

## Greece

Data on immigration in Greece are not consistently available, but all major sources indicate that there has been significant immigration in 2009. According to the fourth quarter Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 2009, there were 840 000 foreigners living in Greece, a 24% increase over LFS estimates for mid-2008. According to the Ministry of Interior permit data, the stock of non-EU permit holders at the end of 2009 stood at 587 000, an increase from April 2008, when there were 432 000 permits. There were also 136 000 citizens of the new EU countries holding permits at the end of 2009. The largest group with permits were from Albania (414 000), followed by Bulgaria (55 900), Romania (42 000), Ukraine (21 600), Georgia (17 700), and Pakistan (17 100).

While immigration to Greece has contributed to population growth in the past decade, estimates from the 2010 Labour Force Survey suggest that this trend has come to a halt, mainly attributable to the difficult economic situation.

In 2009, according to official figures, about 81 000 migrants illegally crossed into Greece. The number rose to 92 000 in 2010. In 2009, the detention centre system was expanded and the maximum duration of detention extended to twelve months. In October 2010, the EU's external border service Frontex expanded its operations in Greece, first with an office in Piraeus, and later to supply additional guards to focus on the land border with Turkey, which had become the main crossing point in 2010. About 47 000 people crossed at this point in that year. Most people illegally crossing the Greek border aim to travel on to another European country.

According to UNHCR, the number of asylum seekers in Greece fell from 33 300 in 2008 to 15 900 in 2009. This was due in part to a bottleneck even to file an asylum application. Few (1%) received refugee status. The number of applications fell further in 2010, although the backlog of asylum applications reached 45 000 in late 2010. In July 2009, the government abolished the asylum appeal system, and transferred

status determination to the local police, which further discouraged applications. Due to the inadequate reception facilities and limited access to asylum, a number of other European countries halted the return of asylum seekers to Greece under the Dublin Convention. In January 2011, the Greek parliament approved an Asylum Law, transferring refugee status determination from the police to a new civilian body, establishing an appeals system, creating a first reception system, and transposing the EU directive on the return of illegally staying third-country nationals.

Applications for naturalisation in Greece have historically been low, due to high fees and a discretionary procedure. In late 2006, the Greek authorities waived the fee and discretionary element for applications for naturalisation from ethnic Greek Albanian citizens. The number of naturalisations increased from 10 000 in 2007 to about 17 000 in both 2008 and 2009. The vast majority (85%) of those naturalised in 2009 were previously Albanian citizens.

The citizenship law was changed in March 2010 to grant citizenship to Greek-born children of foreigners, or those with six years of Greek schooling, when both parents have been legally resident in Greece for at least five years. The law also granted local voting rights to foreigners with at least five years residence and a long-term permit.

A General Secretariat for Immigration Policy was created in February 2010 within the Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation. The Hellenic Migration Policy Institute (IMEPO), created in 2002 to provide policy support to the Greek government on migration, was merged into this secretariat as part of these structural reforms.

### **For further information:**

[www.statistics.gr](http://www.statistics.gr)

[www.ypakp.gr](http://www.ypakp.gr)


[www.ypes.gr/el/MigrationSocialIntegration/](http://www.ypes.gr/el/MigrationSocialIntegration/)

## Recent trends in migrants' flows and stocks

GREECE

Migration flows (foreigners) <i>National definition</i>	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level ('000)
					2000-04	2005-09	2009
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Inflows	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Outflows	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type	Thousands		% distribution				
<i>Permit based statistics (standardised)</i>	2008	2009	2008	2009			
Work	..	..	..	..			
Family (incl. accompanying family)	..	..	..	..			
Humanitarian	..	..	..	..			
Free movements	..	..	..	..			
Others	..	..	..	..			
Total	..	..	..	..			
Temporary migration	2005	2008	2009	Average			
<i>Thousands</i>							
International students	..	..	..	..			
Trainees	..	..	..	..			
Working holiday makers	..	..	..	..			
Seasonal workers	..	..	..	..			
Intra-company transfers	..	..	..	..			
Other temporary workers	..	..	..	..			
Inflows of asylum seekers	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
	0.3	0.8	1.8	1.4	0.5	1.5	15 928
Components of population growth	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level ('000)
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	2.5	3.8	4.1	..	3.2	..	..
Natural increase	-0.2	0.3	0.9	..	-0.1	..	..
Net migration	2.7	3.5	3.2	..	3.3	..	..
Stocks of immigrants	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level ('000)
<i>Percentage of the total population</i>							
Foreign-born population	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign population	2.8	5.0	6.5	7.4	3.8	6.0	840
Naturalisations	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level
<i>Percentage of the foreign population</i>							
	..	..	2.3	2.0	..	..	17 019
Labour market outcomes	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		
<i>Employment/population ratio</i>							
Native-born men	71.3	73.5	74.0	72.7	72.1	73.6	
Foreign-born men	78.1	82.6	85.0	80.5	80.9	83.2	
Native-born women	41.6	45.7	48.6	48.7	43.1	47.6	
Foreign-born women	45.0	50.2	49.5	51.1	46.8	50.2	
<i>Unemployment rate</i>							
Native-born men	7.5	6.2	5.2	6.5	6.7	5.8	
Foreign-born men	9.5	6.7	5.0	10.4	7.9	6.5	
Native-born women	17.0	15.4	11.5	13.2	15.6	13.3	
Foreign-born women	21.4	15.6	12.3	14.5	19.5	14.3	
Macroeconomic indicators	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level
<i>Annual growth in %</i>							
Real GDP	4.5	2.3	1.0	-2.0	4.5	2.1	
GDP/capita (level in USD)	4.1	1.9	0.6	-2.4	4.1	1.7	23 565
Employment (level in thousands)	1.4	1.3	1.1	-1.1	1.4	0.9	4 509
<i>Percentage of the labour force</i>							
Unemployment	11.4	9.8	7.7	9.5	10.5	8.8	

Notes and sources are at the end of the chapter.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932441325>