

Greece



Immigration to Greece has been significant in recent years, although flow data are difficult to obtain and much immigration has been irregular. 85 000 new residence permits were issued in 2006, a 68% increase over 2005. 15% were for family reunification. Likewise, the registered resident foreign population increased by more than 90 000 from 2005 to 2006 – i.e. a growth of more than 15%. As in the past, Albanians are the main nationality concerned, although there are some indications of a diversification of the immigrant population. Albanians account for about 70% of the stocks, but for less than 40% of the change in stocks.

The number of asylum applications in Greece has continued to grow in recent years, as Greece is often the first European country entered by asylum seekers from conflict areas. In 2006, there were a record 12 300 applications for asylum, although refugee or protected status was granted to only 1% of applicants. The largest group of applicants were from Bangladesh (3 750 compared to just 550 the previous year), Pakistan (2 400, twice the previous year), Iraq and Afghanistan. These increases seem to reflect shifting transit routes into Europe.

On 1 May 2006, Greece opened its labour market to all citizens of the EU countries which joined in 2004. However, Greece applied a two-year transition period before granting labour market access to citizens of Romania and Bulgaria following their accession to the EU on 1 January 2007.

In 2007, new legislation was introduced aimed at simplifying the permit system, improving integration and facilitating regularisation. The latter set of measures broadened eligibility for the 2005 regularisation. The 2005 law, the third

Greek regularisation, had offered an opportunity for regularisation to two categories. The first were formerly legal migrants whose status had lapsed (this concerned about 50 000 applicants in 2006), and the second were those who had paid social contributions for 150 – 200 days work during the prior year (an additional 95 000 applicants in 2006). Because the 2005 law required demonstrating contributions, participation was lower than expected and the new law eases these requirements. Immigrants who cannot demonstrate the necessary minimum days of employment can now pay for up to one-fifth of the shortfall. For some occupations, the required number of days of contributions has been halved. Also, undocumented migrants who had attended public primary or secondary schools or universities were made eligible for regularisation. An additional 20 000 persons filed a request for regularisation under these new provisions.

The main beneficiaries of the third regularisation programme are citizens from Albania, Bulgaria and Romania.

Another important measure related to a simplification of permit procedures. The residence permit and the work permit are now combined into a single residence permit allowing labour market access. The 2007 law also eased residence permit renewal procedures.

Finally, the law contains measures aimed at improving the social integration of immigrants, as well as policies to support them in other areas, including employment.

For further information...

www.imepo.gr

www.inegsee.gr/equal/equal2/para_body.htm

www.statistics.gr/Main_eng.asp

Flow data on foreigners

Migration flows (foreigners) National definition	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)			
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006			
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>										
Inflows	3.5			
Outflows			
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type Permit based statistics (standardised)	Thousands		% distribution		Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners					
	2005	2006	2005	2006						
Work						
Family (incl. accompanying family)						
Humanitarian						
Free movements						
Others						
Total						
Temporary migration	2000	2005	2006	Annual average						
				2000-2006						
<i>Thousands</i>										
International students						
Trainees						
Working holiday makers						
Seasonal workers						
Intra-company transfers						
Other temporary workers						
Inflows of asylum seekers	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)			
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006			
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>	0.1	0.3	0.8	1.1	0.2	0.7	12.3			

Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators

Macroeconomic indicators	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
Real GDP (growth, %)	2.1	4.5	3.8	4.2	3.4	4.3	
GDP/capita (growth, %) – level in US Dollars	1.8	4.1	3.4	3.8	2.9	3.9	23 235
Employment (growth, %) – level in thousands	0.9	-0.2	1.3	2.4	0.6	1.6	4 248
Unemployment (% of labour force)	9.1	11.7	10.4	9.3	10.7	10.5	
Components of population growth	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	7.5	2.5	3.8	4.2	5.2	3.6	
Natural increase	0.1	-0.2	0.3	0.6	-	0.1	
Net migration	7.3	2.7	3.5	3.6	5.2	3.5	
Total population	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>(Annual growth %)</i>							
Native-born	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign-born	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
National	..	-	0.2	0.3	..	-	10 578
Foreign	..	11.2	3.7	3.2	..	9.9	571
Naturalisations	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>As a percentage of foreign population</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Labour market outcomes	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Employment/population ratio</i>							
Native-born men	72.3	71.3	73.8	73.9	71.7	72.8	
Foreign-born men	70.6	78.1	82.6	83.6	75.7	82.2	
Native-born women	37.8	41.6	45.9	47.1	39.6	44.5	
Foreign-born women	42.2	45.0	49.3	51.1	44.8	48.4	
<i>Unemployment rate</i>							
Native-born men	6.1	7.5	5.9	5.8	6.7	6.3	
Foreign-born men	14.3	9.5	6.4	5.3	11.5	6.8	
Native-born women	13.7	17.0	15.2	13.6	16.0	15.0	
Foreign-born women	20.6	21.4	15.8	15.1	22.0	17.5	

Notes and sources are at the beginning of the Chapter.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/434206373588>