

Greece

Data on immigration in Greece are not consistently available, but the principal sources available suggest a decline in the stock of immigrants in 2010, and an even sharper decrease in 2011. According to LFS data, in the fourth quarter of 2010 there were 810 000 foreigners living in Greece, a 4% decrease over the corresponding figures for 2009. According to the Ministry of Citizen Protection (former Ministry of Interior) permit data, the stock of non-EU permit holders (non-seasonal) at the end of 2010 stood at 567 000, a decrease by 20 000 compared with the previous year. Preliminary figures for the end of 2011 suggest that the total number of permit holders was down by 100 000. In 2010, the largest groups of non-EU citizens with permits were from Albania (491 000), Ukraine (20 500), Georgia (16 500), and Pakistan (16 300). The largest groups of EU nationals in Greece come from Bulgaria and Romania.

The fall in the stock of registered immigrants is related to the severe economic crisis in Greece: the average unemployment rate stood at 18.2% in July 2011, up 6% higher over one year, and since 2009, the unemployment level of non-EU immigrants has been higher than that of Greek nationals. While the crisis has hit all sectors of the Greek economy hard in the last two years, sectors employing many immigrants, such as construction, have seen employment loss since 2008. Fewer permit holders may not mean that immigrants left Greece, since some, unable to meet employment and welfare payment requirements for permit renewal, may have lost their legal status and remained in the country.

In 2010, according to official figures, about 133 000 migrants were apprehended illegally crossing into Greece (by land and sea), a slight increase compared with 2010. The number fell in 2011 (81 000 apprehensions in the first ten months). Since 2010, most apprehensions have occurred at the land border with Turkey.

According to UNHCR, the number of asylum seekers in Greece fell from 15 900 in 2009 to 10 300 in 2010. This was partly due to an increased backlog after the 2009 reforms of the asylum procedure – abolition of the appeal system and transfer of the responsibility for status determination to local police – and UNHCR's subsequent withdrawal from assistance in the process. In addition, a number of other European

countries halted the return of asylum seekers to Greece under the Dublin Convention, citing inadequate reception facilities and access to asylum. The main origin countries of asylum seekers in 2010 were Pakistan, Georgia and Bangladesh.

In January 2011, the Greek parliament approved a new law reforming the asylum system. The law transfers refugee status determination from the police to a new civilian body, re-establishes an appeals system, and creates a first reception system and new decentralised asylum offices. The latter two measures have yet to be funded. The new law also transposed the EU "Return" directive, creating, among other changes, two separate agencies, one for asylum and one for First Reception of irregular migrants. A new stay permit for exceptional reasons may now be granted to irregular migrants who have lived in Greece for 12 years, and at least 10 years preceding the application, and can demonstrate special ties with the country – such as having studied in a Greek school, being a family member of a Greek citizen, speaking the Greek language, or past legal stay.

Acquisition of the EU long term resident status, a prerequisite for naturalisation under the March 2010 citizenship law, became easier in 2011: immigrants may now prove knowledge of Greek language and history by passing a test, without having to attend a special state-run course as under previous legislation. The 2011 law also granted local voting rights to foreigners with at least five years residence and a long-term permit. About 12 000 non-EU nationals participated in November 2010 local elections.

In the context of the reorganisation of local and regional government in 2010, Councils for Migrant Integration were introduced at the municipal level, as consultative bodies on issues of concern to the local migrant population. These councils are composed of members of the municipal councils and social stakeholders, including migrants.

For further information:

www.statistics.gr

www.ypakp.gr


www.yptp.gr

Recent trends in migrants' flows and stocks

GREECE

Migration flows (foreigners) <i>National definition</i>	2000	2005	2009	2010	Average		Level ('000)
					2001-05	2006-10	2010
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Inflows	..	..	3.0	2.0	..	..	23.0
Outflows	..	..	1.4	4.2	..	..	47.1
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type	Thousands		% distribution				
<i>Permit based statistics (standardised)</i>	2009	2010	2009	2010			
Work	..	..	..	..
Family (incl. accompanying family)	..	..	..	..
Humanitarian	..	..	..	..
Free movements	..	..	..	..
Others	..	..	..	..
Total	..	..	..	..
Temporary migration	2005	2009	2010	Average			
<i>Thousands</i>							
International students	..	..	..	..
Trainees	..	..	..	..
Working holiday makers	..	..	..	..
Seasonal workers	..	..	..	..
Intra-company transfers	..	..	..	..
Other temporary workers	..	..	..	..
Inflows of asylum seekers	2000	2005	2009	2010	Average		Level
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
	0.3	0.8	1.4	0.9	0.6	1.5	10 273
Components of population growth	2000	2005	2009	2010	Average		Level ('000)
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	2.5	3.8	..	..	3.5	..	..
Natural increase	-0.2	0.3	..	..	0.0	..	..
Net migration	2.7	3.5	..	..	3.5	..	..
Stocks of immigrants	2000	2005	2009	2010	Average		Level ('000)
<i>Percentage of the total population</i>							
Foreign-born population	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign population	2.8	5.0	7.4	7.1	4.3	6.4	810
Naturalisations	2000	2005	2009	2010	Average		Level
<i>Percentage of the foreign population</i>							
	..	..	2.3	..	..	..	..
Labour market outcomes	2000	2005	2009	2010	Average		
<i>Employment/population ratio</i>							
Native-born men	71.3	73.5	72.7	70.2	72.5	73.0	
Foreign-born men	78.1	82.6	80.5	76.7	81.8	82.1	
Native-born women	41.6	45.7	48.7	47.8	43.9	48.0	
Foreign-born women	45.0	50.2	51.1	51.2	47.8	50.4	
<i>Unemployment rate</i>							
Native-born men	7.5	6.2	6.5	9.4	6.4	6.4	
Foreign-born men	9.5	6.7	10.4	15.2	7.4	8.2	
Native-born women	17.0	15.4	13.2	16.2	15.3	13.4	
Foreign-born women	21.4	15.6	14.5	17.7	18.3	14.7	
Macroeconomic indicators	2000	2005	2009	2010	Average		Level
<i>Annual growth in %</i>							
Real GDP	4.5	2.3	-3.2	-3.5	4.0	0.3	
GDP/capita (level in USD)	4.1	1.9	-3.6	-3.7	3.7	0.0	28 430
Employment (level in thousands)	1.4	1.3	-1.1	-2.7	1.3	0.1	4 389
<i>Percentage of the labour force</i>							
Unemployment	11.4	9.9	9.5	12.5	10.2	9.4	

Notes and sources are at the end of the part.

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