by six important euro area politicians (Merkel, Schaeuble, Tsipras, Varoufakis, Juncker, and Schulz) on intraday stock returns in Germany, Greece, and the euro area during the period of January 1, 2015–August 19, 2015. We show that positive statements indicating that a Grexit is less likely lead to higher returns, and negative statements to lower returns. The overall impact of negative statements is more pronounced. The cumulative absolute effects on stock returns are sizeable as the statements contribute to a variation of up to 58 percentage points in the ATHEX. These large effects are of particular relevance as our study only captures an eight month snapshot of the Greek government debt crisis.

JEL Codes: G01, G12, G14.

Keywords: Event Study, Grexit, Intraday Data, Political Statements, Stock Returns.

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1 Introduction

Greece was bailed out in May 2010 and February 2012 by the 'Troika', which comprises the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The bailout loans were conditioned on the implementation of austerity measures, structural reforms, and privatisation of government assets. On the 29th of December 2014, the Greek parliament failed to elect a new president, which led to snap elections. Opinion polls taken before the elections indicated that the anti-bailout party Syriza (which announced that it would not comply with the previously negotiated terms in the bailout agreement) held the lead. This rising political uncertainty caused the Troika to suspend all scheduled remaining financial aid to Greece, until the Greek government either accepted the previously negotiated conditional payment terms or, as an alternative, could reach a mutually accepted agreement on updated terms with its creditors.

This rift rekindled the liquidity crisis for the Greek government and the Greek financial system, resulting in plummeting stock prices at the Athens Stock Exchange. Meanwhile, interest rates for loans to the Greek government in the private lending market spiked, making it, once again, inaccessible as an alternative funding source. When Syriza won the election on January 25, 2015, the Eurogroup granted Greece a four-month technical extension of its bailout programme with the proviso that the payment terms attached to its last tranche must be renegotiated with the new government before the end of April 2015. No agreement was reached, however, until the end of May 2015.

Faced with the threat of sovereign default, the Greek government attempted to renegotiate the bailout agreement in June 2015. However, the Syriza government unilaterally broke off negotiations on June 26, 2015, and announced a referendum to approve or reject the achieved preliminary negotiation result for a new set of updated terms ensuring completion of the second bailout agreement. In light of this turmoil, the Athens Stock Exchange closed on the 27th of June 2015. A significant majority of Greek citizens voted to reject the bailout terms, causing stock indexes around the

world to tumble yet another time after July 5, 2015. Negotiations between Greece and other euro area members continued in the following days in an effort to determine whether or not Greece should remain a member of the euro area. On July 13, 2015, euro area leaders reached a provisional agreement on a third bailout programme to save Greece from bankruptcy with the deal being finalised on August 19, 2015.

During these eight months, there was an ongoing debate about whether or not Greece should remain in the euro area. It was during this time that the term ‘Grexit’ (Greek exit) became very popular in the media and among politicians. Thomson Reuters recorded 378 statements containing the word Grexit (or another synonymous term) made by six important euro area politicians during the period of January 1, 2015–August 19, 2015. The six important politicians are German chancellor Angela Merkel, German finance minister (FM) Wolfgang Schaeuble, Greek prime minister (PM) Alexis Tsipras, Greek FM Yanis Varoufakis, EC president Jean-Claude Juncker, and European Parliament (EP) president Martin Schulz (see Figure A1 in the Appendix).

As mentioned earlier, stock markets, not only in Greece, but also in the rest of the euro area reacted to these Grexit-related news (see also Figure A2 in the Appendix). Narrative evidence suggests that positive news, defined as comments suggesting a less likely Grexit, led to an increase in stock returns, whereas negative news, defined as comments suggesting a more likely Grexit, led to lower returns. The paper at hand aims at quantifying these effects on stock returns in Germany, Greece, and the euro area. We begin our analysis by extracting the 378 statements from the Thomson Reuters database and coding them as to whether they (i) indicate a lower likelihood of a Grexit, (ii) contain a neutral stance or no clear information on the likelihood of a Grexit, or (iii) provide a signal that a Grexit more likely. We then use an event study approach to analyse how these statements impact stock returns measured in 30-minute intervals. By employing intraday data, we make sure that we identify the effects of only political communications and that our results are not confounded by other events.

There is some related literature on the influence of political communications on bond yields, bond spreads, or stock returns during the recent euro area sovereign debt crisis, including Beetsma et al (2013), Mohl and Sondermann (2013), Smeets and Zimmermann (2013), Kilponen et al (2015), and Conrad and Zumbach (2016). Ehrmann et al (2014) study the determinants of the volatility of the EUR-USD exchange rate during the crisis. However, to the best of our knowledge this is the first paper to analyse the impact of Grexit-related news on stock returns.¹

We show that positive statements indicating that a Grexit is less likely lead to higher returns, and negative statements lead to lower returns, with the effect of negative statements being stronger. We also show that the Greek stock index reacts much more strongly to Grexit-related news than the German or the euro area index. The cumulative absolute effects on stock returns are sizeable as the statements contribute to a variation of up to 58 percentage points in the ATHEX. These large effects are of particular relevance as our study only captures an eight month snapshot of the Greek government debt crisis. Finally, we find that the comments of Greek PM Alexis Tsipras have the strongest impact on returns, followed by those of German FM Wolfgang Schaeuble.

In Section 2, we explain our empirical methodology. Section 3 introduces the data set of Grexit-related statements made by euro area politicians. Section 4 presents the empirical results, with concluding comments offered in Section 5.

2 Empirical Methodology

The relationship between stock indexes and expected future cash flows is well-established and can be formalised as follows:

$$\log p_t = \phi X_t + \mu_t \tag{1}$$

¹A more established branch of the literature focuses on the determinants and consequences of *central bank* communication. See Blinder et al (2008) for an extensive literature overview.

The (logarithmic) stock index $\log p_t$ is influenced by expected future cash flows X_t with a sensitivity parameter $\phi > 0$ and a stochastic component μ_t . Lagging Eq. (1) by one period and taking first differences yields:

$$\log p_t - \log p_{t-1} = \phi(X_t - X_{t-1}) + \mu_t - \mu_{t-1} \quad (2)$$

Defining returns as $r_t \equiv \log p_t - \log p_{t-1}$ and further simplification of Eq. (2) yields:

$$r_t = \phi \Delta X_t + \Delta \mu_t \quad (3)$$

Any new information about expected future cash flows such as, for instance, changes in expected macroeconomic conditions may influence stock returns. Consequently, any update on the expected likelihood of Greece exiting the euro area should also affect stock returns.

In this paper, we consider a decrease in the likelihood of a Grexit as increasing expected future cash flows (i.e., $\Delta X_t > 0$) and an increase the likelihood of a Grexit as a deterioration (i.e., $\Delta X_t < 0$). We measure changes in the likelihood of a Grexit by positive and negative statements made by six important euro area politicians, and quantify the impact of this Grexit-related news on three stock indexes, the DAX 30 for Germany, the ATHEX 20 for Greece, and the EUROSTOXX 50 for the euro area. Our empirical analysis aims at testing the following three hypotheses.

H1: Positive Grexit-related statements increase stock returns, whereas negative statements decrease stock returns.

H2: The effect of negative statements is greater than the effect of positive statements (when comparing the absolute values).

H3: The cumulative effect of all statements is stronger for Greek returns than for German or euro area returns.

H1 directly follows from the discussion above. H2 results from a standard feature in the behavioural finance literature or, more broadly, from psychology (Baumeister et al, 2001). H3 is based on the fact that the Greek economy and the Greek stock market

would be immediately hit by a Grexit, whereas the German (euro area) economy would only indirectly suffer via negative spillover effects.

Empirically, we use 30-minute intervals of DAX, ATHEX, and EUROSTOXX returns to quantify the influence of political communication on stock indexes. By employing intraday data, we make sure that we identify the effects of only political communications and that our results are not confounded by other events (see also, Almeida et al, 1997), as a systematic correlation of Grexit-related news and other events in such a narrow time window is very unlikely. In addition, we are able to disentangle the influence of multiple statements on a single trading day more precisely. The general specification is as follows:

$$r_{t,t+30} = \alpha + \rho r_{t-30,t} + \beta' C_{t+30} + \gamma D_{t+30} + \epsilon_{t,t+30} \quad (4)$$

The stock returns $r_{t,t+30}$ are explained by a constant term α , lagged returns $r_{t-30,t}$ to test for the persistence of returns or momentum effects, and Grexit-related news C_{t+30} . The latter vector contains separate variables for positive and negative statements by six euro area politicians (Merkel, Schaeuble, Tsipras, Varoufakis, Juncker, and Schulz), which add up to twelve different news dummies. D_{t+30} is an impulse dummy which takes the value 1 for the first observation after the closure of the Athens Stock Exchange on June 27, 2015, and 0 otherwise.² $\epsilon_{t,t+30}$ are the i.i.d. residuals and ρ , β' , and γ are (vectors of) coefficients. Eq. (4) (which is not a time series regression as it only includes those observations with non-zero entries for C_{t+30}) is estimated using ordinary least squares.

As part of our robustness test, we employ the full time series of all three stock indexes and estimate an EGARCH(1,1) model (Nelson, 1991) for the 30-minute returns. This approach corrects for the excess kurtosis, skewness, and time-varying volatility of the asset prices, ensures a positive conditional variance, and allows for the detection of asymmetric effects of positive and negative innovations in the conditional variance. The mean equation is identical to Eq. (4). However, the residuals of the mean equation

²This corresponds to June 29, 2015, 9:30 in case of the DAX and EUROSTOXX and August 3, 2015, 10:00 in case of the ATHEX. The inclusion of this impulse dummy is required to overcome heteroskedasticity in the residuals. See also Table 2.

are now the product of the conditional standard deviation $h_{t,t+30}$ and the normally distributed error term $v_{t,t+30}$.

$$\epsilon_{t,t+30} = h_{t,t+30}v_{t,t+30} \quad (5)$$

$$\ln h_{t,t+30}^2 = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \left| \frac{\epsilon_{t-30,t}}{h_{t-30,t}} \right| + \gamma_1 \frac{\epsilon_{t-30,t}}{h_{t-30,t}} + \beta_1 \ln h_{t-30,t}^2 \quad (6)$$

Eq. (4)–(6) are estimated simultaneously by maximum likelihood.

3 Grexit-Related News

The time period considered in this paper begins right after the failed presidential election in Greece on January 1, 2015, and ends on August 19, 2015, when the third bailout package was finally signed by the involved parties. The sample consists of statements made by those politicians who were considered the most influential during the negotiations. These politicians are, German chancellor Angela Merkel, German FM Wolfgang Schaeuble, Greek PM Alexis Tsipras, Greek FM Yanis Varoufakis, EC president Jean-Claude Juncker, and EP president Martin Schulz. We use the Thomson Reuters database as the source for all news that is related to a potential exit of Greece from the euro area. We restrict our search to only the headlines as financial agents typically monitor only these, given the flood of daily information they are exposed to. To avoid double entries, we focus on news in the English language, as German and Greek language news are translated into English in the Reuters database.

The search algorithm contains the optional keywords ‘Grexit’, ‘Euro’, ‘Exit’, ‘Greece’, and ‘Greek’ in combination with the last name of the respective politician and yields 643 headlines in the Thomson Reuters database. After checking for plausibility and removing multiple entries our sample consists of 378 statements, which are coded into three groups. The first group contains those statements indicating a lower Grexit likelihood (P for positive news), the second group is characterised by a neutral stance or no clear information on the likelihood of a Grexit (0 for neutral news) and the third

group is comprised of those statements that indicate a higher Grexit likelihood (N for negative news).

Coding communication events in different categories carries the risk of introducing into the analysis a judgment error on the part of the researcher. Content analysis, which is a ‘technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages’ (Holsti, 1969, 14), can help reduce the risk of misclassification. Accordingly, each statement was carefully read and coded into the categories. One example is the Reuters report from March 18, 2015, at 14:57, which offers this headline ‘Juncker says concerned about Greece and urges all parties to make progress’. This report should be seen as alarming, and thus is coded as negative (N). In contrast, ‘Merkel says all euro countries have goal of keeping Greece in euro zone’, reported on February 20, 2015, at 14:37, can be interpreted as encouraging news, and thus is categorized as a positive statement (P).³

The timing of the statements is adjusted to the stock returns, which are measured in 30-minute intervals. Statements made after the market is closed are coded as affecting the first 30-minute interval on the subsequent trading day. For example, the positive statement by Juncker on January 16, 2015, at 16:41, ‘Greece won’t leave euro, won’t be kicked out’ is coded as impacting the DAX and the EUROSTOXX at 17:00, because both close at 18:00. The ATHEX closes at 16:30, so the same statement is coded to have an impact on the subsequent trading day. When multiple statements with similar content are made by a particular politician within a short period of time, we code the first statement as positive or negative and all subsequent statements as neutral since market participants receive no new information about the likelihood of a Grexit.

Table 1 summarises the frequency of positive and negative news made by the six politicians. After eliminating the ‘neutral’ comments and adjusting the statements to the stock market series, 145 positive and 94 negative statements remain.⁴ On average, five out of the six politicians are optimistic about Greece remaining in the euro area.

³All statements alongside their coding can be found in the Online Appendix to this paper.

⁴Figure A1 in the Appendix provides an overview of the distribution of positive and negative statements by politician over time.

At least 62% of the comments by Merkel, Tsipras, Varoufakis, Juncker, and Schulz are coded as positive, while only 30% of the statements made by the German FM Schaeuble, are positive. In terms of absolute frequency, most statements are made by Tsipras (55), followed by Schaeuble (47), Merkel (45), Varoufakis (39), Juncker (37), and Schulz (16).

Table 1: Frequency of News

	Positive	Negative	Total
Merkel	31 (26)	14 (8)	45 (34)
Schaeuble	14 (8)	33 (21)	47 (29)
Tsipras	36 (20)	19 (13)	55 (33)
Varoufakis	28 (25)	11 (7)	39 (32)
Juncker	23 (14)	14 (11)	37 (25)
Schulz	13 (9)	3 (2)	16 (11)
Total	145 (102)	94 (62)	239 (164)

Notes: Table shows frequencies of Grexit-related news by six European politicians. Figures in parentheses show the frequencies employed for the ATHEX estimations, which are lower due to the five-week closure of the Athens Stock Exchange from June 27, 2015 to August 3, 2015.

4 Empirical Results

Table 2 sets out the results of the OLS estimations of Eq. (4). Before turning to the interpretation of the results a couple of things have to be mentioned. First, the number of observations is lower than the frequency of statements (see Table 1) as occasionally markets are hit by multiple comments in the same 30-minute interval. Second, the number of observations is lower for the ATHEX due to the five-week closure of the Athens Stock Exchange from June 27, 2015 to August 3, 2015.

The R^2 values indicate that the regressors are able to explain 40% (DAX), 66% (ATHEX), and 41% (EUROSTOXX) of the variation in the 30-minute stock returns, respectively. In general, the results for the DAX and the EUROSTOXX are very similar, which is not surprising as 14 out of the 50 companies listed in the EUROSTOXX are also listed in the DAX and enter the former index with a weight of more than 30%. To conserve space and to avoid reiterations the following discussion focuses on the results for the ATHEX and the EUROSTOXX.

Table 2: Grexit News and Stock Returns

	DAX	ATHEX	EUROSTOXX
$r_{t-30,t}$	-0.2495 (0.1539)	0.3992 (0.3160)	-0.1573 (0.1599)
Merkel			
... Positive	0.0203 (0.1025)	-0.1328 (0.4864)	0.0541 (0.1073)
... Negative	-0.2761** (0.1392)	0.4524 (0.7287)	-0.2612* (0.1459)
Schaeuble			
... Positive	0.1410 (0.1315)	-0.2785 (0.7044)	0.1513 (0.1380)
... Negative	-0.2049** (0.0998)	-0.8784* (0.4817)	-0.2083** (0.1046)
Tsipras			
... Positive	0.2057** (0.0925)	0.1048 (0.5023)	0.2414** (0.0968)
... Negative	-0.4520*** (0.1223)	-1.8019*** (0.5906)	-0.4390*** (0.1280)
Varoufakis			
... Positive	0.0188 (0.1042)	0.2847 (0.4508)	0.0035 (0.1089)
... Negative	-0.1853 (0.1524)	-1.4676* (0.7895)	-0.1945 (0.1593)
Juncker			
... Positive	0.2029* (0.1102)	0.0114 (0.5745)	0.2477** (0.1155)
... Negative	0.0194 (0.1392)	-0.2896 (0.6221)	-0.0365 (0.1455)
Schulz			
... Positive	-0.0332 (0.1405)	0.1838 (0.7032)	-0.0903 (0.1471)
... Negative	0.1465 (0.2687)	-3.1540** (1.3273)	-0.0175 (0.2814)
Dummy	-2.7404*** (0.5152)	-20.9112*** (2.4820)	-3.1335*** (0.5388)
Constant	0.0513 (0.0823)	0.3889 (0.3963)	0.0340 (0.0861)
Observations	197	129	197
R ²	0.40	0.66	0.41
White Test	26.43	34.39	30.14

Notes: Table shows coefficients of OLS estimations with standard errors in parentheses. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% level, respectively.

Confirming H1, we find that positive statements increase stock returns. Comments by Tsipras and Juncker indicating that a Grexit is less likely, lead to 0.24 and 0.25 pp higher EUROSTOXX returns. Also in line with H1, we find that negative statements by Schaeuble (−0.88 pp), Tsipras (−1.80 pp), Varoufakis (−1.47 pp), and Schulz (−3.15 pp) significantly decrease ATHEX returns.⁵ The same type of comments by Merkel (−0.26 pp), Schaeuble (−0.21 pp), and Tsipras (−0.44 pp) also affect EUROSTOXX returns negatively.

Counting the number of significant coefficients, we detect some evidence supporting H2. The Greek stock market is only influenced by negative news. None of the positive statements by the six politicians significantly affect ATHEX returns. Statistical testing confirms that negative statements made by Tsipras ($F(1,114) = 3.94^{**}$) and Schulz ($F(1,114) = 3.69^*$) have a more pronounced impact than their positive statements. The picture for the euro area index is less distinct as it is affected by positive statements as well.

Finally, our results also support H3 as the absolute size of the reaction is larger for the ATHEX compared to the EUROSTOXX. Again, statistical testing confirms this finding for the negative news from Tsipras ($t = -2.26^{**}$) and Schulz ($t = -2.31^{**}$).

The coefficients in Table 2 can be misleading insofar as some types of statements occur more often than others. As a consequence, a fairly small coefficient might have a large cumulative influence on the observed behaviour of financial markets if the frequency of this event is relatively high, and vice versa. For instance, Schaeuble delivered more negative statements than Tsipras. However, the point estimates for negative statements by Tsipras are larger than for Schaeuble. Therefore, we compare the impact by taking into account the frequency of comments. Table 3 shows the cumulative impact on returns per statement category on each stock market.

⁵The large coefficient for negative statements by Schulz should not be over interpreted as the estimate is based on two observations only (see Table 1). In addition, the statement on February 4, 2015, at 19:57, coincides with the ECB's decision to no longer accept Greek bonds as collateral in its monetary policy operations, which is also clearly very negative news for the Greek stock market.

Table 3: Grexit News and Stock Returns: Cumulative Absolute Changes

	DAX	ATHEX	EUROSTOXX
Merkel			
... Positive			
... Negative	-3.87		-3.66
... Sum (Abs.)	3.87		3.66
Schaeuble			
... Positive			
... Negative	-6.76	-18.45	-6.87
... Sum (Abs.)	6.76	18.45	6.87
Tsipras			
... Positive	7.41		8.69
... Negative	-8.59	-23.42	-8.34
... Sum (Abs.)	15.99	23.42	17.03
Varoufakis			
... Positive			
... Negative		-10.27	
... Sum (Abs.)		10.27	
Juncker			
... Positive	4.67		5.70
... Negative			
... Sum (Abs.)	4.67		5.70
Schulz			
... Positive			
... Negative		-6.31	
... Sum (Abs.)		6.31	
Total			
... Positive	12.07		14.39
... Negative	-19.22	-58.45	-18.87
... Sum (Abs.)	31.29	58.45	33.26

Notes: The figures are calculated by taking the significant estimates from Table 2, which are then multiplied by the respective frequencies of news (see Table 1).

The cumulative absolute changes provide some confirmation of H2 and H3. For the ATHEX returns, the impact of negative news (-58 pp) is clearly stronger than for positive news (which is non-existent). The EUROSTOXX shows a moderately stronger impact of negative news (-19 pp for negative news and 14 pp for positive news). Similarly, despite the lower frequency of Grexit-related statements applicable to the ATHEX, the absolute cumulative effects of news are stronger for the ATHEX (58 pp) than for the EUROSTOXX (33 pp). The total variation of the Greek index in our event study time windows is 182 pp, which indicates that the significant coefficients alone contribute to 32% of its variation.

Table 3 also indicates some sort of pecking order among the politicians when it comes to the impact their comments have on stock returns. Greek PM Alexis Tsipras has the strongest influence on both markets (ATHEX: 23 pp; EUROSTOXX: 17 pp), followed by German FM Wolfgang Schaeuble (ATHEX: 18 pp; EUROSTOXX: 7 pp). Financial agents are virtually hanging on the lips of Tsipras, who came to power by promising (among other things) to end the strict austerity policy, a pledge that clearly jeopardises the idea of Greece remaining in the euro area. Schaeuble, in turn, is well-known for being ‘less diplomatic’ than the other politicians in this sample. For instance, on February 10, 2015, at 16:52, he is quoted as saying ‘if Greece doesn’t want a new programme, then it’s all over’. The other four politicians affect only one of the two indexes and to a smaller extent (Merkel, EUROSTOXX: 4 pp; Varoufakis, ATHEX: 10 pp; Juncker, EUROSTOXX: 6 pp; Schulz, ATHEX: 6 pp).

As mentioned before, we employ the full time series of all three stock returns covering all available observations and estimate an EGARCH(1,1) model for the 30-minute returns as a robustness test. Table 4 sets out the results for a simultaneous estimation of Eq. (4)–(6) by maximum likelihood.

A couple of things are worth highlighting. First, the significant point estimates have the same signs in Tables 2 and 4 with these typically being a bit smaller in the EGARCH estimations compared to the OLS models. Second, due to the higher number of observations the standard errors are smaller in the EGARCH estimations, occasionally resulting in higher significance levels.

In general, the EGARCH estimations also support H1 and H3. Positive (negative) statements lead to an increase (decrease) in returns and the effects appear to be more pronounced for the ATHEX than for the EUROSTOXX. However, the more balanced distribution of significant coefficients on positive and negative statements mitigates the evidence in favour of the asymmetry hypothesis H2. Nevertheless, the point estimates for negative news are, on average, still larger than for positive ones.⁶

⁶Note that the coefficients on γ_1 indicate a significant leverage effect in the euro area stock market as negative standardised residuals exert a stronger effect on the conditional variance ($\alpha_1 - \gamma_1$) than positive ones ($\alpha_1 + \gamma_1$).

Table 4: Grexit News and Stock Returns: EGARCH(1,1) Model

	DAX	ATHEX	EUROSTOXX
$r_{t-30,t}$	-0.0312*** (0.0044)	-0.0312 (0.0311)	-0.0092 (0.0187)
Merkel			
...Positive	0.0595 (0.0424)	0.2370 (0.3222)	0.0770* (0.0408)
...Negative	-0.1791** (0.0852)	1.2809 (0.7992)	-0.1308 (0.1146)
Schaeuble			
...Positive	0.1721* (0.0968)	-0.0056 (0.3514)	0.1290 (0.0882)
...Negative	-0.1339*** (0.0080)	-0.5301* (0.3037)	-0.1407** (0.0555)
Tsipras			
...Positive	0.1943** (0.0799)	0.5004 (0.3919)	0.2235*** (0.0744)
...Negative	-0.4516*** (0.0888)	-1.6436*** (0.6051)	-0.4001*** (0.1248)
Varoufakis			
...Positive	0.0078 (0.1073)	0.9954** (0.4743)	-0.0103 (0.0905)
...Negative	-0.1747 (0.1458)	-0.9984* (0.5387)	-0.2027 (0.1645)
Juncker			
...Positive	0.1466* (0.0886)	0.4725 (0.4898)	0.1339 (0.1007)
...Negative	0.0665 (0.0657)	0.0986 (0.2581)	0.0203 (0.0678)
Schulz			
...Positive	0.0116 (0.1114)	0.1972 (0.6892)	-0.0611 (0.1037)
...Negative	0.0874 (0.1951)	-2.4545 (1.9440)	0.0799 (0.3445)
Dummy	-2.7345*** (0.2420)	-22.0398*** (1.1280)	-3.1136*** (0.3069)
Constant	0.0031 (0.0041)	-0.0176 (0.0204)	0.0009 (0.0045)
α_0	-0.0071 (0.0076)	-0.1044 (0.0651)	-0.0015 (0.0037)
α_1	0.0413*** (0.0126)	0.3289** (0.1348)	0.0247*** (0.0080)
γ_1	-0.0463*** (0.0116)	-0.0273 (0.0942)	-0.0540*** (0.0092)
β_1	0.9956*** (0.0030)	0.6754*** (0.1265)	0.9983*** (0.0015)

Table 4: Grexit News and Stock Returns: EGARCH(1,1) Model (Continued)

	DAX	ATHEX	EUROSTOXX
Observations	2878	1826	2898
ARCH Test (2 lags)	0.51	0.32	0.65
Portmanteau Test (25 lags)	32.78	29.73	24.18

Notes: Table shows coefficients of EGARCH(1,1) estimations with robust standard errors in parentheses. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% level, respectively.

5 Conclusions

During the first eight months of 2015, there was an ongoing debate about whether or not Greece should remain in the euro area. The term ‘Grexit’ became very popular in the media and among politicians during that time. Thomson Reuters recorded 378 statements containing the word Grexit (or another synonymous term) made by six important euro area politicians (Merkel, Schaeuble, Tsipras, Varoufakis, Juncker, and Schulz) during the period of January 1, 2015–August 19, 2015. In this paper, we quantify the effects of Grexit-related statements on stock returns in Germany, Greece, and the euro area. We begin our analysis by extracting the 378 statements from the Thomson Reuters database and coding them as to whether they (i) indicate a lower likelihood of a Grexit, (ii) contain a neutral stance or no clear information on the likelihood of a Grexit, or (iii) provide a signal that a Grexit more likely. We then use an event study approach to analyse how these statements impact stock returns measured in 30-minute intervals. By employing intraday data, we make sure that we identify the effects of only political communications and that our results are not confounded by other events.

We show that positive statements indicating that a Grexit is less likely lead to higher returns, and negative statements lead to lower returns, with the effect of negative statements being stronger. We also show that the Greek stock index reacts much more strongly to Grexit-related news than the German or the euro area index. The cumulative absolute effects on stock returns are sizeable as the statements contribute to a variation of up to 58 percentage points in the ATHEX. These large effects are of particu-

lar relevance as our study only captures an eight month snapshot of the Greek government debt crisis. Finally, we find that the comments of Greek PM Alexis Tsipras have the strongest impact on returns, followed by those of German FM Wolfgang Schaeuble.

Our paper contributes to the literature that analyses the effects of political communication on financial markets. The substantial effects documented in our study indicate that financial agents incorporate Grexit-related statements quickly, making significant adjustments in their trading behaviour. One important implication of our results is that European politicians should avoid such lengthy negotiations in the future so that the financial markets will experience less turbulence. This is of particular relevance as the debate about whether or not Greece should be bailed out another time is still going on and, if so, subject to which conditions. In fact, on May 25, 2016, euro area finance ministers agreed, after negotiations that took several months, on debt relief for Greece, extending the repayment period and capping interest rates. Since this agreement becomes effective in 2018, it is likely that there will be further negotiations concerning the repayment conditions of Greek government debt, which is also likely to cause continuing turbulences in Greek financial markets, as well as the rest of the euro area.

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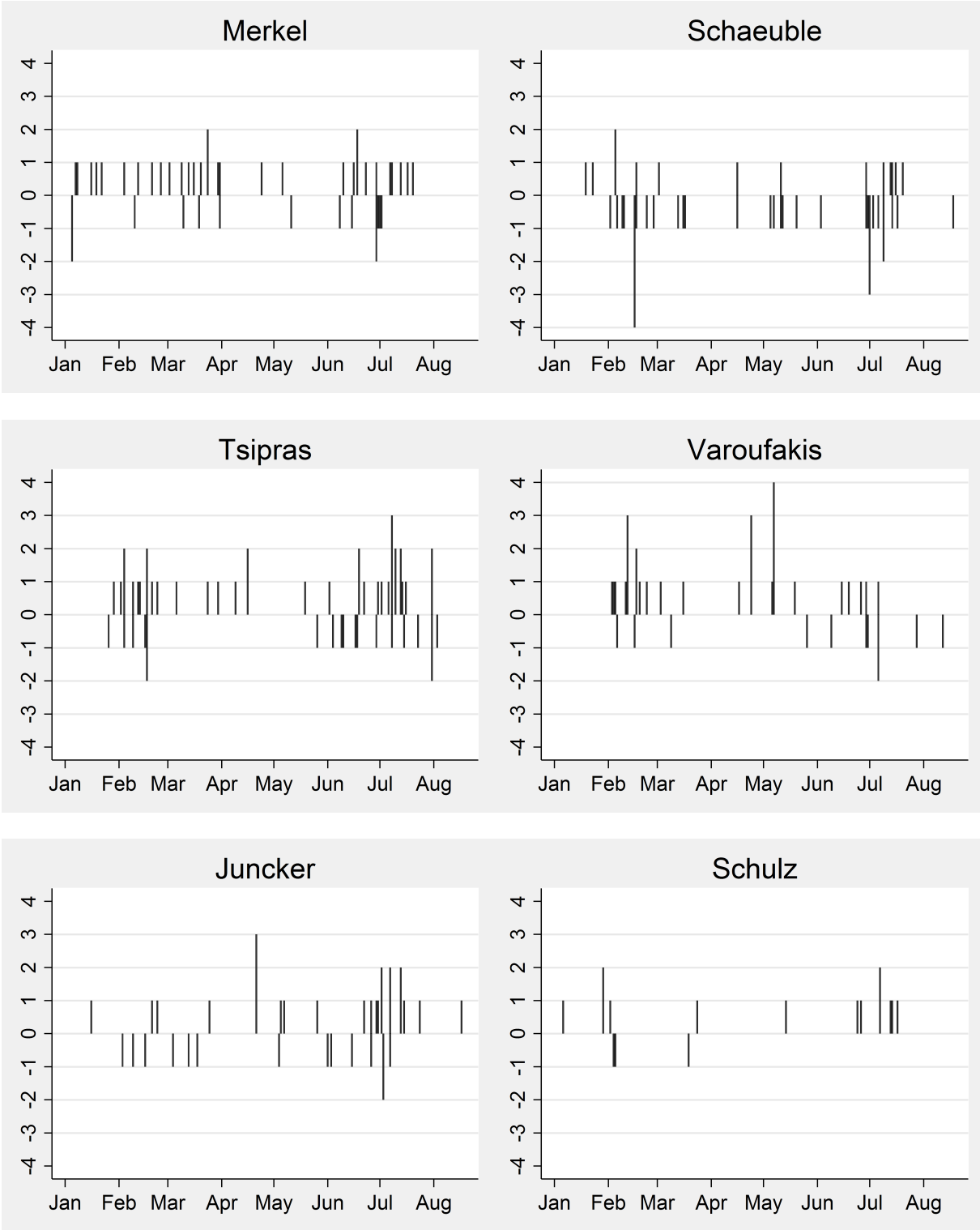
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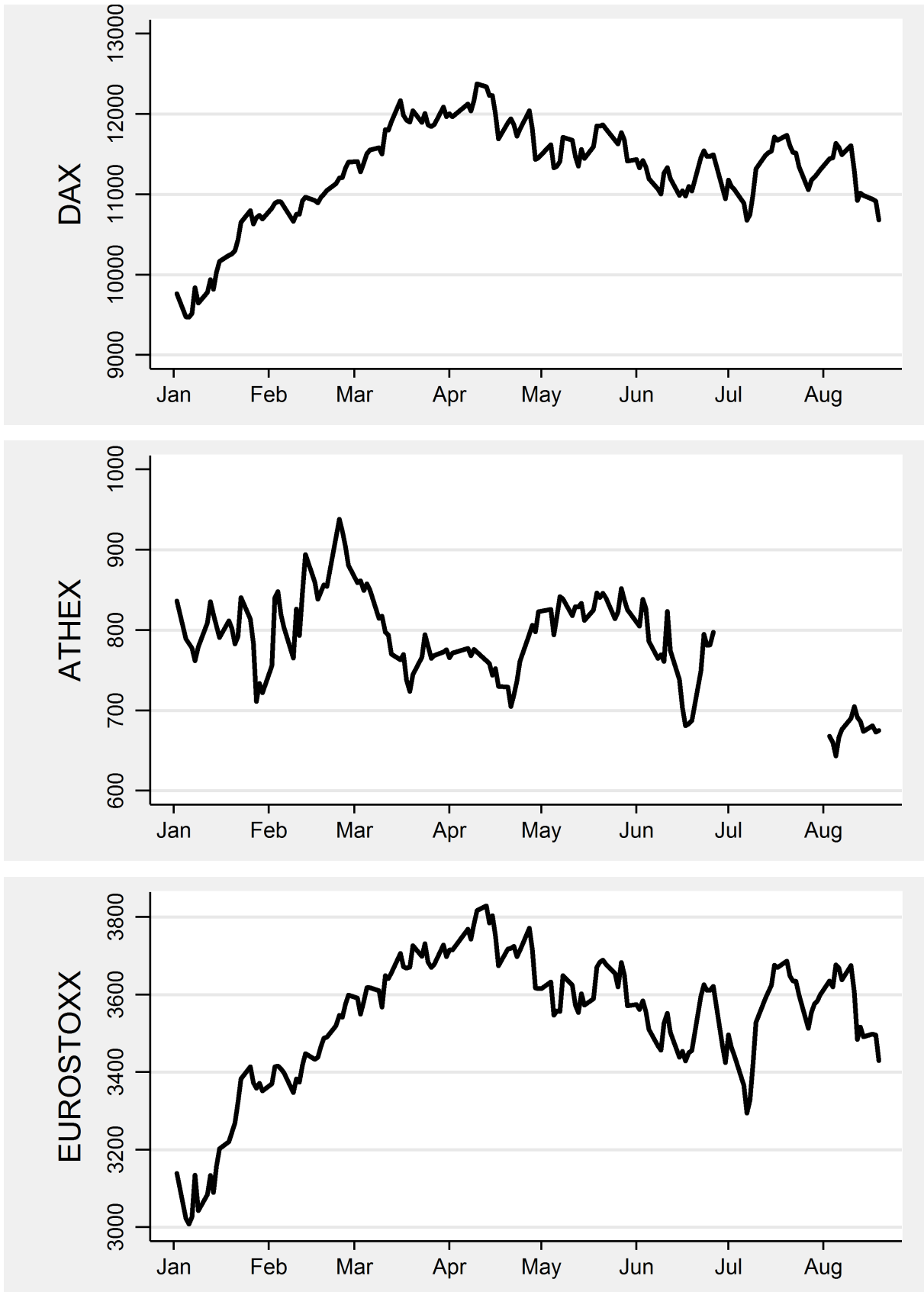
Appendix

Figure A1: Distribution of Statements Over Time



Notes: Figure shows the absolute frequencies of positive and negative statements by politician and trading day.

Figure A2: DAX, ATHEX, and EUROSTOXX



Notes: Figure shows daily closing stock indexes. Source: Thomson Reuters.

Online Appendix: Grexit-Related News

The following list contains all news regarding the keywords ‘Grexit’, ‘Euro’, ‘Exit’, ‘Greece’, and ‘Greek’ in combination with the respective politician’s last name from the Thomson Reuters database during the period 1 January 2015–19 August 2015. Coding: Grexit less likely, i.e., ‘positive’ news: P; neutral stance/no clear information on Grexit: 0; Grexit more likely, i.e., ‘negative’ news: N.

1	Merkel	01/04, 17:21	N	Merkel prepared to let Greece exit eurozone
2	Merkel	01/05, 12:25	N	Merkel’s spokesman says no change in stance on ‘Grexit’
3	Schulz	01/06, 16:01	P	Greece will remain in the Eurozone, Schulz says
4	Schulz	01/07, 12:52	0	Schulz criticises ‘irresponsible speculation’ over Grexit
5	Merkel	01/07, 12:56	P	Germany not planning for Greek euro exit—Merkel spokesman
6	Merkel	01/07, 19:09	P	Merkel says Germany has always pursued policy of Greece staying in euro zone
7	Merkel	01/07, 19:31	P	Merkel wants Greece to stay in euro zone
8	Merkel	01/08, 09:03	P	Merkel insists she wants Greece to remain in euro-zone
9	Merkel	01/15, 22:05	P	Merkel: ‘I would like Greece to stay in the euro-zone’
10	Juncker	01/16, 16:41	P	Juncker: Greece won’t leave euro, won’t be kicked out
11	Schaeuble	01/19, 08:04	P	Schaeuble says no need to worry about the stability and future development of the euro zone
12	Merkel	01/19, 13:45	P	Merkel says all our efforts are focused on keeping Greece in the euro zone
13	Merkel	01/19, 14:15	0	Merkel says would not call this a ‘week of destiny’ for the euro
14	Merkel	01/19, 20:08	0	Merkel says this is not ‘destiny week’ for the euro
15	Tsipras	01/20, 22:05	0	Tsipras pledges end to austerity and support of Greece’s European role
16	Merkel	01/22, 14:24	0	Merkel says euro crisis not over, Europe has not won back enough confidence
17	Merkel	01/22, 14:42	P	Merkel says overwhelming majority of Greeks want to stay in euro, Germany has always said it wants Greece in euro
18	Schaeuble	01/23, 13:41	P	Schaeuble says Greece has made impressive progress, better than we expected in
19	Tsipras	01/25, 22:24	N	Tsipras says our victory is a victory for all European peoples who fight against austerity
20	Schulz	01/26, 19:16	0	Schulz congratulates Tsipras, ‘looks forward to working with him’

- 21 Schulz 01/29, 10:18 P 'No Greek drama and no Greek drachma' Schulz says in a message on Twitter ahead of visit to Athens
- 22 Tsipras 01/29, 15:26 P Tsipras says we are negotiating with European partners for a mutually beneficial solution
- 23 Schulz 01/29, 15:32 P Schulz says positive that Tsipras wants to find joint solution
- 24 Schulz 01/29, 20:19 0 Schulz: 'Better if Syriza's leader had collaborated with To Potami'
- 25 Schulz 01/30, 20:05 P Schulz: 'If Tsipras wants to clash with Europe, he will lose'
- 26 Tsipras 02/02, 11:07 P Tsipras says whoever does not understand importance of Greece and Cyprus in eurozone will be disapproved
- 27 Schaeuble 02/02, 13:01 N Schaeuble says one-sided changes to aid programme for Greece unacceptable
- 28 Schaeuble 02/02, 16:32 0 Schaeuble worried German support for euro is waning
- 29 Varoufakis 02/02, 18:17 P Greece must stop being Eurozone's festering wound, says Varoufakis
- 30 Juncker 02/03, 17:11 N Juncker: EU won't change everything to please Greece
- 31 Tsipras 02/03, 18:38 N Tsipras says austerity in Europe has created many divisions, we don't want to create more
- 32 Tsipras 02/03, 19:22 0 Tsipras says Europe has nothing to fear from Athens
- 33 Varoufakis 02/04, 11:25 P Varoufakis: ECB is also central bank of Greece, ECB will do whatever it takes to support member states in the euro zone
- 34 Tsipras 02/04, 12:07 P Tsipras says we have the will to work to find a mutually acceptable compromise with EU
- 35 Merkel 02/04, 13:56 P Merkel sees no substantial disagreement on Greece in euro zone
- 36 Tsipras 02/04, 16:05 P Tsipras: New Greek government is not a threat to Europe, is an opportunity
- 37 Schulz 02/04, 17:36 N Schulz says in that case Athens will no longer receive funding and the state will no longer be able to finance itself
- 38 Schulz 02/04, 19:57 N Schulz says Greece risks bankruptcy if it does not uphold commitments
- 39 Schaeuble 02/05, 13:23 P Schaeuble says Greece belongs in the euro zone
- 40 Schaeuble 02/05, 13:23 0 Schaeuble says 'we agreed to disagree' with Varoufakis
- 41 Varoufakis 02/05, 13:34 0 Varoufakis says didn't reach agreement with Schaeuble but was never on cards they would
- 42 Schaeuble 02/05, 13:44 0 Schaeuble says promises made in Greek election burden third parties and are not realistic

43 Tsipras 02/05, 15:27 0 Greece will present its own road-map for exiting the crisis, Tsipras tells Syriza MPs

44 Schaeuble 02/05, 16:54 P Schaeuble: Greece belongs in the Eurozone

45 Varoufakis 02/05, 16:59 P We agreed on starting consultations on a solution protecting the European interests, Varoufakis says after meeting with Schaeuble

46 Tsipras 02/05, 18:31 0 Greece will present its own road-map for exiting the crisis, Tsipras tells Syriza MPs

47 Schaeuble 02/05, 20:40 N Schaeuble: He and Varoufakis were unable to bridge differences

48 Varoufakis 02/06, 14:06 N Varoufakis will not agree to any deal relating to previous bailout programme at next week's euro group—Government official

49 Tsipras 02/08, 19:09 N Tsipras says EU bailout failed, rejects extension

50 Juncker 02/09, 10:25 0 Juncker says Greece shouldn't assume sentiment has changed so much that euro zone will adopt Syriza's plans in entirety

51 Juncker 02/09, 10:57 N Juncker tells Greek PM: Don't assume euro zone will accept your plans

52 Juncker 02/09, 11:37 0 Don't assume euro zone will simply accept your plans, Juncker tells Tsipras

53 Schaeuble 02/09, 13:32 N Schaeuble says he hasn't yet understood how new Greek government will deal with its problems

54 Tsipras 02/09, 13:40 P Tsipras says believe we will reach an agreement in coming days on common European solution for Greece

55 Varoufakis 02/10, 06:17 0 Greek euro exit fears revived; European stocks slump on Grexit fears; Varoufakis says Greece needs time to negotiate; US stocks fall

56 Merkel 02/10, 09:07 N Merkel is trapped between a Grexit and setting precedent

57 Schaeuble 02/10, 16:52 N Schaeuble says if Greece doesn't want a new programme, then it's all over

58 Varoufakis 02/10, 21:17 0 Greek euro exit fears revived; European stocks slump on Grexit fears; Varoufakis says Greece needs time to negotiate; US stocks fall

59 Varoufakis 02/11, 17:37 P Varoufakis again rules out quitting euro zone

60 Varoufakis 02/12, 00:23 P Varoufakis said he never heard any threats from EU partners

61 Tsipras 02/12, 08:05 0 Tsipras defies EU by ruling out bailout extension

62 Varoufakis 02/12, 10:42 P We are optimistic because Europe always knows how to find solutions to impasses, Varoufakis said after the euro group

63 Tsipras 02/12, 14:32 P Tsipras: Confident can find solution viable for euro zone and Greece

64 Varoufakis 02/12, 14:48 P Varoufakis: Greek exit from eurozone not under discussion

65	Merkel	02/12, 14:58	P	Merkel says on Greece that Europe always aims for compromise
66	Juncker	02/12, 22:41	0	Juncker says Greek government must balance any new spending with finding cuts of similar value
67	Tsipras	02/12, 22:57	P	Tsipras says talks with Dijsselbloem were a positive step, to continue talks with EU partners
68	Tsipras	02/13, 00:01	0	Tsipras: Greece aims to 'exit self-perpetuating crisis'
69	Tsipras	02/14, 16:36	N	Tsipras: 'Negotiations at Monday's euro group will be difficult'
70	Varoufakis	02/14, 19:01	N	Varoufakis says Greece and EU have agreed on many issues but labour issues and privatisations remain sticking points
71	Juncker	02/16, 00:21	N	Juncker making 'last effort' to resolve Greek debt problem—EU official
72	Schaeuble	02/16, 07:22	N	Schaeuble says sceptical that we will find an agreement with Greece today
73	Schaeuble	02/16, 07:24	0	Schaeuble says we don't want a Greek exit from the euro zone
74	Schaeuble	02/16, 10:38	N	Schaeuble not hopeful of Greek deal
75	Schaeuble	02/16, 14:29	N	Schaeuble says: What I heard so far didn't strengthen my optimism about Greece
76	Schaeuble	02/16, 14:30	N	Schaeuble says: As long as the Greek government doesn't want a programme I don't have to think about options
77	Varoufakis	02/16, 20:44	P	Varoufakis says no doubt there will be debt agreement that is good for Greece, good for Europe
78	Tsipras	02/16, 22:05	N	Tsipras wins parliament backing to cancel Greece's EU-IMF bailout
79	Merkel	02/17, 13:34	0	Merkel must keep up tireless work rate or risk losing goal of a 'united Europe'
80	Schaeuble	02/17, 14:22	N	Schaeuble says we know the situation in Greece is not getting better
81	Schaeuble	02/17, 14:31	0	Schaeuble says so far Varoufakis has not been very successful in convincing other euro zone finance ministers
82	Schaeuble	02/17, 14:38	P	Schaeuble says wants euro group to stay together, everybody must do their bit
83	Tsipras	02/17, 15:43	N	Tsipras says Greece will not compromise with euro zone
84	Tsipras	02/17, 17:09	P	Tsipras says we don't need a plan B because we are going to stay in the euro
85	Tsipras	02/17, 17:41	P	Tsipras: No plan B, going to stay in euro
86	Varoufakis	02/17, 17:45	P	Greece will remain in euro group—Varoufakis
87	Tsipras	02/18, 11:27	0	Greek negotiations with euro zone at crucial stage—Tsipras
88	Varoufakis	02/18, 19:46	P	Varoufakis says I believe the proposal will satisfy the Greek side and the euro group president

89	Varoufakis	02/18, 20:32	P	Varoufakis: 'I believe the Greek proposal will be approved by euro group on Friday'
90	Tsipras	02/20, 12:59	P	Tsipras: Greece has done 'everything possible' to reach mutually beneficial solution
91	Merkel	02/20, 14:37	P	Merkel says all euro countries have goal of keeping Greece in euro zone
92	Juncker	02/20, 14:53	P	Juncker says a Greek exit from the euro won't happen
93	Juncker	02/20, 15:06	0	Juncker rules out Greek exit from euro
94	Tsipras	02/20, 18:42	0	Greek PM 'certain' euro zone will back loan, Merkel demands more
95	Schaeuble	02/20, 21:45	N	Schaeuble says as long as the programme for Greece isn't successfully concluded there will be no payout
96	Schaeuble	02/20, 22:09	N	Schaeuble says 'I can stand behind today's agreement'
97	Tsipras	02/21, 13:38	P	Tsipras: 'We achieved an important success in Europe'
98	Varoufakis	02/21, 20:08	P	Varoufakis says I am confident partners will accept Greek list of reform promises, 'almost certain' no euro group meeting needed
99	Juncker	02/23, 13:31	P	Juncker: 'A Greek exit won't happen'
100	Merkel	02/25, 14:13	P	Merkel welcomes 'compromise' made by EU and Greece
101	Schaeuble	02/27, 09:11	N	Schaeuble says Greece needs longer than other bailout countries to win back confidence of markets
102	Schaeuble	02/27, 09:14	0	Schaeuble says Germans should do everything possible to keep Europe together
103	Schaeuble	02/28, 20:59	P	Schaeuble: I have confidence in Greek government to implement necessary measures, establish more efficient tax administration and fulfil conditions
104	Merkel	03/02, 15:47	P	Merkel: Want good future in eurozone for Greece
105	Juncker	03/02, 19:28	0	Juncker says that there are no talks in the euro zone about a possible 3rd Greek bailout
106	Varoufakis	03/02, 22:52	P	Varoufakis says the worst thing that could happen to Greece is an exit from the euro zone
107	Juncker	03/04, 14:51	N	Juncker: Too early to talk about third Greek bailout package
108	Merkel	03/04, 15:14	0	Merkel says euro zone has hands full with existing Greek bailout programme
109	Tsipras	03/06, 12:41	P	Tsipras says rules out Greek exit from euro 'because I love Europe'
110	Varoufakis	03/08, 12:40	N	Referendum possible if debt restructure rejected
111	Merkel	03/09, 10:55	P	Merkel says our political goal is for Greece to stay in euro zone
112	Merkel	03/09, 11:42	0	'Our political goal is to keep Greece in the euro-zone,' Merkel says

113	Merkel	03/09, 18:31	N	Merkel: Eurozone and Greece have 'difficult path' ahead
114	Tsipras	03/09, 19:17	0	National defence minister meets with Tsipras: 'euro group results positive'
115	Juncker	03/12, 08:05	0	Juncker paper fails to spark debate about euro-zone's future
116	Schaeuble	03/12, 18:59	0	Schaeuble says doesn't think expansionary monetary and fiscal policy is a good way to deal with stagnation
117	Schaeuble	03/12, 19:27	P	Schaeuble says Cyprus is on the right path with its aid programme
118	Schaeuble	03/12, 22:19	N	Schaeuble says can't rule out an accidental Greek exit from the euro
119	Schaeuble	03/12, 22:43	N	Schaeuble says can't rule out 'Grexident'
120	Juncker	03/13, 09:40	N	Juncker says: Not sufficient progress in resolving Greek problem
121	Merkel	03/13, 11:38	P	German government spokesman says goal of Merkel and German government remains to keep Greece in euro zone
122	Juncker	03/13, 12:28	0	Juncker not happy with Greece developments
123	Tsipras	03/13, 14:51	0	Tsipras says there is no Greek problem, but a European one
124	Varoufakis	03/13, 18:02	P	Greece's Varoufakis says confident can reach deal with EU by April 20
125	Varoufakis	03/13, 19:08	P	Athens ready to delay some reforms, hopeful for EU deal—Varoufakis
126	Merkel	03/16, 12:04	P	German government spokesman says Merkel and finance ministry still have shared goal of keeping Greece in euro zone
127	Schaeuble	03/16, 17:32	N	Schaeuble says Greece lived far beyond its means in the past
128	Schaeuble	03/16, 18:00	N	Schaeuble says new Greek government has destroyed all the trust that had been rebuilt
129	Juncker	03/16, 19:05	0	Juncker says EU must 'respect Greek dignity'
130	Tsipras	03/18, 12:46	0	Tsipras says EU partners don't scare us with talk of unilateral actions, threats that prove empty
131	Juncker	03/18, 14:57	N	Juncker says concerned about Greece and urges all parties to make progress
132	Juncker	03/18, 15:16	0	Juncker 'concerned' on Greece, urges all to 'get a grip'
133	Schulz	03/19, 08:34	N	Schulz warns before summit Greek finances are 'dangerous'
134	Merkel	03/19, 09:27	N	Euro zone has not yet fully overcome debt crisis, says Merkel
135	Schulz	03/19, 12:06	0	Schulz warns Greek financial situation is 'dangerous'
136	Merkel	03/20, 14:03	P	Merkel says working to find way to keep Greece in eurozone

137	Merkel	03/20, 14:40	0	Greece must respect 'every paragraph' of deal with euro zone—Merkel
138	Tsipras	03/23, 18:48	P	Tsipras says we are seeking a solution which would be beneficial for Greece and Europe
139	Merkel	03/23, 18:57	P	Merkel says all countries in Europe are equal, Germany has interest in good relations with all member states including Greece
140	Schulz	03/24, 09:44	P	Schulz expects Greece to reach deal with partners within a week
141	Merkel	03/24, 17:31	P	We want you in Europe, Merkel tells Greece's leader
142	Juncker	03/25, 15:50	P	Juncker says was 'very pessimistic' about Greece in recent weeks but now thinks issue back on track
143	Juncker	03/25, 16:01	0	Juncker was 'very pessimistic' about Greece, now more positive
144	Tsipras	03/26, 10:21	0	'Greece is an integral part of the European reality,' Tsipras says
145	Tsipras	03/28, 22:37	P	Tsipras says he seeks no rift with Europe
146	Merkel	03/30, 14:18	P	Merkel says majority of Greeks want to stay in euro zone, German policy has always been geared towards this
147	Merkel	03/31, 09:04	N	Greece in talks with eurozone as Merkel says reform plan must 'add up'
148	Merkel	03/31, 09:46	P	Merkel: We are working to keep Greece part of the eurozone
149	Schulz	04/07, 22:22	0	Schulz: Tsipras must not break EU line on sanctions against Russia
150	Tsipras	04/09, 17:41	P	Tsipras says Greece wants to stay in eurozone
151	Schaeuble	04/15, 22:11	P	Schaeuble 'confident' Greece won't exit Eurozone
152	Schaeuble	04/16, 01:27	N	Schaeuble says disappointed the G7 was unable to find a common position on the AIIB
153	Tsipras	04/16, 14:50	P	Tsipras says is 'firmly optimistic' there will be a deal with EU/IMF creditors by end of April
154	Tsipras	04/16, 17:56	P	Tsipras confident of EU deal despite friction over reforms
155	Varoufakis	04/16, 21:47	N	Varoufakis says Greece's problems tied to euro zone's design flaws
156	Varoufakis	04/16, 22:01	P	Asked what Greece will do to stay in euro zone, Varoufakis says: We are going to compromise, compromise, compromise, without being compromised
157	Schaeuble	04/18, 19:48	0	Schaeuble says don't see solution coming at Riga meeting on Greece
158	Varoufakis	04/20, 09:20	0	Varoufakis warns of Grexit contagion
159	Juncker	04/21, 14:58	P	Juncker says cannot let Greece fall but cannot support Greece at any price
160	Juncker	04/21, 15:07	P	'We are prepared for all kinds of events but I am excluding at 100 percent this Grexit,' Juncker said

- 161 Juncker 04/21, 17:03 P Juncker says seeing first signs that Greece more aware of tasks in debt talks
- 162 Varoufakis 04/23, 21:05 N Greece is not bluffing about exiting euro if it had to accept more austerity, says Varoufakis
- 163 Varoufakis 04/24, 06:57 N Varoufakis says international lenders must drop 'an approach that has failed' in Greek talks
- 164 Varoufakis 04/24, 07:03 O Varoufakis says he rejects additional wage, pension cuts as they would undermine support for reforms
- 165 Varoufakis 04/24, 07:05 P Varoufakis says Greece is willing to proceed with partial privatisation of public assets
- 166 Varoufakis 04/24, 12:55 P Varoufakis says there was a clear indication that the process of negotiation has converged in last weeks
- 167 Varoufakis 04/24, 13:08 P Varoufakis says talks with euro zone have made progress
- 168 Varoufakis 04/24, 15:04 O Varoufakis: The cost of not finding a solution would be huge for Greece and the euro zone
- 169 Merkel 04/24, 15:50 P Merkel says we will do everything to ensure that Greece stays in the euro
- 170 Merkel 04/24, 19:43 O Merkel says everything is being done to keep Greece in euro
- 171 Juncker 05/02, 15:06 N Juncker: Greece has 'long road ahead' but is not in danger of bankruptcy
- 172 Juncker 05/04, 21:56 N Greece must take 'major steps' to compromise—Juncker
- 173 Juncker 05/05, 09:15 P Grexit is not an option, Juncker says
- 174 Schaeuble 05/05, 12:43 O Schaeuble says negotiations with Greece have become more constructive recently
- 175 Schaeuble 05/05, 12:43 N asked on Greek primary surplus, Schaeuble says IMF has made clear that the numbers have gotten worse
- 176 Schaeuble 05/06, 14:53 O Schaeuble says neither troika, nor Europe nor Germany to blame for Greece's problems
- 177 Schaeuble 05/06, 15:09 O Schaeuble says wrong for Greece to blame troika, EU or Germany
- 178 Varoufakis 05/06, 15:49 P Varoufakis: Meeting with Italy economy minister Padoan was 'excellent', gave him much confidence for a deal that is good for Greece, good for eurozone
- 179 Merkel 05/06, 17:59 P Merkel 'doing everything she can' to keep Greece in eurozone, German spokesman says
- 180 Juncker 05/07, 12:05 P Juncker talks Grexit avoidance tactics with Samaras
- 181 Varoufakis 05/07, 13:44 P Varoufakis says it is a myth that a Greek exit from the euro zone would be good for euro zone
- 182 Varoufakis 05/07, 15:27 P Varoufakis says Grexit is a 'forbidden thought', not an issue
- 183 Varoufakis 05/07, 15:29 O Varoufakis says any exit from euro zone would bring down whole euro project in time
- 184 Schaeuble 05/07, 15:35 N Schaeuble says on Greece my expectations for euro group on Monday are not high

185	Varoufakis	05/07, 15:47	P	Varoufakis says Grexit is a ‘forbidden thought’
186	Varoufakis	05/07, 17:43	P	Greek Varoufakis sees convergence of Greek, European sides in negotiations
187	Juncker	05/07, 19:05	0	Juncker: If Greece leaves, Anglo-Saxons will try to break up eurozone
188	Schaeuble	05/09, 13:16	N	Schaeuble says he does not expect a final deal on Greek debt at Monday’s euro group meeting
189	Schaeuble	05/10, 12:32	0	Schaeuble reaffirms will to keep Greece in euro
190	Merkel	05/10, 18:04	N	Merkel’s party suffers another state defeat, euro sceptics win seats
191	Schaeuble	05/11, 08:18	P	Schaeuble reaffirms will to keep Greece in euro
192	Schaeuble	05/11, 13:40	P	Schaeuble says if Greece wants to hold referendum, it could be helpful
193	Schaeuble	05/12, 12:21	N	Schaeuble says improvement in Greek talks climate not matched by substance
194	Schulz	05/14, 09:18	P	Schulz: EU wants to continue to assist Greece
195	Tsipras	05/18, 18:45	P	Tsipras says Greece says deal with lenders does not only concern Greece but whole of euro zone
196	Varoufakis	05/18, 23:17	P	Varoufakis says very close to deal with EU/IMF lenders
197	Varoufakis	05/20, 10:47	0	Varoufakis says it’s frustrating in talks with Schaeuble that arguments don’t carry more weight than power
198	Schaeuble	05/20, 17:36	N	Schaeuble tells WSJ he cannot rule out a Greek default
199	Varoufakis	05/24, 10:37	N	Varoufakis says would be ‘catastrophic’ if Greece left euro, would be beginning of end of common currency project
200	Tsipras	05/24, 16:02	N	Tsipras must choose between Grexit or political mutiny
201	Juncker	05/26, 15:49	P	Juncker says growing feeling Greek default can be avoided
202	Schaeuble	05/29, 13:29	0	Schaeuble, on Greece, says we are aware of our responsibilities but this is a responsibility for the euro zone as a whole and the institutions
203	Schaeuble	05/29, 16:18	0	Schaeuble on Greece: ‘It is a responsibility for the euro zone ... for the stability of the global economy’
204	Juncker	05/31, 19:20	N	Juncker warns against Greek exit from euro
205	Tsipras	06/02, 12:04	P	‘We have tabled a realistic plan for Greece’s exit from the crisis’, Tsipras says
206	Juncker	06/03, 12:43	N	Juncker to meet Greek PM, no deal expected
207	Tsipras	06/03, 12:59	0	Tsipras would be happy if Grexit not mentioned again
208	Schaeuble	06/03, 15:12	N	Schaeuble says first impression of Greek list of reforms confirms view that talks won’t be over soon
209	Tsipras	06/04, 03:58	N	Tsipras sees Greek deal, but differences remain after EU talks

210	Juncker	06/07, 11:38	0	Juncker says rules out Greek exit from euro, but doesn't mean he can pull rabbit out of hat to prevent it
211	Merkel	06/08, 15:02	N	Merkel says wants Greece to remain part of euro zone, but solidarity of euro states/IMF depends on Greece implementing reforms
212	Tsipras	06/09, 08:55	N	Tsipras issues Grexit warning
213	Varoufakis	06/09, 13:57	N	Schaeuble says after talks with Varoufakis on Monday we still have differing views
214	Tsipras	06/10, 05:02	N	Greek exit would trigger eurozone collapse, says Tsipras
215	Merkel	06/10, 14:53	P	Merkel says our goal is to keep Greece in euro zone
216	Varoufakis	06/13, 10:04	P	Varoufakis says he believes Europe does not want 'Grexit'
217	Varoufakis	06/15, 05:07	P	Varoufakis rules out 'Grexit', as it is not a 'sensible solution'
218	Merkel	06/15, 08:12	N	Kauder says Merkel wants to keep Greece in euro but won't work if Greece tries to set terms on its own
219	Juncker	06/15, 13:56	N	Juncker disappointed by lack of progress in talks, spokesman says
220	Merkel	06/16, 14:12	P	Merkel says wants to do everything to keep Greece in the euro zone
221	Merkel	06/16, 15:51	0	Merkel: 'I want to do everything possible to keep Greece in the euro zone'
222	Tsipras	06/16, 21:28	N	Tsipras heaps scorn on Greece's creditors as 'Grexit' becomes real threat
223	Tsipras	06/18, 03:06	N	Tsipras to meet Putin over bailout loan as fears of Greek exit from EU mount
224	Merkel	06/18, 09:24	P	Merkel says Germany's efforts are aimed at keeping Greece in euro zone
225	Merkel	06/18, 14:05	P	Merkel wants to keep Greece in euro zone
226	Tsipras	06/18, 19:43	0	Tsipras vows to reject 'unfair' deal as EU braces for collapse
227	Varoufakis	06/18, 21:38	0	Varoufakis says euro zone 'dangerously close' to 'accident'
228	Varoufakis	06/18, 22:40	P	Varoufakis: Greece has presented an analytical proposal for exiting the crisis
229	Tsipras	06/19, 07:26	P	Tsipras says solution will allow Greece to return to growth in the euro
230	Tsipras	06/19, 09:30	P	Decision to hold EU summit on Greece 'positive'—Tsipras
231	Juncker	06/22, 02:39	P	Juncker EU aide calls new Greek debt proposal 'good basis for progress' at euro summit
232	Tsipras	06/22, 10:56	P	Tsipras says time for substantial and viable solution to allow Greece to return to growth within the euro zone
233	Merkel	06/22, 23:23	P	Merkel says wants Greece to stay in euro zone

- 234 Schulz 06/24, 14:09 P Schulz confident a deal between Greece and its creditors will be reached
- 235 Schulz 06/25, 22:26 P Schulz does not expect Greece to leave euro zone, says all should done to avoid that
- 236 Varoufakis 06/26, 09:17 P Varoufakis says Greece's commitment to remain in euro zone is absolute
- 237 Schaeuble 06/26, 13:11 0 Schaeuble says in comments on Greece if we only kick the can down the road, the situation will be worse later
- 238 Juncker 06/26, 15:24 N Juncker says euro group head Dijsselbloem will try to bring positions together on Greece, it will not be easy
- 239 Juncker 06/26, 16:06 P Juncker 'quite optimistic' of deal with Greece
- 240 Juncker 06/26, 17:17 0 Juncker: Saturday will be a crucial day for Greece, Europe
- 241 Tsipras 06/28, 12:24 N Euro zone readies for Greek default after Tsipras referendum call
- 242 Varoufakis 06/27, 18:07 N Varoufakis leaves EU council headquarters, says 'it's a sad day for Europe'
- 243 Schaeuble 06/28, 13:52 N Remaining in eurozone is 'up to the Greeks' but became much more difficult—Schaeuble
- 244 Varoufakis 06/28, 14:14 0 Varoufakis says doesn't see why his country should consider quitting the euro despite turmoil
- 245 Merkel 06/28, 19:36 0 Obama and Merkel agree it is 'critically important' to make efforts to return to a path that allows Greece to resume reforms and growth within eurozone
- 246 Merkel 06/28, 22:06 N Cautious Merkel on verge of biggest risk with 'Grexit'
- 247 Varoufakis 06/29, 12:18 P Varoufakis told euro group that Greece cannot leave euro zone
- 248 Merkel 06/29, 12:32 P Merkel says it's essential with the euro that solidarity and own efforts
- 249 Juncker 06/29, 12:49 P Juncker says expects euro zone to remain at 19 members
- 250 Juncker 06/29, 13:25 0 Juncker: Whole planet will see a Greek 'no' as meaning Greece wants out of euro zone, EU
- 251 Juncker 06/29, 14:13 0 Juncker sees Greek referendum as vote on Europe
- 252 Schaeuble 06/29, 15:01 P Schaeuble: Greece remains important party of European family
- 253 Merkel 06/29, 17:00 N Merkel: Greece is voting on its future in the eurozone
- 254 Schulz 06/29, 19:45 0 Schulz calls on Greeks to say 'yes' to Eurozone in referendum
- 255 Tsipras 06/29, 19:58 N Tsipras becomes unlikely hero for Europe's euro sceptics
- 256 Tsipras 06/29, 21:29 P Tsipras says does not think creditors want to throw Greece out of the eurozone, cost would be huge

257	Schaeuble	06/29, 23:24	N	German Schaeuble says it's up to Greece to avoid bankruptcy and Grexit
258	Juncker	06/30, 09:47	P	Juncker makes last-ditch offer to Athens
259	Merkel	06/30, 13:20	N	'If euro fails, Europe fails,' Merkel warns as Greek crisis deepens
260	Schaeuble	06/30, 14:27	0	Schaeuble: No does not mean Grexit
261	Schaeuble	06/30, 14:37	0	Schaeuble says Greek 'no' vote would not mean Grexit
262	Merkel	06/30, 15:43	0	Merkel says can cushion effects of Greek crisis quite well now, we don't need to fear effects on euro zone now
263	Varoufakis	06/30, 16:20	N	Varoufakis threatens to sue as exit looms
264	Tsipras	07/01, 11:20	0	Bunds dive on rumours Tsipras accepts EU deal
265	Schaeuble	07/01, 12:26	N	Schaeuble says we have always been very flexible but situation has deteriorated
266	Schaeuble	07/01, 12:31	N	Schaeuble says economic situation in Greece is getting worse
267	Merkel	07/01, 13:12	N	Merkel says a good European is not one that does deal at any price
268	Schaeuble	07/01, 14:22	N	Schaeuble says Greek economy has 'dramatically worsened' since Tsipras was elected
269	Tsipras	07/01, 16:27	0	Tsipras says referendum of Sunday does not concern whether we stay in euro or not
270	Tsipras	07/01, 17:17	0	Tsipras slams talk of euro exit after referendum
271	Tsipras	07/01, 18:30	0	Tsipras: Referendum not about Greece's stay in Eurozone
272	Juncker	07/02, 05:05	P	Juncker asks the Greeks to vote yes for Europe
273	Merkel	07/02, 05:05	N	Cautious Merkel faces riskiest move with 'Grexit' decision
274	Tsipras	07/02, 05:05	P	Tsipras: 'Greece is part of Europe'
275	Juncker	07/02, 12:11	P	Juncker fully supports Greeks' determination to be part of euro area, but no further talks till after referendum
276	Varoufakis	07/03, 06:32	0	Varoufakis says Greeks 'Blackmailed to Vote Yes'
277	Juncker	07/03, 12:49	N	Juncker says if Greeks vote yes, we will still face difficult negotiations
278	Juncker	07/03, 13:01	N	'No' vote would dramatically weaken Greek negotiating position—Juncker
279	Schaeuble	07/03, 14:55	N	Schaeuble says expects any talks with Greece after referendum to be 'very difficult', situation in Greece has worsened significantly in last weeks
280	Tsipras	07/03, 15:17	0	Tsipras says Sunday's referendum is not a vote on whether to remain in the euro
281	Tsipras	07/03, 15:32	0	Tsipras says Sunday's referendum is not a vote on whether to remain in the euro
282	Tsipras	07/03, 20:41	0	Tsipras says Sunday referendum about staying in Europe, and deciding to live in

283	Schaeuble	07/04, 11:26	N	Schaeuble says Greece is a member of the euro zone, 'whether with the euro or temporarily without it', only Greeks can decide
284	Varoufakis	07/04, 16:08	N	Varoufakis: Schaeuble made clear in 2012 that he would prefer Grexit
285	Varoufakis	07/05, 21:52	N	Greece's Varoufakis says 'No' vote bolsters Europe
286	Tsipras	07/05, 22:34	P	Tsipras says Greeks made a brave choice, I'm convinced that the mandate is not to clash with Europe
287	Varoufakis	07/06, 16:14	P	Varoufakis quits as Greeks seek euro deal
288	Varoufakis	07/06, 17:31	N	Schaeuble says Varoufakis had positions that we disagreed with
289	Merkel	07/06, 19:34	N	Merkel says Europe can only hold together if each country takes responsibility for itself
290	Merkel	07/07, 01:45	P	Hollande, Merkel tell Greece 'door is open for discussion' on Euro crisis
291	Juncker	07/07, 09:00	P	Juncker says Grexit should be avoided
292	Schulz	07/07, 10:48	P	Schulz says in favour of Greece remaining in euro zone
293	Juncker	07/07, 10:54	0	Juncker challenges Greeks, Germans to avoid Grexit
294	Schulz	07/07, 11:04	P	Schulz says 'Grexit cannot be our aim'
295	Merkel	07/07, 12:29	0	German 'Grexit' calls raise pressure on Merkel
296	Juncker	07/07, 12:37	N	Juncker does not see an agreement on Tuesday
297	Juncker	07/07, 14:12	P	Juncker advises to put 'egos' aside, avoid 'Grexit'
298	Tsipras	07/07, 17:25	0	Tsipras briefs Obama on bid for euro zone loan
299	Juncker	07/07, 18:51	P	European Commission working towards solution for Greece, says Juncker
300	Merkel	07/07, 22:48	N	Merkel, asked if Grexit possible if Greek proposals inadequate, says Sunday summit will decide whether to open negotiations
301	Juncker	07/07, 22:54	N	Juncker: We have a Grexit scenario, prepared in detail
302	Tsipras	07/07, 23:16	P	Tsipras aims for 'final exit from the crisis'
303	Juncker	07/07, 23:46	N	Juncker says Grexit cannot be ruled out
304	Juncker	07/08, 00:19	0	Juncker says Grexit cannot be ruled out
305	Juncker	07/08, 00:32	0	Juncker: EU officials are prepared for Grexit
306	Merkel	07/08, 05:07	P	Merkel faces revolt for wanting to keep Greece in the euro
307	Tsipras	07/08, 05:07	P	Hopes of Greek deal rise as eurozone leaders consider Tsipras's new plan
308	Juncker	07/08, 08:18	0	Juncker: EU officials are prepared for Grexit
309	Tsipras	07/08, 10:26	0	Tsipras to European parliament: We do not have mandate for rift but for return to European values
310	Tsipras	07/08, 11:32	0	Tsipras to European parliament: Greece was an experiment lab for austerity but the experiment failed
311	Tsipras	07/08, 14:02	P	Tsipras slams talk he has agenda for Grexit
312	Juncker	07/08, 14:29	0	Juncker: EU officials are prepared for Grexit

313	Tsipras	07/08, 15:45	N	Greece debt crisis: 'Let's not let Europe be divided', says Tsipras
314	Tsipras	07/08, 16:17	P	Tsipras pledges reform to divided European parliament
315	Schaeuble	07/09, 15:16	P	Schaeuble says now is time to strengthen monetary union project
316	Schaeuble	07/09, 15:30	N	Schaeuble says there need to be prior action and I don't see any prior actions here
317	Schaeuble	07/09, 16:04	N	Schaeuble says no bailout provisions are necessary for monetary union
318	Tsipras	07/10, 05:07	P	Tsipras tells creditors what he is prepared to do to stay in the euro
319	Tsipras	07/10, 13:43	P	Tsipras U-turn only lowers short-term Grexit risks
320	Tsipras	07/10, 23:18	P	Tsipras says referendum voters did not give us mandate to break with Europe
321	Schaeuble	07/11, 19:06	P	Schaeuble has not raised 'Grexit' at euro group—Greek official
322	Tsipras	07/12, 15:03	P	Greece's Tsipras says working for those in Europe who do not want to see Europe divided
323	Juncker	07/12, 15:25	P	Juncker says we will work until very end to find a solution
324	Merkel	07/12, 16:01	0	No signal from euro group on start of talks on new aid programme for Greece—Merkel
325	Schulz	07/12, 17:08	P	Grexit even temporary Grexit is not an option—Schulz
326	Merkel	07/12, 19:45	0	Merkel doubtful of Eurozone summit success on Greece
327	Tsipras	07/12, 22:47	N	Tsipras facing pressure to back deal or consider euro exit
328	Schulz	07/13, 01:45	N	Schulz: Grexit will be lose-lose situation for all
329	Schulz	07/13, 07:25	0	Schulz says the European project is on a knife edge
330	Schulz	07/13, 07:28	P	Schulz says idea of temporary Grexit is off the Table
331	Juncker	07/13, 09:13	P	Juncker says there will be no Grexit and so we are satisfied with the result we have found
332	Merkel	07/13, 09:32	0	Merkel: Won't ask for vote of confidence in parliament, don't need plan B for Grexit
333	Juncker	07/13, 10:01	P	Greece not to exit euro zone—Juncker
334	Merkel	07/13, 10:01	P	Agreement with Greece on new aid package reached—Merkel
335	Merkel	07/13, 10:47	0	Merkel says eurozone agreement with Greece based on Athens asking for further IMF help
336	Tsipras	07/13, 11:02	P	Tsipras says deal will eliminate 'Grexit' talk
337	Tsipras	07/13, 13:41	0	Much shorter odds on Tsipras exit than Grexit
338	Schulz	07/13, 22:09	P	Schulz says Greek government will implement reforms
339	Tsipras	07/14, 07:04	0	Tsipras aims to steer eurozone bailout plan through Greek parliament

340 Tsipras 07/14, 11:45 P Tsipras to confront parliament with eurozone bailout deal

341 Schaeuble 07/14, 13:16 P Schaeuble says vital after crisis to reinforce European monetary union

342 Schaeuble 07/14, 13:22 0 Schaeuble says until bailout agreed for Greece, risks remain

343 Schaeuble 07/14, 13:57 N Some in German government preferred temporary Grexit—Schaeuble

344 Juncker 07/14, 18:46 P Juncker ‘to fight’ for Greek deal

345 Tsipras 07/14, 21:00 N Tsipras says yesterday was a bad night for Europe

346 Tsipras 07/14, 22:04 0 Tsipras, asked about Grexit, says I cannot say anything with certainty until deal is ratified

347 Tsipras 07/15, 03:02 0 Tsipras aims to steer eurozone bailout plan through Greek parliament

348 Schaeuble 07/15, 13:34 0 Spokesman says Schaeuble has worked tirelessly for a good solution for Europe, is not a ‘provocateur’

349 Schaeuble 07/16, 07:24 0 Schaeuble temporary Grexit would perhaps be the better path

350 Tsipras 07/16, 07:25 P Schaeuble: Tsipras has committed to staying in the euro

351 Schaeuble 07/16, 07:28 P Schaeuble says we will be at pains that Greece’s reform plans are implemented, we must hold Europe together

352 Schaeuble 07/16, 07:57 0 Schaeuble still thinks temporary Grexit a good idea

353 Schaeuble 07/16, 13:33 0 Schaeuble insists ‘Grexit’ a better option

354 Schaeuble 07/16, 15:00 0 Rehberg says Schaeuble told committee that non-euro zone EU members will be free from liability risks from EFSM use

355 Merkel 07/16, 18:53 0 Merkel told parliamentary fraction on Grexit scenario: It is definitely correct to discuss every option in such a situation

356 Merkel 07/16, 19:10 P Merkel defends Grexit debate in conservative meeting

357 Schulz 07/16, 21:14 P Schulz says it’s good to keep Greece in euro zone and invest in the country and start necessary reforms which got a majority in parliament in Greece

358 Merkel 07/17, 10:25 0 Merkel: Germany only does well when everyone does well in Europe

359 Merkel 07/17, 11:25 P Merkel: We guarantee that Greece will remain in the eurozone

360 Schaeuble 07/17, 11:26 N Schaeuble this is a last attempt to deal with this difficult task

361 Schaeuble 07/18, 09:07 P Merkel’s ‘bad cop’ strives for united Europe

362 Merkel 07/19, 16:45 P Merkel: Schaeuble’s proposal for temporary Grexit was on Table but we chose another option

363 Merkel 07/20, 13:16 0 Merkel: No more debate on Grexit

364	Tsipras	07/23, 00:05	N	Tsipras says Grexit remains on the mind of some of our partners
365	Juncker	07/23, 23:00	P	Juncker says expects 'Grexit' off table if Greeks deliver
366	Juncker	07/24, 08:57	P	Juncker says Grexit 'off table'
367	Varoufakis	07/28, 07:02	N	Varoufakis admits 'contingency plan' for euro exit
368	Varoufakis	07/28, 17:03	0	Varoufakis had a plan to houdini Greece out of the euro
369	Tsipras	07/30, 11:23	0	Tsipras tells Syriza committee Grexit would have forced Greece into devaluation and returning to IMF for support
370	Tsipras	07/30, 18:02	0	Tsipras says Greek crisis sparked period of reflection in Europe
371	Tsipras	07/31, 09:59	P	Tsipras says we have never had a plan to take Greece out of the euro
372	Tsipras	07/31, 10:03	N	Tsipras says we were obliged to prepare for a possibility of Greece leaving euro zone
373	Tsipras	07/31, 15:14	N	Tsipras backs Varoufakis, says he gave orders for 'Grexit' defence plans
374	Tsipras	07/31, 17:41	P	Tsipras assures Greek government never drafted plan to exit Eurozone
375	Tsipras	08/01, 05:03	N	Tsipras defends Varoufakis over secret Grexit plan
376	Varoufakis	08/12, 14:30	N	Varoufakis exit marked 'sea change' in Greek talks, EU sources say
377	Juncker	08/15, 02:01	P	Juncker: 'Greece is and will irreversibly remain a member of the eurozone'
378	Schaeuble	08/17, 18:42	N	Schaeuble, asked if 'Grexit' is off the table, says it is up to Greece