



Community Information Summary

Greece-born

Historical Background

The first migrants from Greece were seven young sailors convicted of piracy by a British naval court and transported to Australia, where they arrived in August 1829. After being pardoned, two sailors settled in Australia.

The first significant Greek migration to Australia began in the 1850s during the gold rush. Early Greece-born settlers worked mainly in mining camps, on the wharves or on coastal ships.

The 1901 Australian Census recorded 878 Greece-born people. Many were owners or employees at shops and restaurants, and some were cane cutters in Queensland.

There was a substantial increase in immigration in the years between the two World Wars, caused in part by the expulsion of Greeks from Asia Minor of the Ottoman Empire (now part of modern day Turkey) in 1922-23 and immigration quotas imposed by the United States of America in the early 1920s.

After World War II, with the active encouragement of a Greek Government struggling with post-war reconstruction, large numbers of Greeks migrated to Australia. Numbers increased after 1952 when the Australian Government provided assisted passage to tens of thousands of Greeks.

Migration from Greece expanded rapidly through the 1960s, and at its peak, there were 160 200 Greece-born in Australia, recorded in the 1971 Census, with 47 per cent living in Melbourne. Factors including opportunities in Europe meant that from 1972, those in Greece preferred to migrate to other countries of Europe rather than Australia.

Today

Geographic Distribution

The latest Census in 2011 recorded 99 939 Greece-born people in Australia, a fall of 9.1 per cent from the 2006 Census. The 2011 distribution by state and territory showed Victoria had the largest number with 49 992 followed by New South Wales (31 546), South Australia (9756) and Queensland (3441).

Refer to Figure 1.

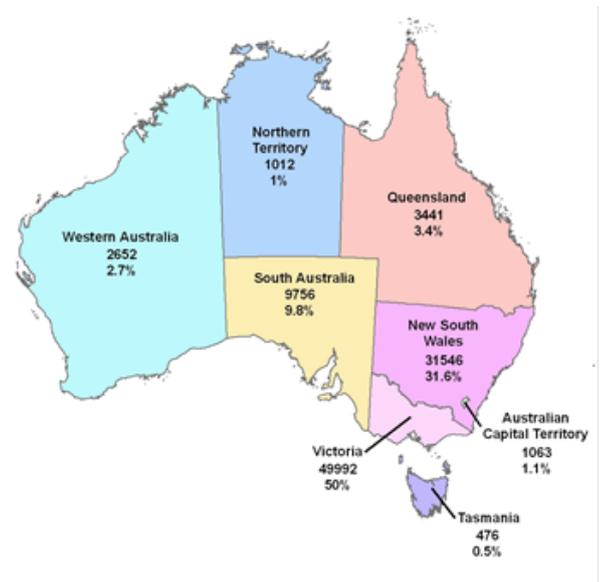


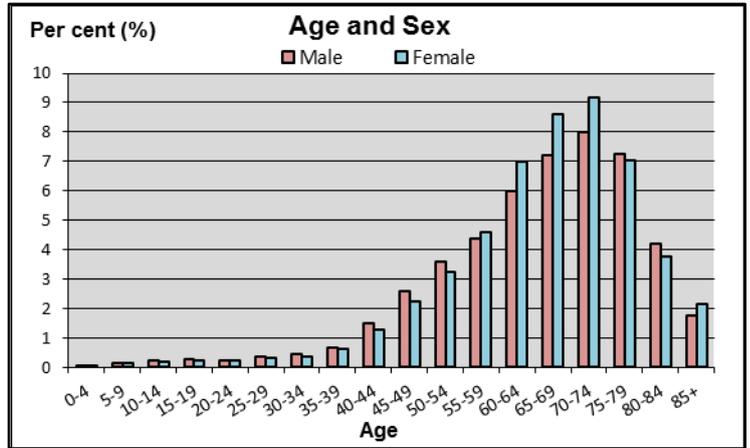
Figure 1

Age and Sex

The median age of the Greece-born in 2011 was 67 years compared with 45 years for all overseas-born and 37 years for the total Australian population.

The age distribution showed 0.8 per cent were aged 0-14 years, 1 per cent were 15-24 years, 5.5 per cent were 25-44 years, 33.6 per cent were 45-64 years and 59.2 per cent were 65 years and over.

Of the Greece-born in Australia, there were 48 812 males (48.8 per cent) and 51 126 females (51.2 per cent). The sex ratio was 95.5 males per 100 females.

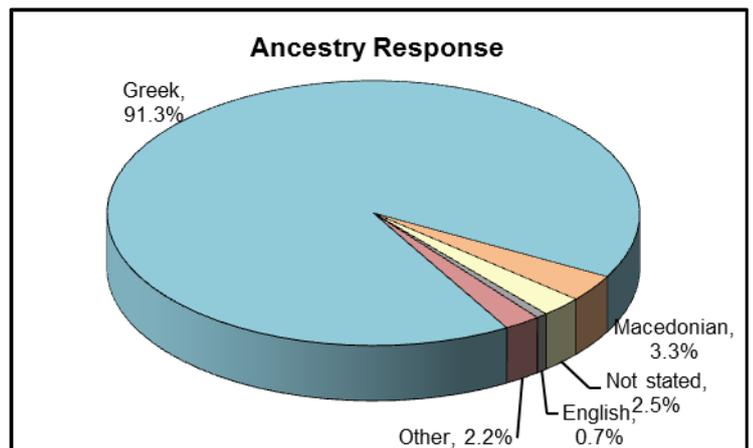


Ancestry

In the 2011 Census, the top ancestry responses* that Greece-born people reported were Greek (92 787), Macedonian (3342) and English (682).

In the 2011 Census, Australians reported around 300 different ancestries. Of the total ancestry responses*, 378 270 responses were towards Greek ancestry.

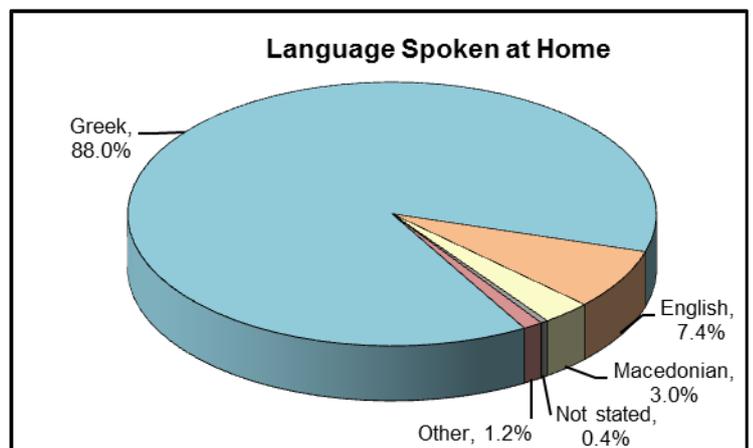
*At the 2011 Census up to two responses per person were allowed for the Ancestry question; therefore providing the total responses and not persons count.



Language

The main languages spoken at home by Greece-born people in Australia were Greek (87 920), English (7404) and Macedonian (2977).

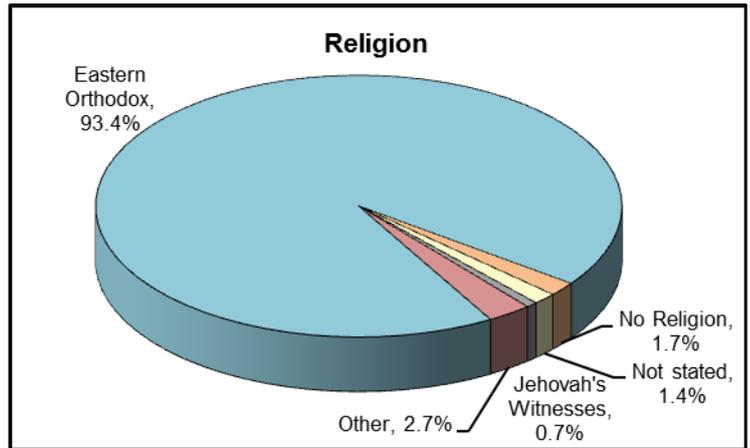
Of the 92 534 Greece-born who spoke a language other than English at home, 63.8 per cent spoke English very well or well, and 35.2 per cent spoke English not well or not at all.



Religion

At the 2011 Census the major religious affiliation amongst Greece-born was Eastern Orthodox (93 346).

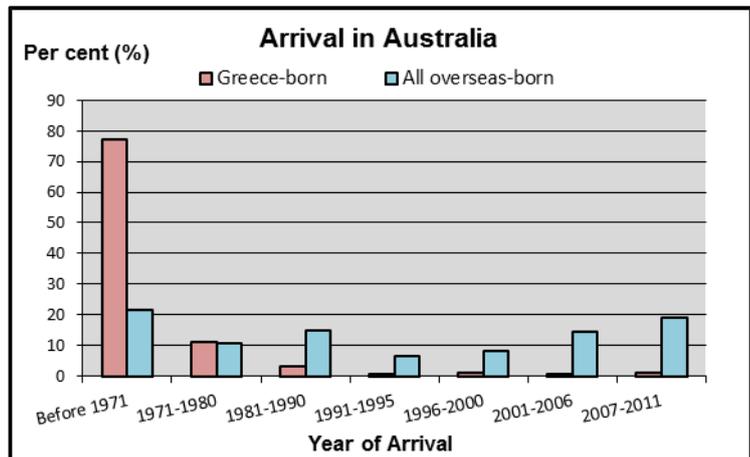
Of the Greece-born, 1.7 per cent stated 'No Religion' which was lower than that of the total Australian population (22.3 per cent), and 1.4 per cent did not state a religion.



Arrival

Compared to 62 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 93.1 per cent of the Greece-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2001.

Among the total Greece-born in Australia at the 2011 Census, 0.8 per cent arrived between 2001 and 2006 and 1.1 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011.



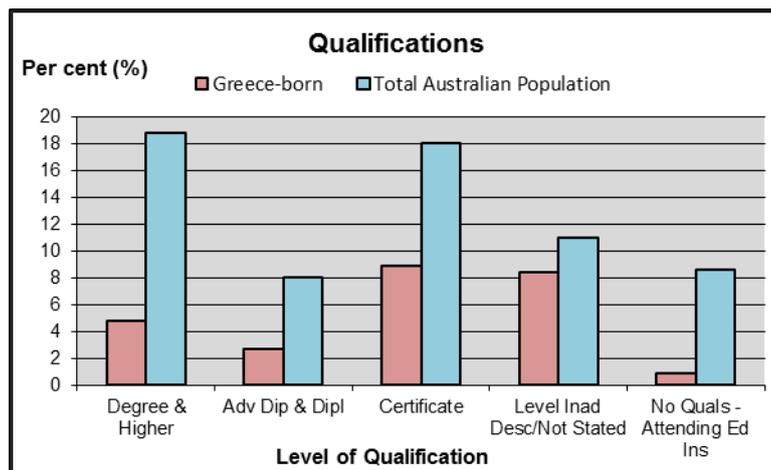
Median Income

At the time of the 2011 Census, the median individual weekly income for the Greece-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$321, compared with \$538 for all overseas-born and \$597 for all Australia-born. The total Australian population had a median individual weekly income of \$577.

Qualifications

At the 2011 Census, 24.7 per cent of the Greece-born aged 15 years and over had some form of higher non-school qualifications compared to 55.9 per cent of the Australian population.

Of the Greece-born aged 15 years and over, 0.8 per cent were still attending an educational institution. The corresponding rate for the total Australian population was 8.6 per cent.

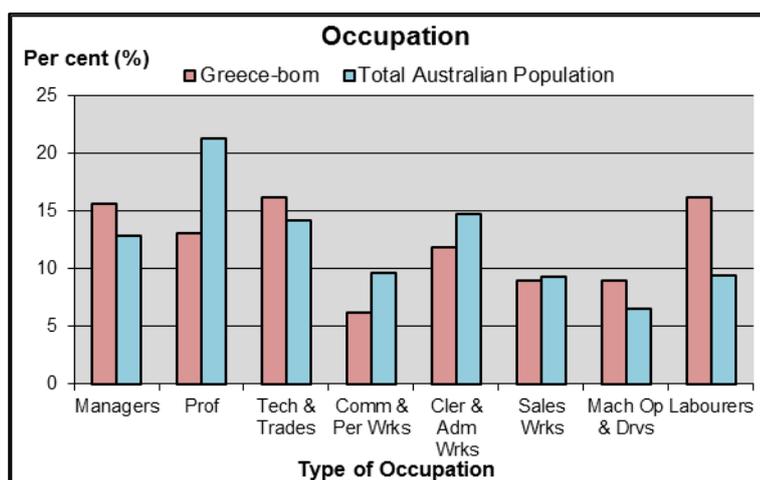


Level Inad Desc/Not Stated = Education level inadequately described or not stated
No Quals - Attending Ed Ins = No qualifications and still attending educational institution

Employment

Among Greece-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 28.1 per cent and the unemployment rate was 4.7 per cent. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 65 per cent and 5.6 per cent respectively.

Of the 25 757 Greece-born who were employed, 44.8 per cent were employed in either a skilled managerial, professional or trade occupation. The corresponding rate in the total Australian population was 48.4 per cent.



Comm & Per Wrks = Community & Personal Service Workers

Produced by Community Relations Section of DIAC

All data used in this summary is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing. Sources for the Historical Background available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/source.htm>