A systemic understanding of crisis: definition, measurement and strategies to enhance resilience in the current Greek crisis

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A universal or agreed definition of crisis does not exist. Writers and researchers from variety of disciplines tend to highlight different aspects focusing on either societal or individual characteristics, interpretations and understandings. Their analysis concentrate on economics, labour issues, social values, health and others; some analyses focus on behaviour and others on attitudes. Measurement efforts depend on the perspective preferred. In most cases these analyses are not interconnected. In this paper we consider three aspects. First, there is an attemp to present a synthetic definition of the crisis allowing for individual and societal characteristics, including objective and subjective understandings of the crisis. Second, this definition will be operationalized for the current situation in Greece. Using quantitative and qualitative data we identify the aspects of everyday life (at the personal and social level) that have been affected by the current crisis. With quantitative data we show changes in different dimensions including economic, labour, health, family, migration, etc.. A map of changes in the last 8 years is attempted. With qualitative data we shed light on the interpretations of crisis from people currently living in Greece. This endeavor aims at a better understanding of how social behaviours and values are affected by the crisis in Greece. A systemic understanding of the current crisis is necessary before any attempts to solve problems are made. Given this systemic understanding, the third part of the paper focuses on strategies and practices enhancing resilience both at the personal and the societal level.