

Geography of Greece

Greece is in south-eastern Europe. It is bordered by Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Turkey to the north, and the Ionian, Mediterranean and Aegean seas to the south.

Historical backgroundⁱ

South Australia's first Greek settler reportedly arrived in 1842. The first significant period of migration was in the 1920s, following World War I; the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne required Greeks in Turkey to move to Greece and Turks in Greece to move to Turkey. This caused a major exodus of people, some of whom immigrated to Australia. Many men who came to South Australia found work at smelters in Port Pirie.

There was a second influx of Greek migrants to Australia after World War II. In the aftermath of its occupation from 1941 until 1945, the Greek economy was in recession and its administration and politics were unstable. At this time, many single men migrated to South Australia from Greece. During the early 1950s the ratio of Greek males to females in Australia was 5 to 1. To redress this, in the following years, young single Greek women were given special assistance to come to Australia.

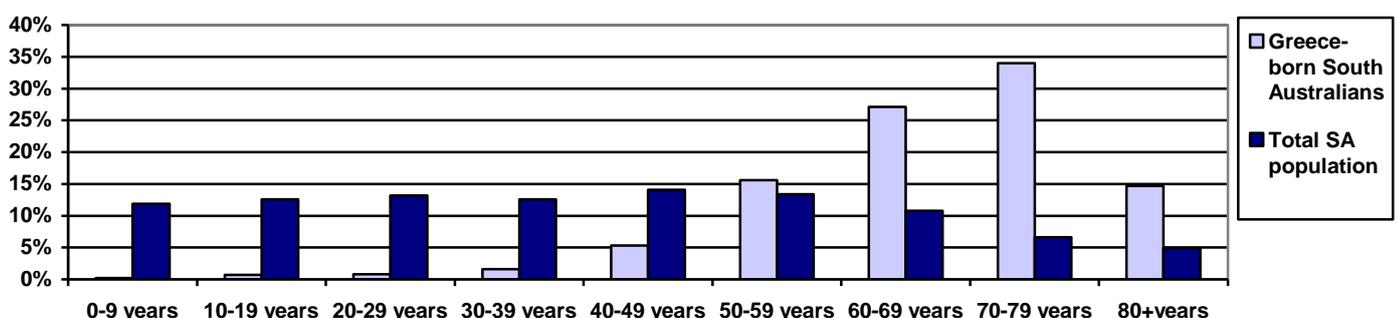
During the 1950s and 1960s, many new Greek arrivals in South Australia were employed by the government as farmers on Eyre Peninsula and in Mount Gambier. They also worked in ship building in Whyalla, fishing in Port Lincoln and as fruit pickers and growers in the Riverland. By 1966 there were 14,660 Greek South Australians. Migration from Greece to Australia continues, but has generally slowed since this time.

The Greek population in South Australiaⁱⁱ

At the 2011 Australian Census, 9,757 people who were born in Greece were living in South Australia, 9.5% less than in 2006 when there were 10,783 Greek South Australians. In 2011, 37,677 South Australians reported having Greek ancestry.

This community represents 0.6% of the South Australian population, and 2.8% of overseas-born South Australians. As shown in Figure 1, the Greek South Australian population is older than the total South Australian population.

Figure 1: Age distribution (%) of South Australians born in Greece and the total South Australian population, 2011

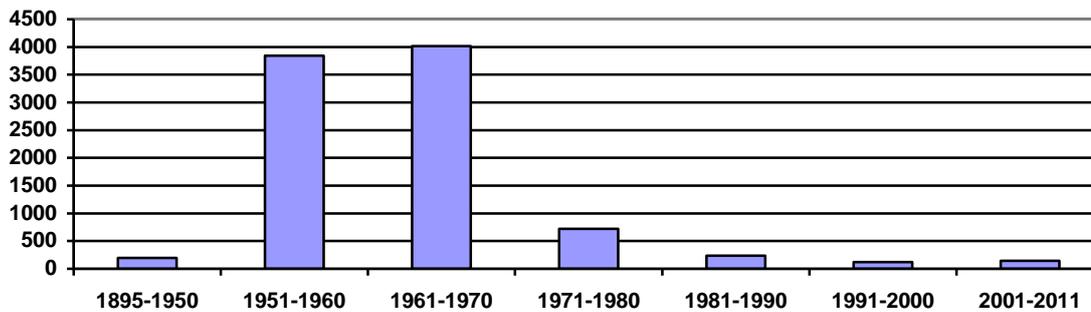


(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011) Census of Population and Housing. Accessible at <http://www.abs.gov.au/census>)

Year of migrationⁱⁱ

Figure 2 shows the year in which Greek South Australians migrated to Australia. Among those born in Greece and living in South Australia in 2011, peak periods of migration were the 1950s and 1960s.

Figure 2: Year of migration to Australia, among Greece-born people living in South Australia in 2011



(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011) Census of Population and Housing. Accessible at <http://www.abs.gov.au/census>)

Languagesⁱⁱ

Of South Australians born in Greece, 90.2% reported that English was the main language they spoke at home. The remaining people reported speaking a breadth of nine different languages other than English at home, the most common of which were Greek (8,797 people) and Macedonian (146 people). Of 9,008 Greek people who reported speaking a language other than English, 65.1% reported that they were able to speak English 'well' or 'very well', and 34.0% reported that they spoke English 'not well' or 'not at all'.

Religionsⁱⁱ

As shown in Table 1, 96.3% of Greek South Australians reported being affiliated with Christianity, and 1.6% reported no religious affiliation. Among Christians in this population, the primary denomination was Eastern Orthodox (97.3%).

Table 1: Religious affiliations of South Australians born in Greece, 2011

Religion	Number	%
Christianity	9,398	96.3%
No religion	155	1.6%
Other religions	30	0.3%
Not stated	173	1.8%
Total	9,756	100.0%

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011) Census of Population and Housing. Accessible at <http://www.abs.gov.au/census>)

Employmentⁱⁱⁱ

At the 2011 Australian Census, 24.1% of Greek South Australians aged 15 years and over reported being employed and 72.4% reported that they were looking for work or not in the labour force.

Of Greek South Australians who were employed, the most common industry in which to be employed was construction (11.6%), followed by retail (10.8%), health care and social assistance (9.7%), manufacturing (9.3%) and education and training (9.2%). The most common occupations were managers (18.8%), professionals (16.7%), labourers (15.3%) and technicians and trade workers (14.6%).

Studying in South Australiaⁱⁱⁱ

In 2012 there were 21 Greek student enrolments in South Australia (new and continuing enrolments). The majority of these were English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) enrolments. Total Greeks student enrolment figures have increased up from five enrolments in 2009.

Place of residenceⁱⁱⁱ

As shown in Table 2, the majority of Greek South Australians live in metropolitan areas, particularly in Adelaide's western suburbs.

Table 2: Areas of residence of Greek South Australians, 2011

Adelaide - Central and Hills	2,213	22.7%
Adelaide - North	1,402	14.4%
Adelaide - South	1,320	13.5%
Adelaide - West	4,052	41.5%
Barossa - Yorke - Mid North	97	1.0%
South Australia - Outback	165	1.7%
South Australia - South East	504	5.2%
No Usual Address (SA)	3	0.0%
Total	9,756	100.0%

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011) Census of Population and Housing. Accessible at <http://www.abs.gov.au/census>)

Richmond in Adelaide's western suburbs is home to 862 Greek people, comprising 8.8% of Greek South Australians, and 5.5% of the Richmond population. Other areas in which there are more than 200 Greek residents comprising at least 2% of the population include Flinders Park, Henley Beach, Hindmarsh/Brompton, Lockleys and Richmond, also in Adelaide's western suburbs, and Prospect in Adelaide's inner northern suburbs.

Although smaller in number, regional areas in which Greek people comprise 2% or more of the population are Barmera (147 people), Renmark (89 people) and Coober Pedy (61 people).

Special holidays and events

The most fundamental aspect of Greek national identity is the Greek Orthodox Church, which is seen as the embodiment of both religious and cultural traditions. Easter is the holiest festival in the Greek Orthodox

calendar. On Holy Thursday, Greek women prepare special Greek celebratory foods. Greek Orthodox Christians do not work on Good Friday. At midnight on Saturday a special Mass is held to celebrate Christ's Resurrection. The congregation cracks coloured eggs together to signify new life. After the service, family and friends share a special meal together.

Saints days are very important in the Greek Orthodox Church, and many Greeks are named after Saints. On the feast day of the Saint an individual is named after, he or she attends Mass. Relatives and friends visit to wish the guest of honour well, give gifts and have a party. Name days, as they are called, are similar to birthdays.

The Blessing of the Waters ceremony is held in both Glenelg and Henley Beach. A bishop blesses the Southern Ocean and throws a cross into the water, and young people dive into the water to retrieve it. The custom originated in Greece and signifies the request for God's blessing to make water safe for fishermen, sailors and swimmers.

Members of the South Australian Greek community celebrate Greek Cultural Month in March. The month culminates in the annual Glendi Festival, commemorating Greek National Day on 25 March, the anniversary of Greek Nationals' revolted against Turkish rule in 1921. In South Australia the festival takes place over a weekend. Traditional Greek food and drinks are sold and Greek musicians and dancers perform in national costume.

Community organisations and clubs^{iv}

There are over 130 Greek organisations and clubs in South Australia. These span a range of purposes and interest groups, with a large number representing regional communities, parishes and aged care providers. One of the largest groups is the Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia. Some of the largest are the Greek Orthodox Communities of South Australia, which is based in Adelaide and leads religious, language, music and dancing activities for the Greek community.

References

ⁱ South Australian Migration Museum (2006) *From Many Places: The History and Cultural Traditions of South Australian People*. (CD-Rom).

ⁱⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011) *Census of Population and Housing*. Accessible at <http://www.abs.gov.au/census>

ⁱⁱⁱ Australian Education International (2013) *International Student Data 2012: 2012 Pivot Tables*. Accessible at <https://aei.gov.au/research/International-Student-Data/Pages/InternationalStudentData2012.aspx#3>

^{iv} Details of South Australian community organisations were informed by Multicultural SA's Contacts Database of cultural organisations and clubs throughout South Australia.