

International Conference

“Changing Cities: Spatial, morphological, formal & socio-economic dimensions ”

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*“Environmental degradation, the image of ghettos
and the fear of crime in the centre of Athens:
research evidence”*

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The definition of 'ghetto'

'Ghetto'

'an urban area where a minority lives in isolation'

History

- The first 'ghettos' appear during the 13th century,
- The mass expansion was recorded during the Second World War and the so-called 'destruction ghettos'
- In the U.S.A., the formation of ghettos is related to migration waves at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The most familiar ghettos are those of African Americans the so-called 'colored neighborhoods'

The ghettos' prerequisites

- A) *High concentration of a minority in an urban area* which displays overpopulation. The minority group is expected to dominate in percentage in the area in question. The majority of definitions accepts the numeric prevalence of only one dominant group (racial, ethnic or religious).
- B) *Segregation*. The minority population lives in isolated conditions, is socially weakened and politically marginalized.

- C) *Social disorganisation*. It indicates intense accumulation of social problems: poverty, unemployment, criminality, drugs. The increased rate of social problems in the ghetto appears through epidemic theory.
- D) *The minority group is treated by the rest of society as inferior, foreign, different*. This fact appears as much as a prerequisite as it does a consequence of ghettoisation.
- E) *The state's role*. Perhaps it will be active, even institutionalized, through legal ordinances. However, it is usually limited to a more indirect, tolerant stance.

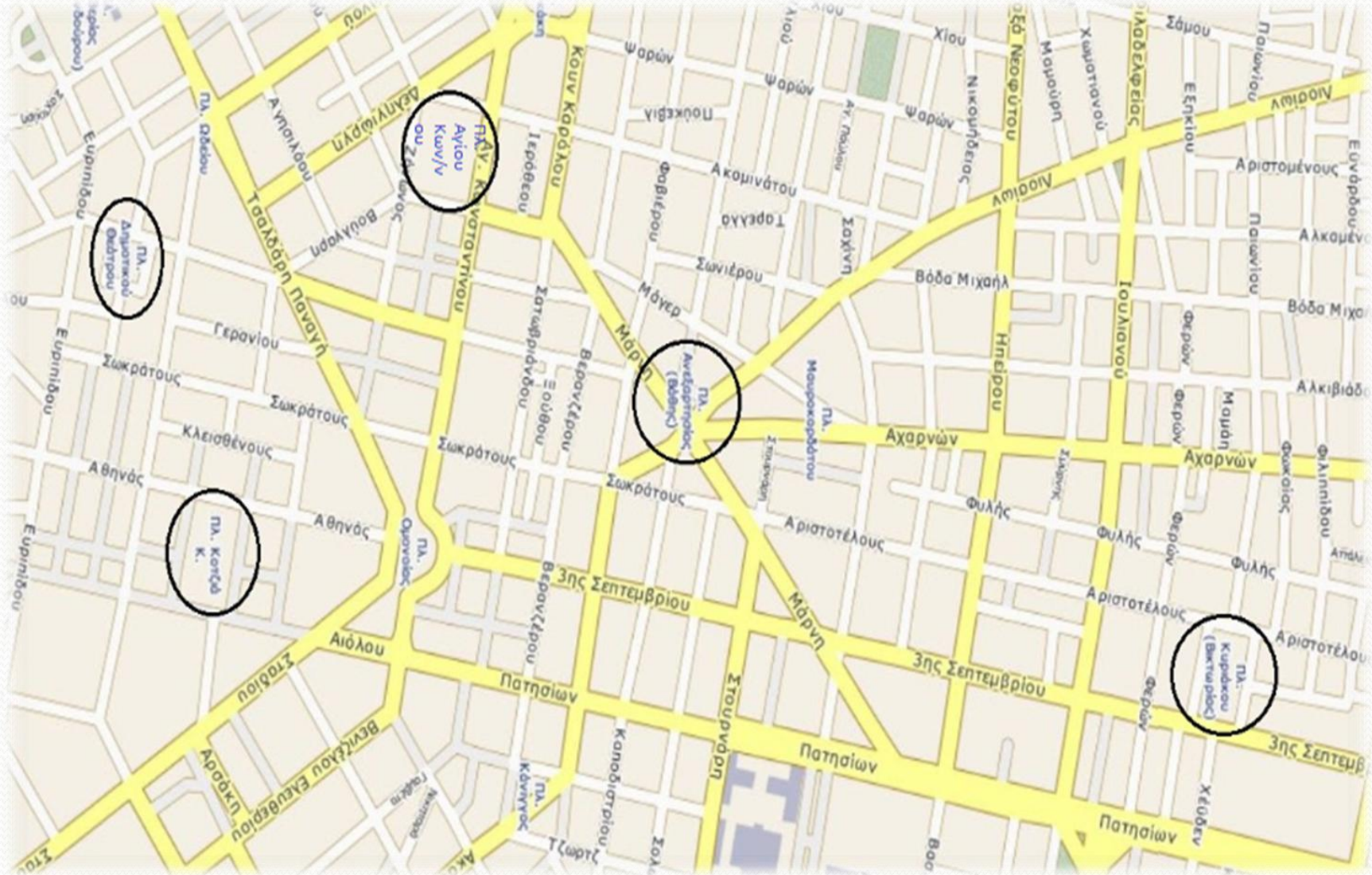
Important steps in the urbanisation process of Athens

- Its nomination as the capital of the modern Greek State (1834)
- Repatriation of Greek refugees from Asia Minor (1922)
- Internal immigration (1950-1980), more intense during the decade 1960-70
- 1st massive wave of immigration from Balkan countries (1990-2000)
- 2nd massive wave of immigration from Asia and Africa (2005-today)

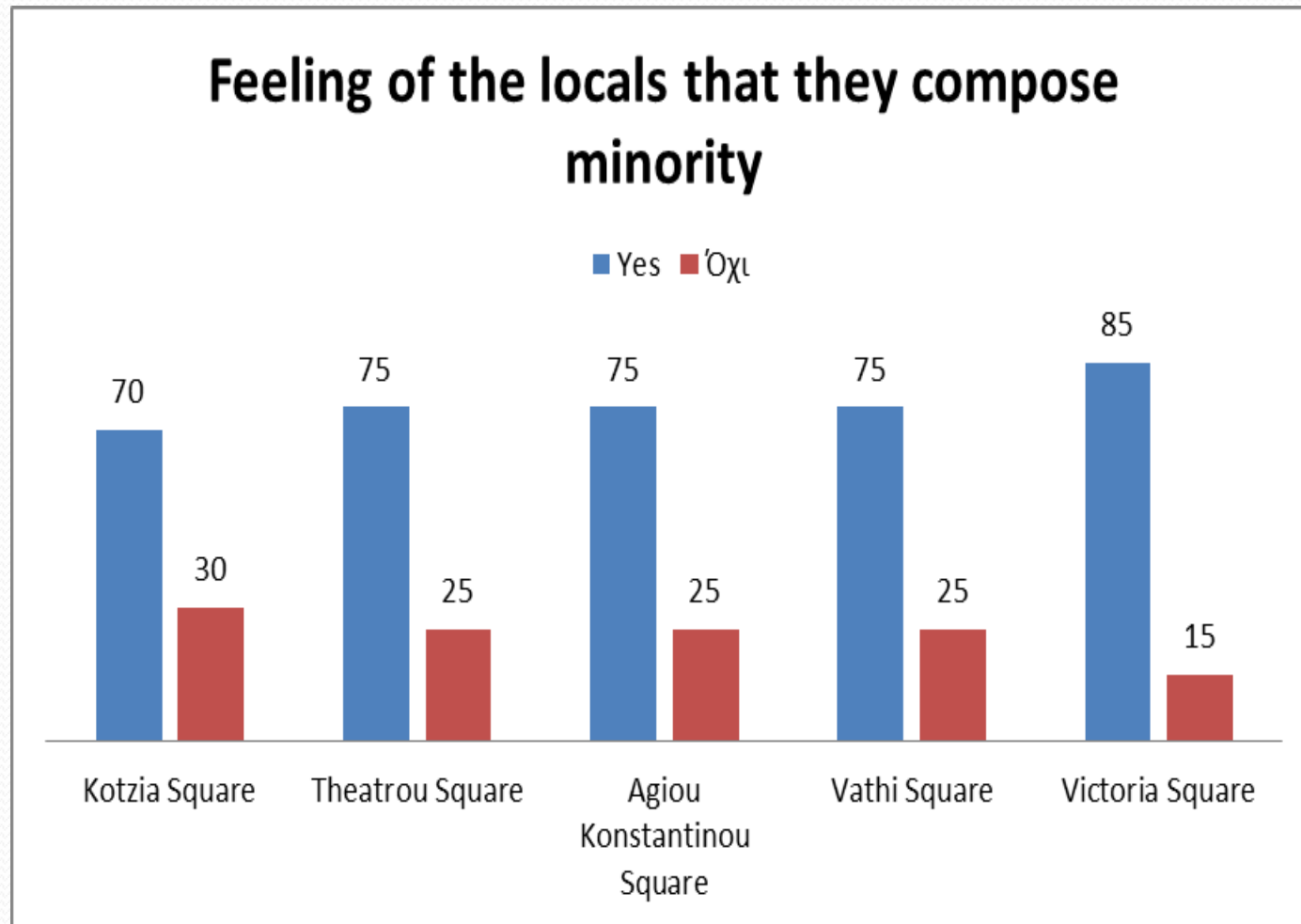
Research presentation

- **1st stage:** *on the spot observation* of the research areas during the period from 30 April 2011 to 4 June 2011 (from 9 in the morning to 2 in the morning the following day)
- **2nd stage:** 100 questionnaires were completed through personal interviews with Greek shopkeepers and residents (20 in each square), which included a total of 24 questions, which were mainly open-ended.
- **3rd stage:** *patterns analysis of their characteristics.* The aim was to determine the extent to which the ghettos' characteristics, as proposed by current scientific theory, appear in the areas under scrutiny.

The research areas

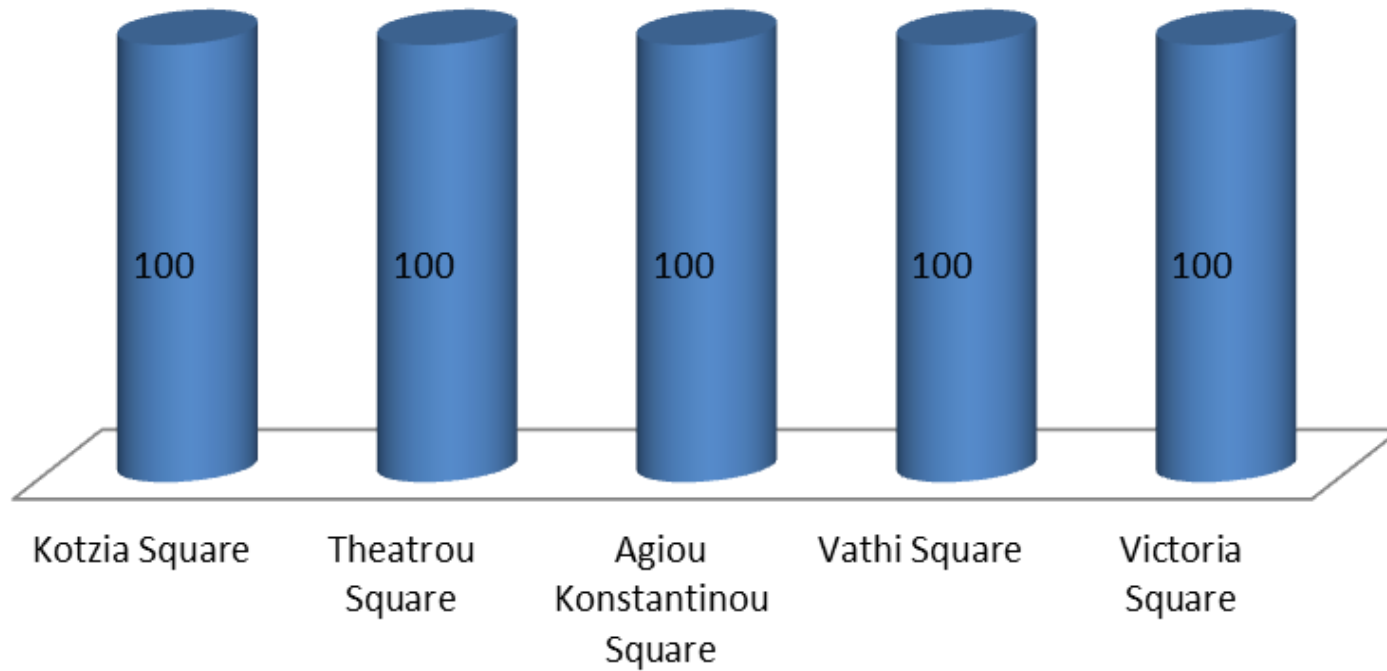


Research findings

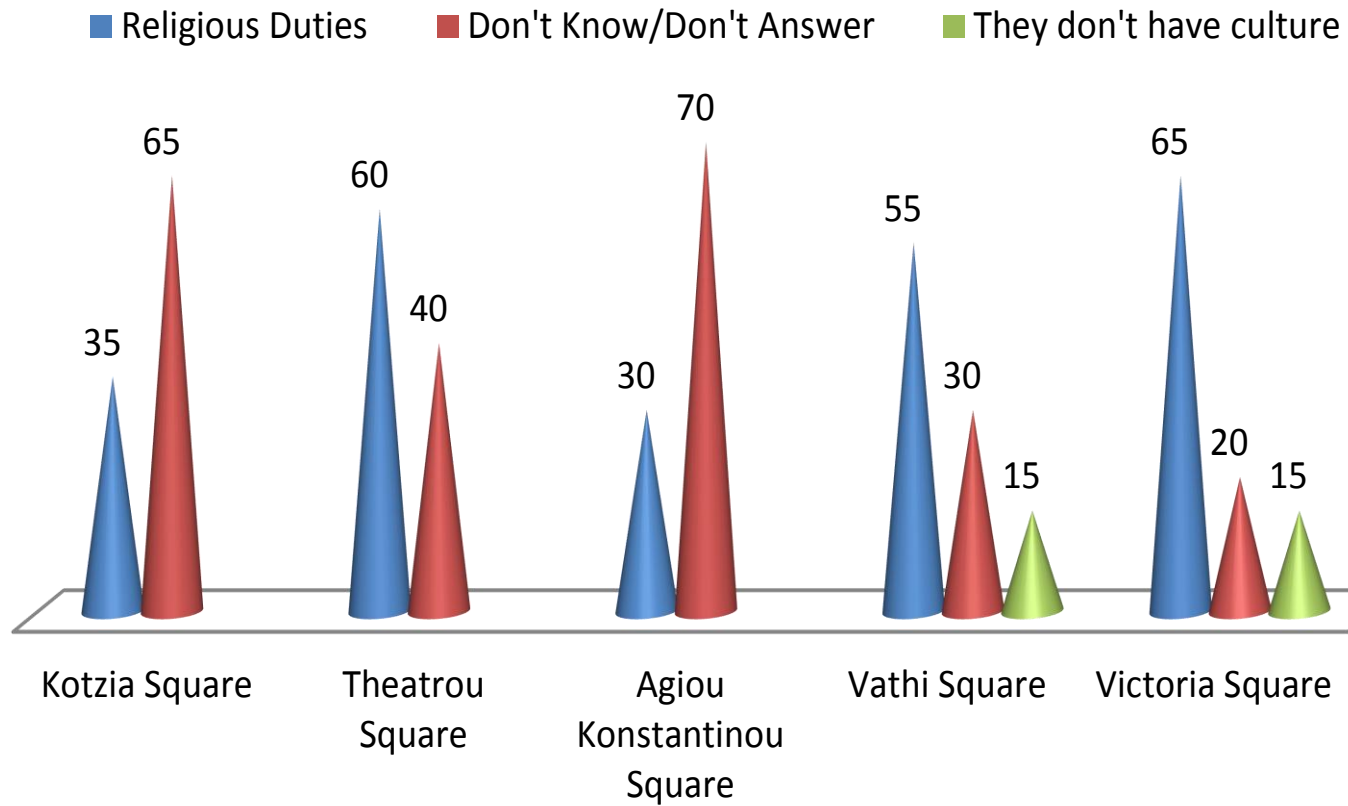


High concentration of foreigners

■ Yes ■ No

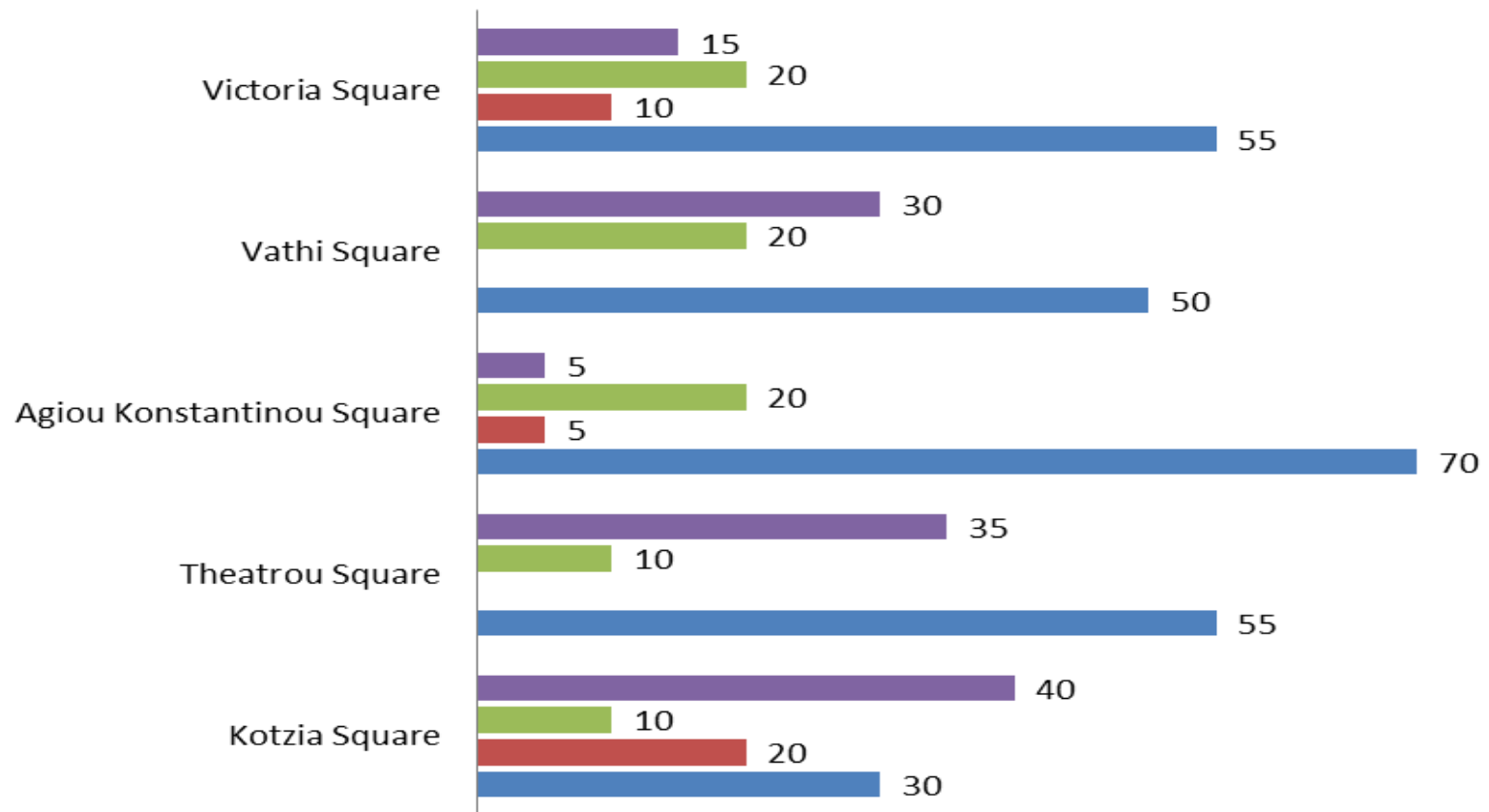


Culture/Tradition

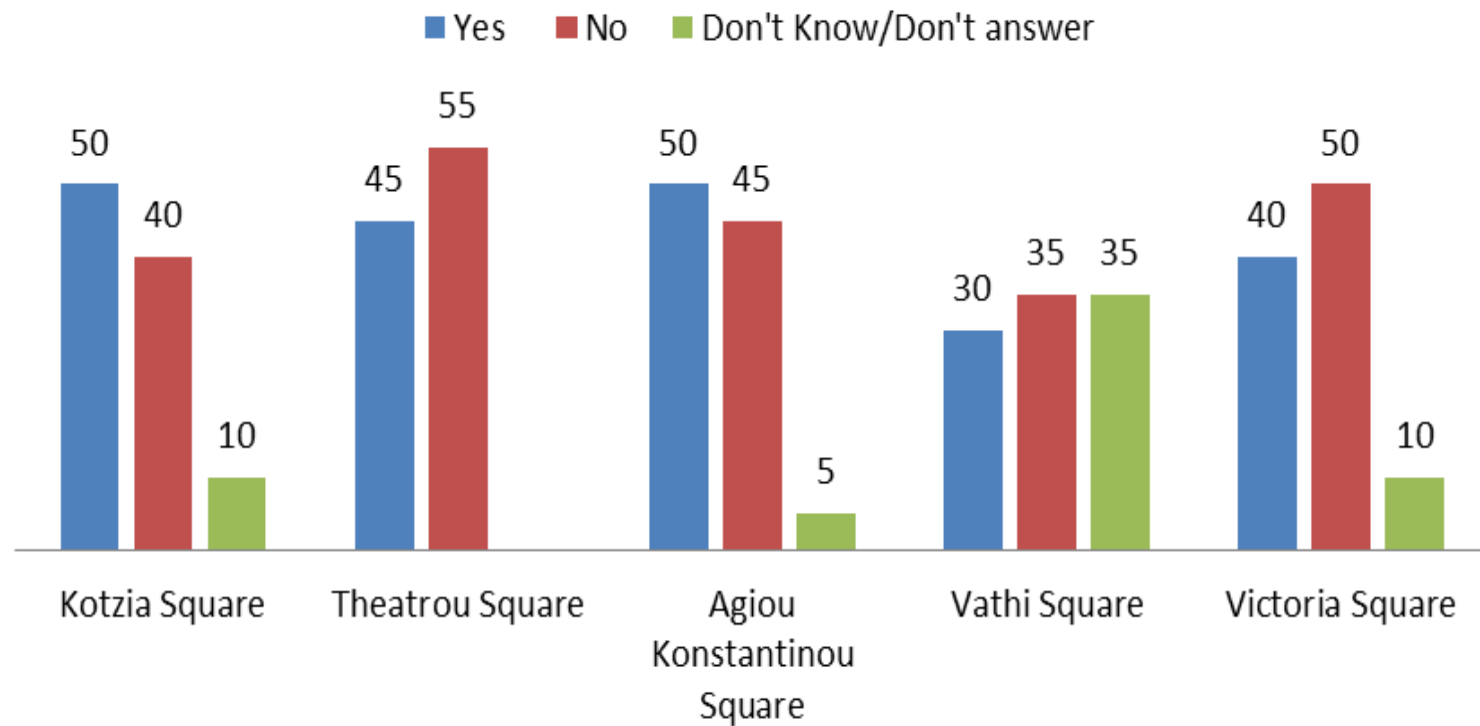


Tolerance between national/racial minorities

■ Don't Know/Don't Answer ■ Tolerance between them ■ Depends on the race ■ Conflict

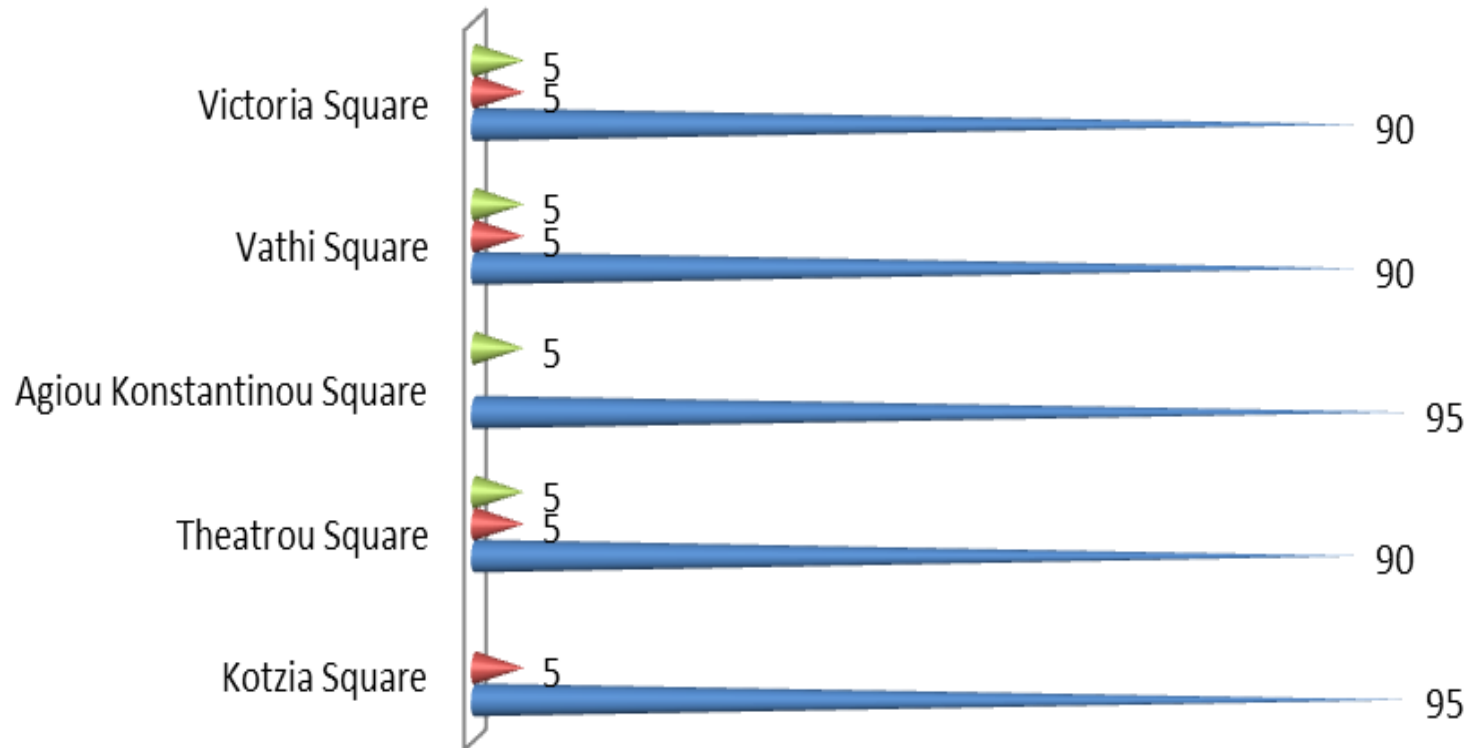


Foreigners's wish for assimilation by the greek society



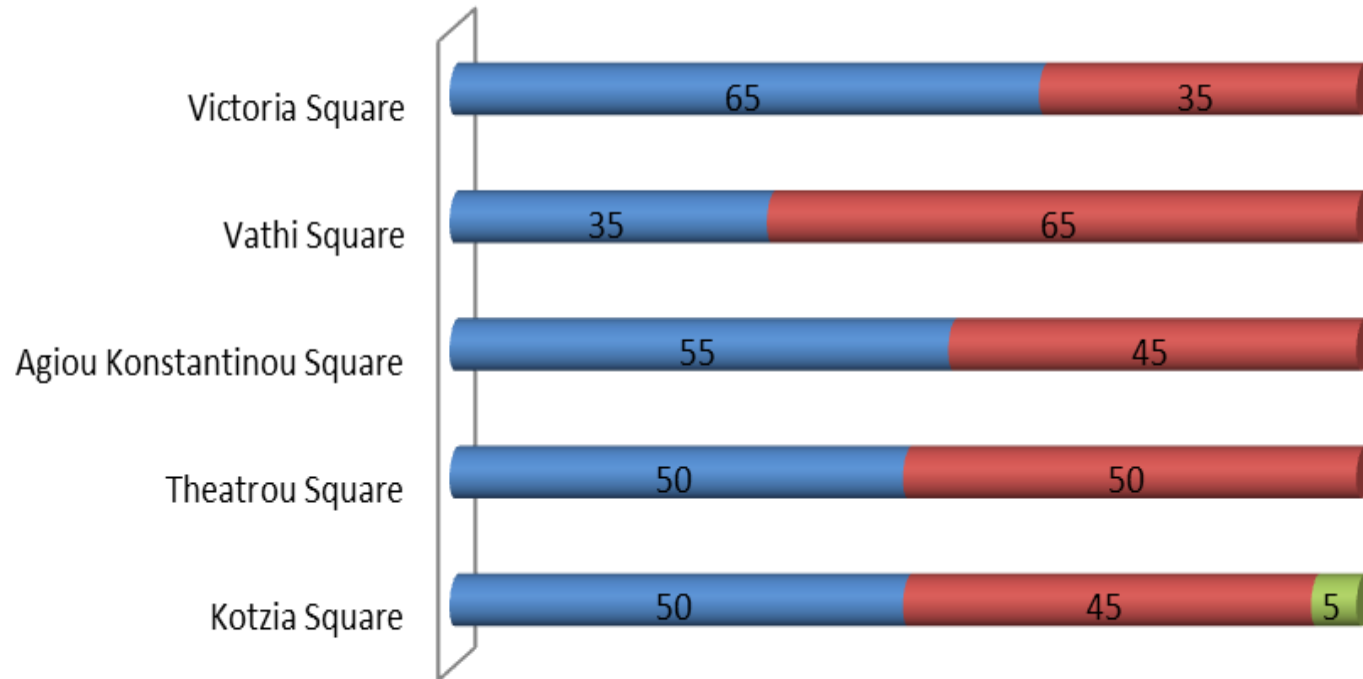
Foreigners's rallying

■ Don't Know ■ No ■ Yes



Agreement with the foreigners's accession

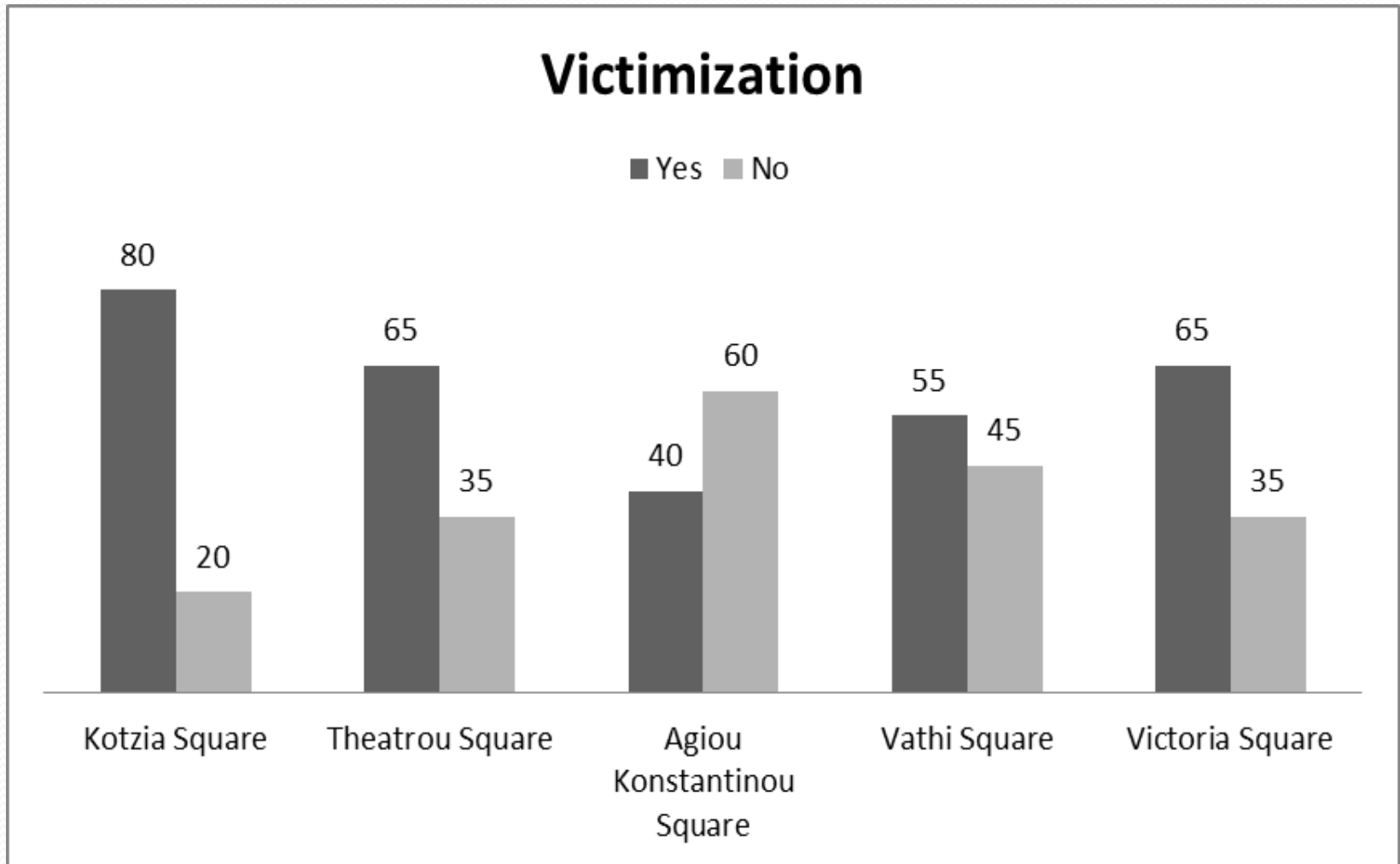
■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't Know/Don't Answer



The image of criminality in their area

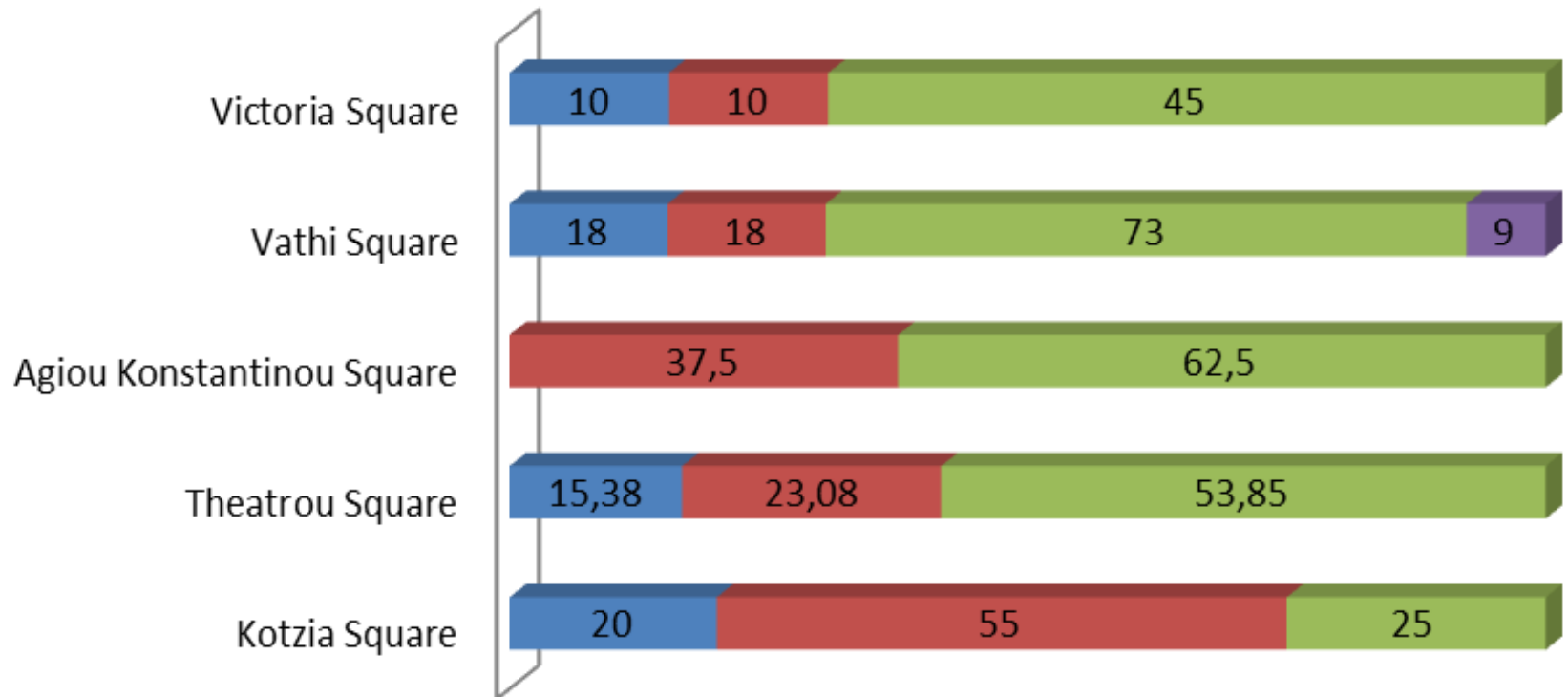
- Theft of personal belongings in the street and public use of drugs (with the percentages of reporting by residents being 90% to 95%).
- Burglaries of cars or homes or shops follow (with percentages from 65%-75%),
- Conflicts between immigrants are a rather frequent phenomenon, with the percentage of reporting being about 65% in all areas of the survey.
- Vandalism (about 40%), bodily harm and assault as well as to racial offences.

Personal victimisation in the area



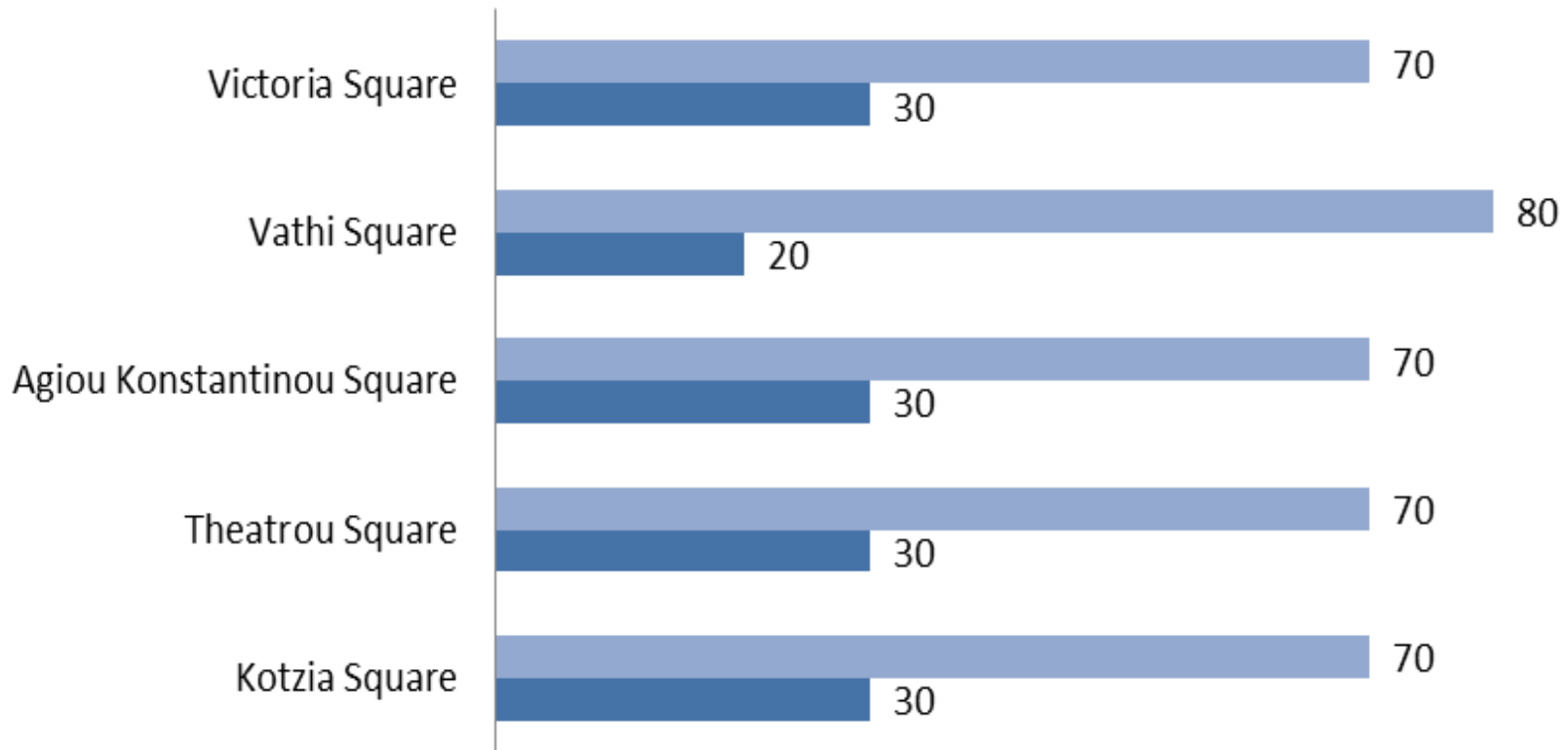
Kind of victimization

■ Car burglary ■ Store burglary ■ Petty thefts ■ Vandalism

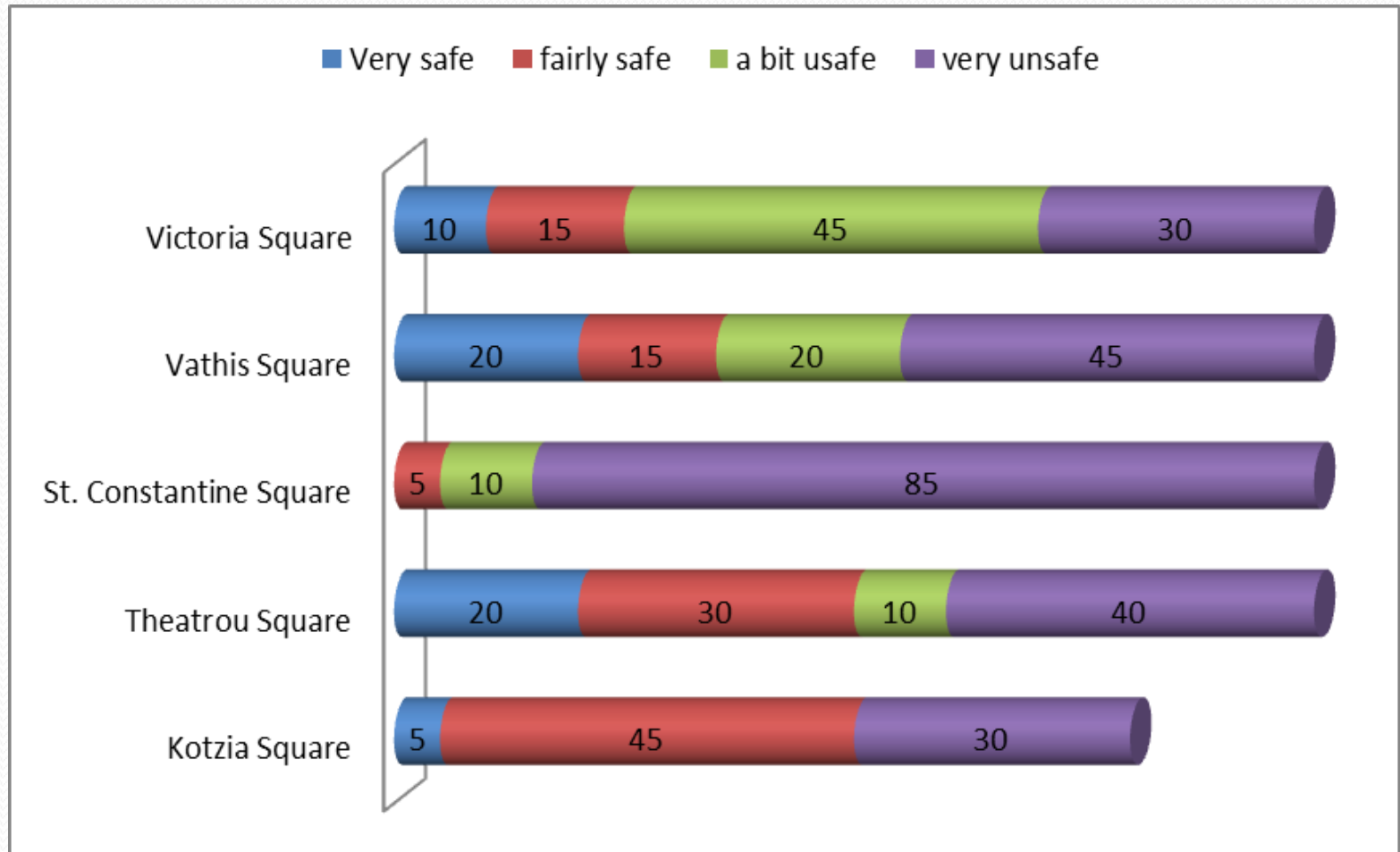


Police's Effectiveness

■ Negative evaluation ■ Positive evaluation



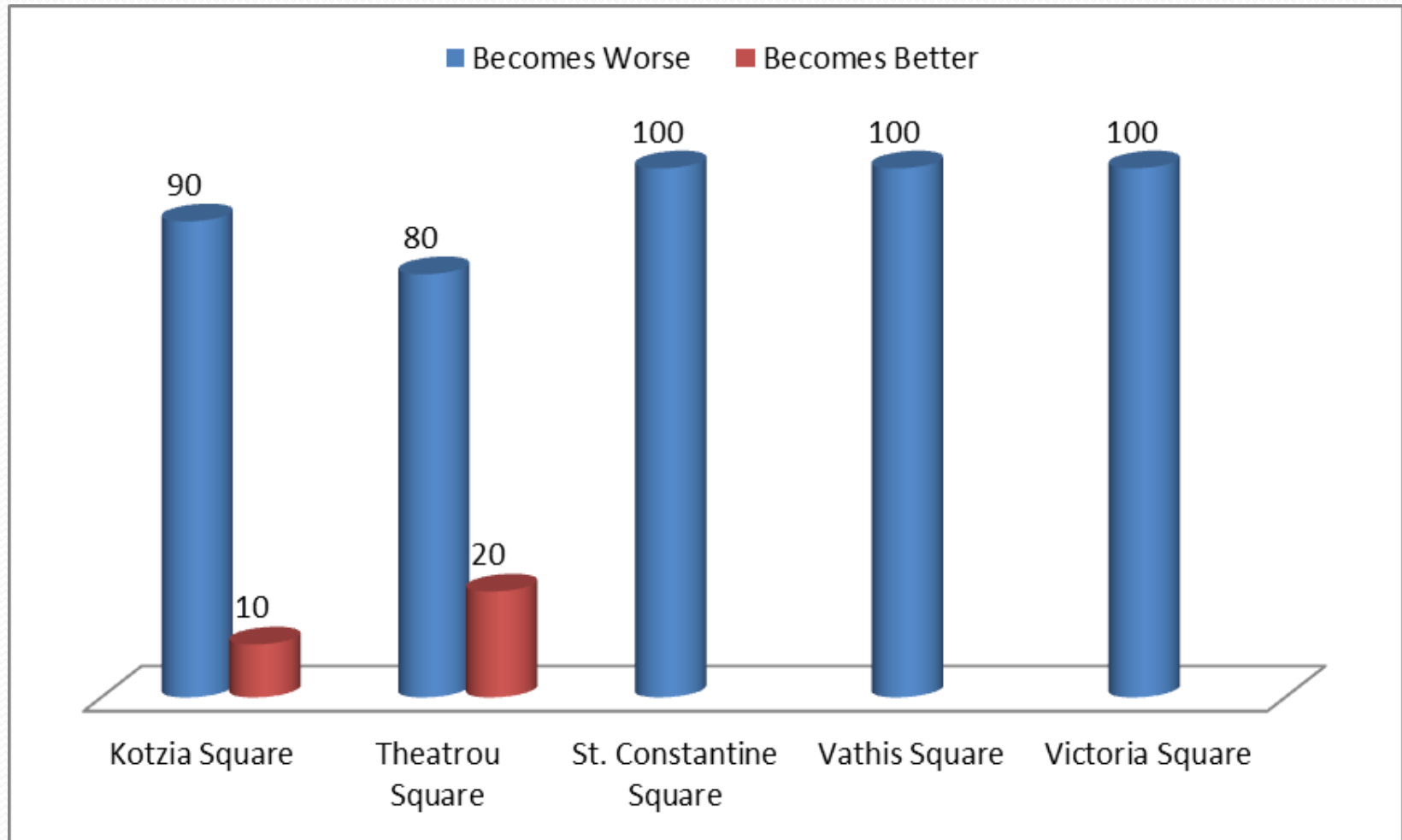
Feeling of Insecurity



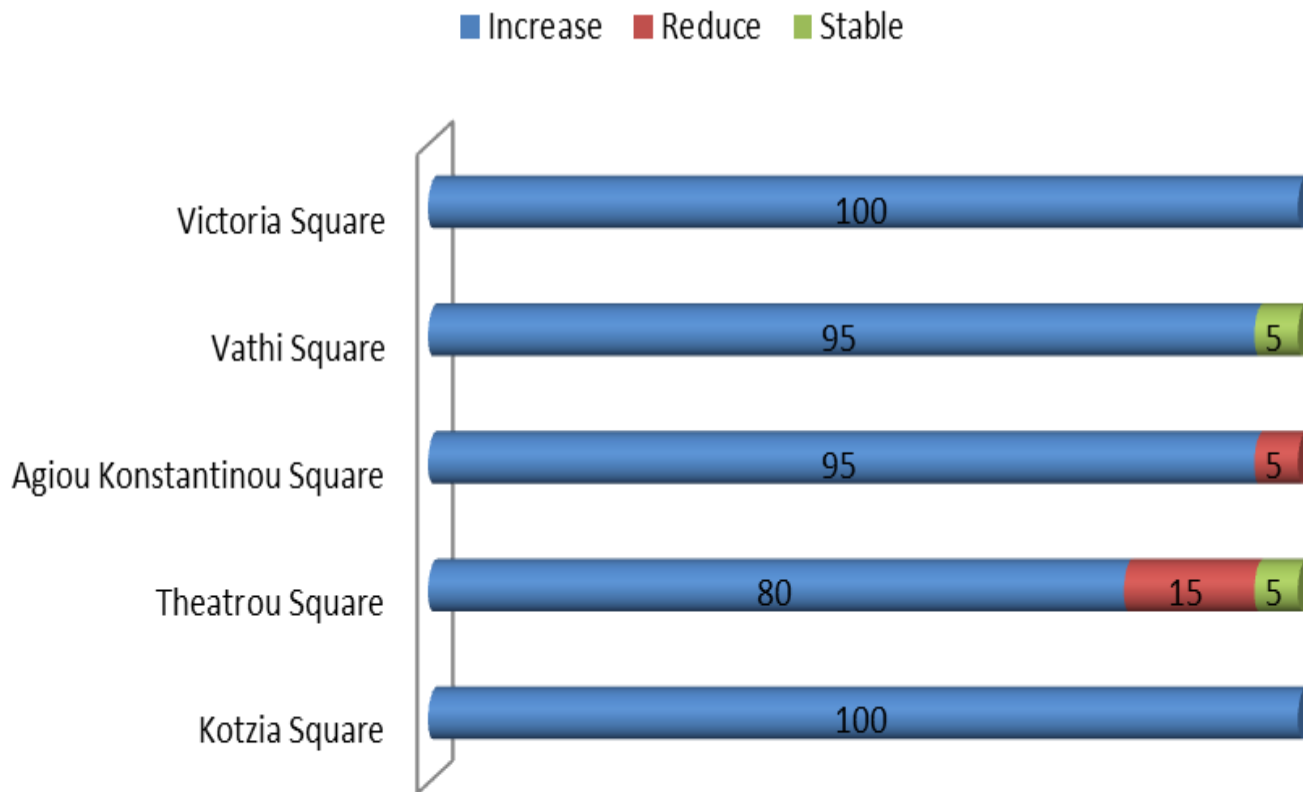
'Fear of crime' & insecurity

- *'Fear of crime'* : “a rational or irrational state of alarm or anxiety engendered by the belief that one is in danger of criminal victimisation” [McLaughlin, 2006:164]
- *Insecurity*: is correlated with the perception of crime as “a real and serious enough threat in order to be taken into account in the arrangement of everyday life” [Killias, 2001:399]
- *'Personal safety'* : “the daily, often taken for granted, routines, that human beings engage in as a way of feeling safer at home, on the street and in the workplace” [Walklate, 2006:292]
- *'Personal insecurity'*: “the threat, imminent or remote, direct or indirect, imaginary or real, posed for individuals by other people, identifiable groups, larger and impersonal entities like the system, the market, the establishment or even society in the abstract” [Berki, 1986]

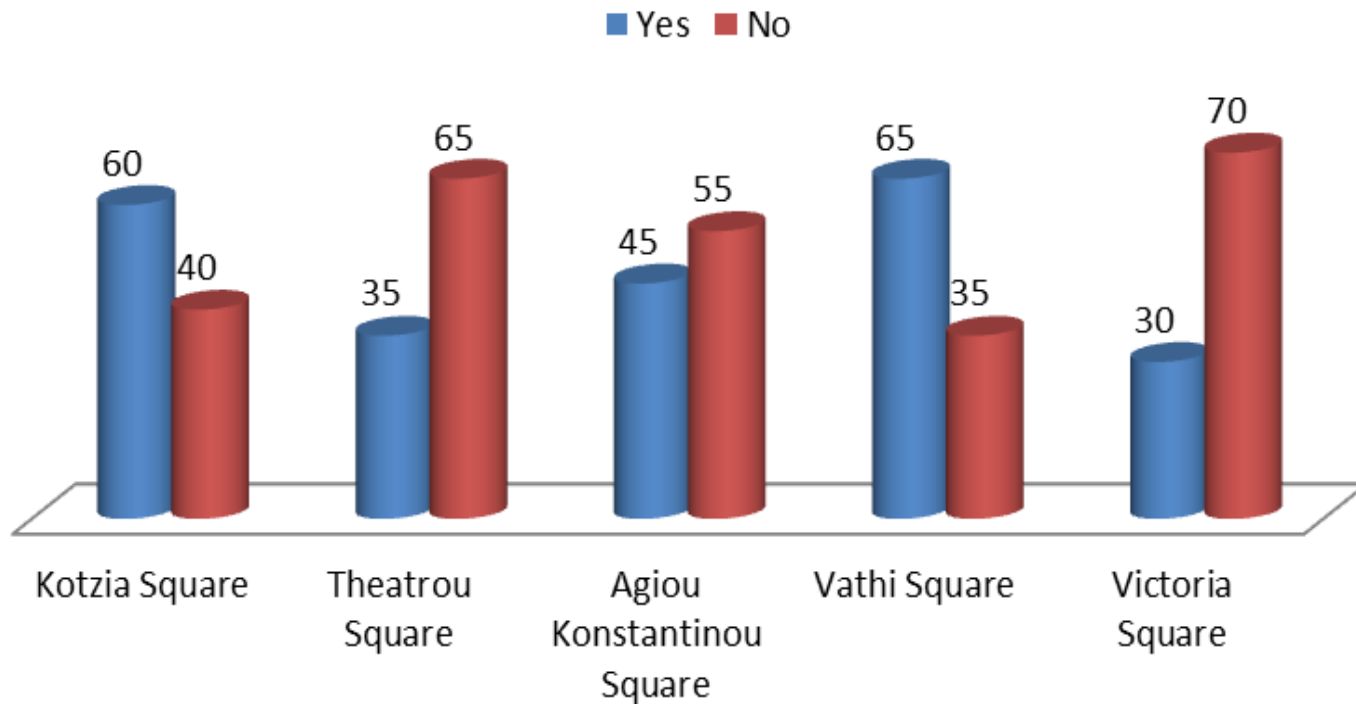
Assessment of their area of residence



Evaluation of criminality the last 5 years

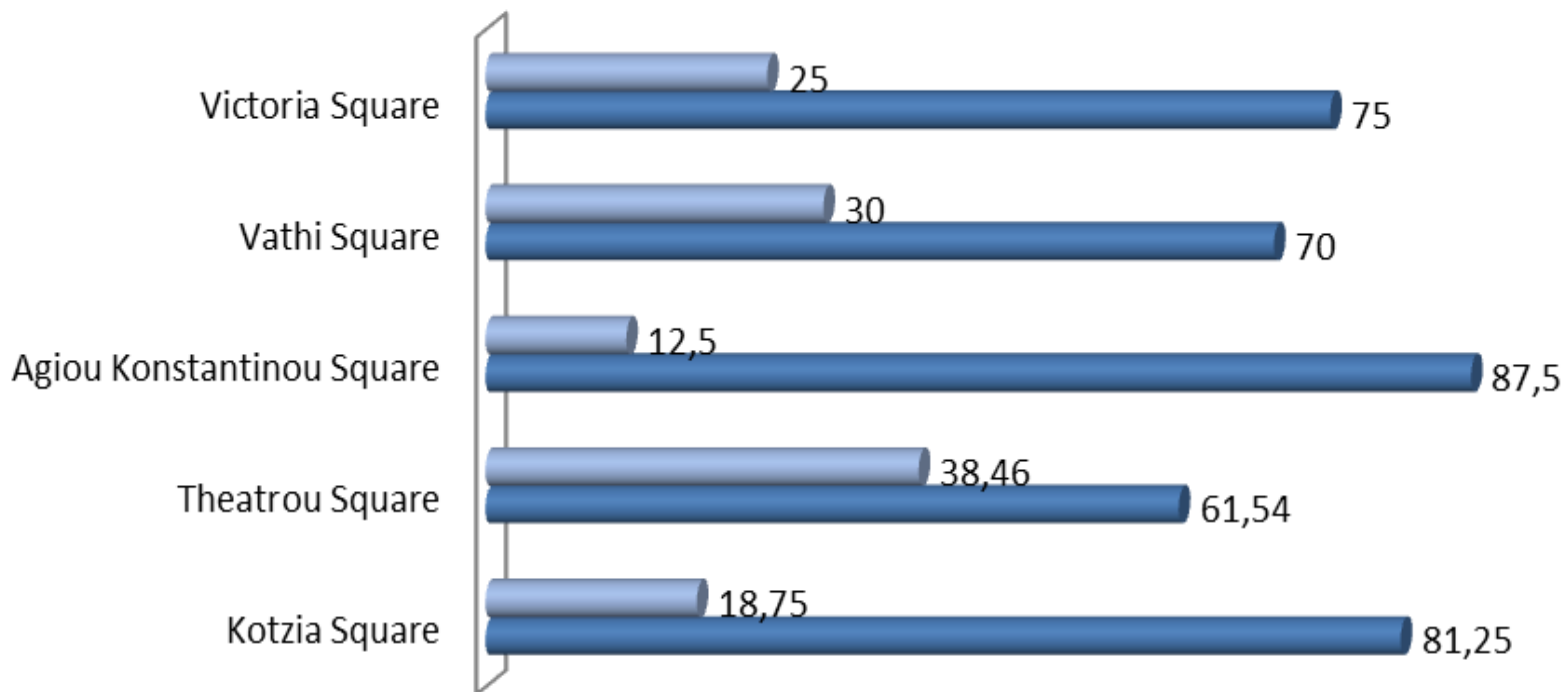


Local people's intention to leave from the area



Safety Measures

■ No ■ Yes



Verification of ghettos' characteristics per area

~ = relative verification, + = yes, - = no, +/- = more or less

	Theater Square	Kotzia Square	St. Constantine Square	Vathis Square	Victoria Square
High concentration of a minority in an urban area	~	~	~	~	~
Segregation	~	~	~	~	~
Social disorganisation	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
The minority group is treated by the rest of society as inferior, foreign, different	-	-	-	-	-
The factor of the state's role	+	+	+	+	+

Thank you for your attention

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