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**HELLENIC STUDIES**

**LA NOUVELLE  
IMMIGRATION GRECQUE  
THE NEW WAVE OF  
GREEK MIGRATION**

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**2**

# The Return of Ulysses: 80,000 Australian Citizens Repatriate Home

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## RÉSUMÉ

La Grèce a été le deuxième meilleur choix comme pays de rapatriement après le Royaume-Uni pour les Australiens d'origine ethnique. Au cours de la période 1980-2008 plus de 135.000 citoyens australiens d'origine grecque se sont installés de façon permanente dans les grands centres urbains de la Grèce. Suite à la crise économique européenne et l'effondrement de l'économie grecque en 2009, un grand nombre des Grecs ayant la citoyenneté australienne a commencé à retourner en Australie. L'exode avait deux visages différents: (a) Le rapatriement en premier lieu d'environ 80 000 Grecs citoyens australiens avec leurs membres de famille à charge, les enfants et les conjoints jusqu' à la fin de 2013, soit un total estimé à 110 000 personnes et (b) L'immigration d'environ 10 000 nouveaux immigrants grecs économiques vers l'Australie en utilisant différentes formes de visas. Cet afflux massif de plus de 100 000 Grecs, citoyens australiens, enrichit l'Australie d'un point de vue socio-économique et culturel parce que la plupart d'entre eux sont membres de la classe moyenne, comprenant des professionnels, des technocrates, des hommes d'affaires, des scientifiques, des artistes qui avaient atteint le TAFE (technical and further education) ou l'enseignement supérieur. Cependant, ni la communauté grecque organisée ni la vie institutionnelle australienne n'ont été préparées à recevoir cet afflux massif de Grecs. Actuellement, il n'y a aucune infrastructure ou de réseaux communautaires en état de les aider à s'adapter et à s'intégrer à la société australienne.

## ABSTRACT

Greece had been the second, after the U.K. most popular recipient country of the world Australian Diaspora.<sup>1</sup> During the period 1980-2008 over 135,000 Australian citizens settled permanently in the major urban centres of Greece. Following the European Economic Crisis and the collapse of Greek economy in 2009, a huge repatriation of the Australian Diaspora commenced. The exodus had two different characters: (a) The repatriation in the first instance of approximately 80,000 Australian citizens with their dependent members, children and spouses until the end of 2013, giving a well-estimated total of 110,000 persons within the period 2009-2015; and (b) The immigration of approximately 10,000 new economic Greek settlers to Australia utilizing different forms of visas. This massive influx of more than 100,000

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actual and/or prospective Australian citizens enriches Australia socio-economically and culturally as most of them are members of the middle class, comprising (of) professionals, technocrats, businessmen, scientists, artists who had attained TAFE or tertiary education.<sup>2</sup> However, neither the organized Greek community nor the Australian institutional life were prepared to receive this massive influx of fellow compatriots; currently, there are no communal or state infrastructure or networks to absorb, utilize or assist them to conform, adapt and acculturate.

## **1. Current Demographical Characteristics of Greeks in Australia**

In 1947 Australian's newly appointed Minister for Immigration A. A. Calwell signed in Lausanne the *International Refugee Agreement* for the acceptance by Australia of displaced persons as immigrants. Australia's Hellenes numbering then 17,000 and the Greek leaders of the *Homogeneia* were totally unprepared to receive the thousands of displaced Greek children scattered in Eastern Europe, resulting in having the world ecclesiastic organizations to care for the arriving of the abandoned children. Then in 1952, when the bilateral immigration agreement between Australia and Greece was signed and the massive immigration of 270,000 Greeks and Cypriots began, the Greek community leaders were again unsuspecting of the consequences (Tamis, 2000 and 2005; Tamis and Gavaki, 2002). During the years of robust Greek settlement that followed (1952-2008), it became apparent to Greek community leaders given the economic euphoria in Greece following the restoration of Democracy in Greece (>1980), that any chance of a neo-migration was unfeasible. As a matter of fact, historians and political scientists were predicting the shrinking of the Greek community's cultural and linguistic vitality (Tamis, 1992:1) as a result of the termination of Greek emigration.<sup>3</sup> Hence, community leaders, social welfare organizations and the Greek Orthodox Church were seized completely unwary of the Greek neo-migration (2009-2013) that provoked the repatriation of almost 75,000 Australians of Greek descent residing permanently in Greece with their dependent spouses and children as well as a cohort of over 20,000 immigrants arriving as dependents of these Australian citizens (spouses and children) as well as economic migrants by means of sponsored working visa, tourist's or student's visas (*see below*). "*Most definitely I was not expecting these neo-migration trends in my time but obviously the*

*situation was risen in Greece and people felt that they needed to recount and make the decision to emigrate.*"<sup>4</sup>

According to consistent statistical data,<sup>5</sup> individuals of Greek ancestry demonstrated the highest integration and citizenship rates into the Australian community and played a key role in the socio-economic and cultural development of Australia. However, during the inter-census period between 2006 and 2011 significant demographic changes occurred altering both the size and character of the Greek community as well as the role of its networks and institutions. In 2006, the ABS recorded 109,980 Greece-born immigrants and 365,145 individuals of Greek descent living in Australia (based on country of birth of parents). Following additional cross-tabulations involving the variables of religion, place of birth and language spoken at home and the prevailing political limitations<sup>6</sup> the total number of Australia's Greek community, including the Cypriot Greeks, stood at approximately 506,000 (*see Table One below*).<sup>7</sup>

The latest 2011 Census recorded 99,939 Greece-born individuals in Australia, a reduction of 9.1 per cent from the 2006 census (*see above*). The 2011 distribution by State and territory showed Victoria had the largest number with 49,992 people followed by the New South Wales (31,546), South Australia (9,756), Queensland (3,441), Western Australia (2,652), Northern Territory (1,012), ACT (963) and Tasmania (476). From *Table Two* below, it becomes apparent that although the number of Greece-born was reduced by almost 10 percent, the recorded overall number of Greeks in Australia was increased by more than five percent from 365,145 in 2006 to 378, 276 as a result of the repatriation of thousands of Australian citizens from Greece and other financially affected European countries.

The median age of the Greece-born in 2011 was 67 years compared with 45 years for all overseas born Australian and 37 years for the total Australia population. However, the more than double median age of the Greece-born individuals is expected to be reduced sharply with the repatriation of those Australian citizens of Greek descent from Greece and Cyprus to Australia and the anticipated young neo-immigrants arriving from Greece with student and or tourist visas.

**Table 1:** Number of Individuals of Greek Ancestry in Australia (2006)

<i>Nation.</i>	<i>Birthplace</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tasman</i>	<i>N.T.</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Greece</i>	61,894	41,135	4,295	12,640	3,434	621	1,096	1,406	126,521
<i>Greek</i>	<i>Australia</i>	148,783	91,769	11,568	29,932	7,852	1,586	2,467	3,212	297,169
	<i>Egypt &amp; M.East</i>	2,874	656	152	302	201	18	17	9	4229
	<i>Turkey</i>	1,212	367	112	145	109	12	12	14	1983
	<i>Other (S. Afric. U.K., F.S. Union)</i>	2,012	486	95	367	690	9	9	11	3679
<i>Cypriot Greek and Turkish Speaking</i>	<i>Cyprus</i>	9,382	7,965	1,043	1,535	356	53	231	127	20,692
	<i>Australia</i>	23,345	18,568	2,456	3,978	789	116	487	286	50,025
	<i>Other</i>	704	611	72	94	11	3	7	4	1,506
<b>Total</b>		250,206	161,557	19,793	48,993	13,442	2,418	4,335	5,069	505,804

Source: *Cross-tabulation of ABS (2006); also A. M. Tamis, Steve Petrou and Terry Stavridis.*

The 2011 age distribution showed 0.8 per cent were aged 0-14, one per cent were 15-24, 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 gender ratio was 95.5 males per 100 females.

In the 2011 Census, the top ancestry responses<sup>8</sup> that Greece-born people reported were Greek (92,787), “Macedonian”<sup>9</sup> (3,342) and English (682). A total of 378,276 Greek ancestry responses were recorded in Australia amongst a reported total of 300 different ancestries. The main languages spoken at home by Greece-born individuals in Australia were Greek (87,920), English (7404) and Macedonian Slavonic (2,977).

**Table 2:** Number of Greeks by Ancestry, Birthplace of Parents and Gender According to the “Problematic” 2011<sup>10</sup>

State/ Territory		Both parents born overseas	Father only born overseas	Mother only born overseas	both parents in Australia	Not stated	Total responses
ACT	(M)	1277	278	119	624	41	2339
	(F)	1182	249	112	633	38	2214
NSW	(M)	37606	6274	2886	15339	1420	63,545
	(F)	37925	6266	2671	15177	1329	63,368
NT	(M)	1127	280	84	445	46	1982
	(F)	828	255	93	415	58	1649
QLD	(M)	5742	1960	793	5066	275	13,836
	(F)	5385	2060	809	5299	309	13,862
SA	(M)	10920	1883	810	4911	413	18,937
	(F)	10871	1936	713	4815	414	18,749
TAS.	(M)	576	158	40	362	15	1151
	(F)	489	152	48	324	27	1040
VIC	(M)	51744	7196	3261	16563	1748	80,512
	(F)	53263	7276	3019	15591	1753	81,262
WA	(M)	3165	952	441	2208	113	6879
	(F)	3188	971	419	2255	112	6945
OTHER	(M)	3	NIL	NIL	3	NIL	6
	(F)	0	NIL	NIL	0	NIL	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>225,291</b>	<b>38,146</b>	<b>16,318</b>	<b>90,039</b>	<b>8,111</b>	<b>378,276</b>

Source: *Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2011. Elaboration by A.M. Tamis and T. Stavidis.*

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. It is significant to note, however, that the actual

language shift from Greek to English within the Greece-born settlers increased from one per cent in the early 1990s to almost eight per cent. This is mainly DUE TO the excessive aging and biological exodus of the older immigrants. It is also significant to note that the number of people who are using Greek regularly at home increased by also nine per cent compared with the number of Hellenophones recorded in 2006. The increase is strongly related to the repatriation of tens of thousands of Australian citizens from Greece and to a lesser extend to neo-migration trends. According to the *Australian Early Development Index* study surveying the teachers of 47,000 children about the language their pupils spoke at home, it found that Greek was the third most commonly spoken language other than English at home in Australia with 4.3 per cent after Arabic (11.8 per cent) and Vietnamese (8.4 per cent).<sup>11</sup>

**Table 3:** Number of Users of Greek by Gender and State/ Territory (2011)

<b>State/ Territory</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Australian Capital Territory	1393	1383	2776
New South Wales	42,251	44,271	86,522
Northern Territory	1562	1326	2,888
Queensland	5800	5998	11,798
South Australia	12,373	12,760	25,133
Tasmania	638	577	1,215
Victoria	56,781	59,719	116,500
Western Australia	2663	2718	5,381
Other territories	3	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>123,464</b>	<b>128,755</b>	<b>252,219</b>

Source: *Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2011. Elaboration by A.M. Tamis and S. Stavridis.*

Among Greece-born individuals 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.

## **2. Neo-migration and Repatriation Patterns**

During the years of massive immigration (1952-1974), the 270.000 Greek and Cypriot immigrants that settled in the major urban centres of the state capital cities and the vast hinterland were protected to a large degree by the Australian government which was responsible to secure for them employment, the Greek community organizations, the numerous Greek brotherhoods which swiftly began to emerge, as well as their compatriots, relatives and friends. However, the conditions of mutual dependence and survival, the solidarity enforced by chain migration and the inevitable type of sharing residence facilities assisted one another to endure the hardships and outlive the difficulties. It must be clarified that there were also then deficiencies in systemic and well-thought community strategies; apparent was a clear need for infrastructure and a weakness by the leaders of the then historic Communities, the Greek Orthodox Church as well as the ecclesiastic organizations to realize the size and the persistence of the incoming almost epidemic Greek immigration.

It must also be taken into account that the early post-WW II immigrants were vastly small farmers of a neglected countryside and proletarians of the urban centres with very limited education; their expectations from their settlement in the new country were grossly limited; their prospects of being treated lordly or with dignity were also narrow; their anticipation of direct employment in their trade, if any, non existent. They were prepared to adapt and to adopt the harshness of the new cultural and socio-economic environment. This gave rise to altruism and acts of compassion and selflessness, having to sleep on the floor or share a bathroom or a kitchen with another twenty people under a small roof and still be happy and content.

During the second large wave of immigration to Australia or repatriation of thousands of Australian citizens of Greek descent and their spouses and



children following a long stay in Greece (2010-2014), the organized Greek Communities, community organizations, brotherhoods, the Greek Orthodox Church and secular social welfare organizations, even the friends and relatives were caught unprepared and ill-equipped. Since the rising of the economic crisis in Greece (2009) more than 90,000 individuals set foot in Australia seeking employment, accommodation, welfare and education for them and their dependents. Australia's Hellenes remained unwary of the size as well as the expectations and prospects of their compatriots; the latter were not small farmers or proletarians as we shall see. Like their compatriots in the 1950s and 1960s they were the essence of the production sector of the market; however, by contrast, they were well educated, highly skilled middle class people with upgraded ambitions and highly advanced expectations, unable to undergo the hardships of their parents. After all, they had emerged from an affluent Greece, having grown in a prosperous economy for decades and enjoying one of the best thirty socio-economic standards of living in the world.

There were several spasmodic and sporadic initiatives by certain community groups; a number of community leaders as we shall see undertook a campaign to assist the incoming immigrants with a professional approach, engaging trained and highly-qualified experts;<sup>12</sup> a couple of lightly-minded diplomats even dared to use the radio studio for a buzzer interview announcing inter-government agreements which were never realized,<sup>13</sup> numerous articles of serious and/or dubious style and accuracy appeared in the Greek and Australian media describing the various aspects of the crisis of repatriation and neo-migration, boosting the expectations and inflaming the anticipation of prospective immigrants;<sup>14</sup> even a number of charlatans and self-interest moving individuals entered the arena to exploit the incoming desperate immigrants.

The European financial crisis brought back once again the institutions of migration agents in Greece and Australia to cater with the immigration needs of thousands of prospective new immigrants.<sup>15</sup> Government registered migration agencies appeared in the large urban cities of Melbourne and Sydney enriched with fully qualified legal personnel on migration issues. Charging fees from \$1,000 to \$10,000 the agents were responsible to submit visa applications, to advise and direct their clients on their employment, accommodation and other vital issues.<sup>16</sup> The mediation of agents was not

always successful;<sup>17</sup> hence many immigrants experienced hardships and losses. A number of arriving immigrants fell victims of exploitation as in many instances they were forced to receive remuneration much lower to the standard awards.

According to reliable government sources<sup>18</sup> in 2012 a total of 1,749 Greeks arrived in Australia as permanent economic immigrants and students, representing an increase of 21 per cent from 2011. During the first eight months of 2013 their number increased to 2,150.<sup>19</sup> To this number we must also add a percentage of approximately 45 per cent of the total number of 7,938 Greeks arriving as tourists, who changed their visa status and applied to stay as settlers.

In 2012, a total of 300 Greeks, mainly males (90 per cent) secured an employment sponsor who offered them employment for a period between one to four years under different types of visa.<sup>20</sup> An additional number of 1.112 Greeks aged between 23 to 40 years old (79 per cent male and 21 per cent females) arrived as regular immigrants (*see below*) with one of the various skilled immigrant Visa (175 Visa) or long stay employment visa (Visa subclass 457) securing permanent employment and the presuppositions for permanent residence. Most of the newly arriving Greek immigrants settled in Melbourne (55 per cent) the fast growing city in Australia,<sup>21</sup> followed by Sydney (30 per cent), Perth, Darwin, Adelaide and to a lesser extend in Brisbane or Hobart.<sup>22</sup> According to credible sources<sup>23</sup> a percentage of 14 per cent of incoming Greek migrants were Greek citizens of foreign ethnic background, mainly Albanians born in Greece (78 per cent) or Greeks from Northern Ipeiros.

Greek occupational patterns were seriously affected as a result of the aging of the Greek community (*see Table Four below*). The existing current employment situation will define to a larger extend the presuppositions of socio-economic integration of the incoming Greek neo-migrants within the next few years.

**Table 4:** Employment type of Greece-born Settlers by Gender (2011)

State/ Territory		Employed not owning business	Owner of Incorporated enterprises	Unicorpor. enterprises	Contributing family workers	Employment not stated	Total
ACT	(M)	104	38	39	10	0	191
	(F)	115	26	10	3	3	157
NSW	(M)	2660	791	1082	140	49	4722
	(F)	2220	226	407	104	32	2989
NT	(M)	177	77	90	10	8	362
	(F)	63	11	16	3	6	99
QLD	(M)	405	124	146	34	4	713
	(F)	219	47	40	11	6	323
SA	(M)	680	247	357	82	17	1383
	(F)	654	74	88	45	17	878
TAS	(M)	29	26	18	10	0	83
	(F)	27	5	11	3	0	46
VIC	(M)	4388	1385	1226	176	83	7258
	(F)	3725	425	431	138	53	4772
WA	(M)	275	73	101	18	7	474
	(F)	201	16	31	12	0	260
Total:		15,942	3,581	4,093	799	285	<b>24,710</b>

Source: *Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2011. Elaboration by A. M. Tamis and S. Stavridis.*

A significant percentage of incoming Greeks with tourist visa (17 per cent), upon their arrival to Australia, attempt to amend its status into a student visa. This is encouraged by the fact that Greece is enlisted as a category A' country of preference by the Australian authorities. The citizens of the countries enlisted in category A' have a direct and more economic procedures to enter

into the country as students. More specifically the candidates of a student visa who wish to study in Australia are not obliged to attest or verify their financial status; neither are they compelled to formally apply in Greece prior to coming to Australia; they may arrive first as tourists and then apply. Other Balkan countries, including Albania comprise part of the group countries in category C; hence they must first prove their financial adequacy to study in Australia and are required to apply from their country of origin.

**Table 5:** Number of Greek citizens entering Australia in 2012<sup>24</sup>

Type of Visa	Male	Female	Total
Tourist visa	4 775	3 163	7 938
Student visa	407	180	587
Migration program visa	204	121	325
457 Long Stay visa	90	70	160
457 Temporary visa	140	77	217
457 Inter-business visa	10	10	20
175 Skilled Immigrant Visa	26	7	33
Illegal Immigrants			440
Total	5 652	3 628	9 720

Source: *Australia's Migration Trends 2011-2012*, Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

The lack of a bilateral agreement between Australia and Greece on issues of employment and visas and recognition of qualifications remains a serious problem, generating immense social problems and throwing in disarray and despair thousands of individuals, including returning Australian citizens. Australia has signed similar inter-government agreements with the USA and certain European countries offering a smooth transition to incoming immigrants. It was within this framework of traditional mutuality that the Greek community leaders decided to act by February 2011, almost one year after the commencement of the massive repatriation of Australian citizens from

Greece and Cyprus. The GOCMV and the AGWS jointly invited the representatives of the Greek community organizations to assemble at the community premises to discuss the inflating problem of neo-migration. Almost eighty representatives attended this crucial assembly on 28 February 2011.<sup>25</sup> Then on 15 June 2011, the president of the Community, Bill Papastergiadis, referring to the historical ties between Australia and Greece invited the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship Chris Bowen,<sup>26</sup> to convene to discuss the possibility of arranging for Greek immigrants the reciprocal working holiday visa between the two countries.<sup>27</sup> Following the meeting between Chris Bowen and the leadership of the Hellenes, despite the numerous diplomatic interferences and the exchange of amicable personal eulogies,<sup>28</sup> as well as a number of misleading newspaper reports,<sup>29</sup> the stance displayed by the Australian government could be assessed as rather negative or at least idle to say the least. The Greek community leaders were pushing the Commonwealth to accommodate their claims, namely the acceptance and socio-economic integration of the newly arriving Greek immigrants under the *Working Holiday Maker Visa-subclass 462*, the increase of their numbers and their consolidation within the employment market in Australia. It should be noted that citizenship in Australia is acquired mainly by conferral to immigrants. Other modes are *by descent* (for those born overseas to an Australian citizen); *by adoption* (for those adopted to an Australian citizen); *by resumption* (for those who previously lost or gave up their Australian citizenship).

Following the jointly invited forum on migration at the premises of the GOCM (February 2011) between the AGWS and the Community, as we have already noticed, an interim committee was appointed to compile an Immigration Report to be submitted to the Department of Immigration.<sup>30</sup> The Report recognized that as a result of the economic crisis in Greece, thousands of highly skilled and educated Greek nationals were seeking opportunities outside Greece. However, the Report failed to identify that the vast majority of the incoming individuals were as a matter of fact returning Australian citizens of Greek descent with their dependent family members; nevertheless, the purpose of the Report was to “*outline the ways in which Greek nationals can make a valuable contribution to the economic and social fabric of Australia society and to suggest practical reforms to the Australian immigration process to facilitate entry of Greek visa applicant to Australia.*”<sup>31</sup>

Since mid 2010, when larger waves of repatriating Australians hit the main urban centres of Australia the organized Greek community,<sup>32</sup> unable to canvass the volume of exerted pressure was making a formidable and systemic effort to rally the support of the Commonwealth. Greek leaders were pursuing changes to the Australian visa application and the processing system, so that the incoming individuals could be able to easily and effectively enter Australia to meet skills shortages and make a positive impact to the socio-economic and cultural landscape of Australia. The authors of the Report were even prepared to claim that “Australia’s migration legislation, policies and procedures were non-discriminatory in nature. *“We are not seeking any special or preferential treatment for Greek visa applicants. Rather, we are suggesting some small scale practical reforms to the current system to allow Greeks to more easily apply for the visas for which they are eligible.”*<sup>33</sup> The advocators of the Greek cause were pushing the Australian government to adopt a policy of attracting more Greeks to Australia under the *General Skilled Migration Program, Employer Sponsored Visa Program, Working Holiday Program and Student Visa Program*. They were also asking the Commonwealth to provide increased assistance to repatriating Australian citizens who were seeking entry of their partners, children and other family members to Australia. Following a number of public meetings, the Greek leaders stipulated a changing role and function of a much inactive and cumbersome Australian Embassy in Athens; they insisted on ensuring adequate staffing and resources to the Embassy to meet the needs of emigrating Greek and repatriating Australian citizens.

During the period 2011-2013 the Greek community vigorously recommended to the then Minister for Immigration Chris Bowen, seeking funding to establish a taskforce in assisting skilled Greeks to make contact with perspective Australian employers. The taskforce was to establish an on line hub whereby Australian employers and community organizations could communicate with interested Greeks about job and study opportunities. Nevertheless, the commonwealth government failed to provide funding towards the establishment of a hub or any migrant assisting scheme towards the GOCMV or the AGWS; however, Bowen honoured his promise to hold a Skills EXPO in Greece.

The *Australian Skills EXPO* to be held in Thessaloniki, “the Balkan centre”, similar to conventions in Berlin and London, providing an opportunity for

skilled and qualified Greeks interested in working in Australia to speak to potential employers and the representatives of DIAC about work and visa options, was finally staged in Athens (October 2011); yet its five sessions attracting 773 participants<sup>34</sup> in Athens at Hilton Hotel proved to be a disappointment, as potential employers from Australia took no interest to be present. The Skills Australia Needs EXPO and information sessions organised by the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) was attended by three exhibitors: the South Australian government, the Victorian government and WA Health. *Froniditha Care* was the only private organisation to attend. Nevertheless, the president of the GOCMV, Bill Papastergiadis claimed<sup>35</sup> that in the space of two weeks more than 13,000 medical and building professionals applied to attend a recent Australian Government expo in Athens. Most of them were having difficulty in finding gainful employment in Greece. But the people who are mostly making contact with us are predominantly educated, people with a number of degrees, people who have mostly studied abroad. Here is how Sakis Zafiroopoulos, AO, the sole "potential employer" from Australia described the derailing nature of EXPO.

*"When DIAC organized the Athens EXPO, I was in Athens on a private capacity. The CEO of Froniditha, George Lekakis called me from Melbourne asking me to represent our social welfare organization at the EXPO. Indeed, I was the sole potential employer; the only one. As a Greek migrant, and the only exhibitor with a Greek background, I was able to discuss aspects of the Greek community in Australia with those attending. Many were asking about bilingual schools, orthodox churches, newspapers, and community groups and the difficulties of employment. Absent from the EXPO was also the Australian ambassador. There was a DIAC representative from London. Amongst those registered participants were many medical specialists; they wanted to escape Greece to secure a better place for their children; they felt socially unsecured. For them the drive was not related to the country's economy. It was rather funny to have in front of the audience the representatives of the government exhibitors one each for the three states and next to them a table with me "representing"...Australia's employment potential..."<sup>36</sup>*

Nevertheless, prospective Greek immigrants and repatriating Australian citizens continued to experience long delays and to remain with insufficient

briefing; the visa application by Greek nationals continued to be processed by the Australian Embassy in Berlin, not in Athens for reasons of “economic rationalism”.<sup>37</sup> Similarly the applications for Citizenship by Descent were processed in London. Despite the severe impetus of the crisis and the petitions of the Australian Hellenes the Embassy in Athens remained grossly inadequate in staff and resources throwing in long delays and jeopardy the rights of thousands of Australian citizens residing in Greece to repatriate without fuss or bureaucratic ordeal with their family members.

Australia’s Hellenes put a strong case for the operating and counter hours of the Australian Embassy in Athens to be extended in order to deal with the increase in enquiries for Australia visas, reaching more than 15,000 per annum.<sup>38</sup> Responding to numerous complaints of deficiency and absence of due information escalating by prospective immigrants and repatriating Australians, the Greek community leaders demanded that the role and function of the Australian Embassy in Greece ought to be adapted to ensure that it became responsive to the needs of Greeks and the repatriating Australians.<sup>39</sup> Certain community leaders went as far as to claim that Australia’s attitude in obstructing free and easy rapport with prospective migrants and repatriating Australians in Athens could be interpreted as a systematic attempt “*to save the Commonwealth with additional expenses incurred as a result of their settlement in Australia- allowances, Medicare expenses...*”<sup>40</sup> The same leaders also stated that the Australian Embassy’s website in Athens should be in both the English and Greek languages, “*as it is for all other non-English speaking European countries*”,<sup>41</sup> hence terminating middling and substandard treatment for Greece.

On 20 February 2012, the president of the GOCMV, B. Papastergiadis wrote to Minister Chris Bowen asking him about the fate of the reciprocal working holiday visa between Australia and Greece, which they had discuss almost one year ago. Papastergiadis did not stop short of even considering the fiasco of the Athens Skills EXPO a “huge success”.<sup>42</sup> The laconic ministerial reply regarding the reciprocal working visa for the Greeks and the political play staged as Athens Skills EXPO did not allow much room for further negotiations.<sup>43</sup> The ministerial letter informed Papastergiadis that indeed in February 2010, “*the Government decided to recommence/advance negotiations for capped Work and Holiday (subclass 462) agreements with a small number of countries. Greece was not amongst these countries. While there are currently no immediate plans to*



*commence Work and Holiday negotiations with Greece that matter is still under active consideration. I will advise you if there is a change in the status of negotiations with Greece. Should negotiations be opened, the support of the Greek community in Australia will no doubt play a very positive role in the process of establishing an agreement.*” Minister Bowen had also some additional comments about the failed *Skills Expo*: «*The Skills Expo recently held by my Department in Athens, in October 2011, highlights the valuable contribution that Greek migrants have made, and will continue to make, to the Australian economy and community, through the wide range of existing visa pathways available to them...*”. The Minister of Immigration was excluding Greece and its prospective citizens from the list of European countries with whom Australia had signed the *Working Holiday- subclass 417*,<sup>44</sup> he was also excluding Greece even from the *Work and Holiday- subclass 462*, which was offered to countries of the Pacific and Asian regions, including Turkey.<sup>45</sup> For example, the *Working Holiday- subclass 417* which is valid for Cyprus and other European countries was signed by the then Minister of Immigration and Indigenous Affairs, Philip Ruddock, and by the High Commissioner of Cyprus in Australia, Sotos Liassidis (25 June 2002)<sup>46</sup>, refers to Australian and Cypriot youth aged between 18 to 30, healthy, not accompanied by dependent children, possess a valid passport and a return travel ticket or sufficient funds with which to purchase such a ticket have a good health and a sound background to work for two years.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the diplomatic blissful outcries in Australia and Greece, the well-organized campaign undertaken by the Greek community leaders in Melbourne was left without substantial gains for and on behalf of the returning Australian citizens of Greek descent and the Greek neo-immigrant. The well-planned proposal to establish for the latter a ***Skilled Greek Migrants and return Residents Taskforce-Hub*** in Melbourne under the responsibility of the GOCMV and the Australian Greek Welfare Society did not receive the support of the Commonwealth either. The objective was to operate a reception centre «*to assist and connect Greek migrants and return residents with Australian employers and community organizations to assist with information in relation to employment, study opportunities, migration/visa advice and settlement within Australia*”. Through this centre the incoming immigrants and repatriating Australia Greeks would have the human resources and the advice to find employment, accommodation, familiarization with the institutions, schools for themselves and their children,

and to be accustomed with the Australian practices and traditions.

By contrast to the prevailing characteristics of the 1952-1974 massive Greek immigration period, where 86 per cent of incoming immigrants were either illiterate or primary school leavers, during the 2011-2013 period of the 15,500 individuals that expressed the desire to return or to migrate to Australia, the vast majority (63 per cent) were graduates of tertiary institutions of Greece, of whom at least 14 per cent accomplished postgraduate studies in Greece/Cyprus or Europe; a total of 18 per cent were graduates of equivalent to TAFE colleges and 17 per cent completed their secondary studies.

In an effort to canvass the large waves of neo-migrants and repatriating Greek Australians Greek community organizations in Melbourne developed mechanisms of close collaboration with the Australian migration authorities. The AGWS established and maintains in service despite the lack of monetary support from the Commonwealth the *Greek Migration Agent Service* in response to the demand for information and assistance in immigration and visa matters by many returning residents and new arrivals. This service is closely related to the *Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA)* operated by the Australian government. The latter provides information for neo-migrants about their rights, outlines the obligations of the migration agents under the code of conduct, outlines the complaints process and provides contact details for registered migration agents.

In 2012-2013, the AGWS has had contact with 310 Greek neo-immigrants requesting immigration / visa information and settlement needs, via casework services. Of this number 218 individuals accessed the *Greek Migration Agent Service*. According to collated specific data related to the 218 individuals-recipients of this service, 55 per cent were males and 45 per cent females; 46.3 per cent were married/defacto and 13.76 per cent single; only 23 per cent were Australian Citizens; 23 per cent had student visa, 33.48 per cent arrived with tourist, 3.6 per cent with working visa, six per cent with bridging visa, 1.8 per cent with partner visa and 2.2 per cent sponsor visa. According to the AGWS's data 17 per cent of the incoming neo-migrants had no English, 41.7 per cent low level English, 25.7 per cent Good level English and 10.5 per cent excellent English language. It is important to note that 46.8 per cent had no income, 8.7 had only access to government allowances, namely the Centrelink payment; 10 per cent had some part time employment, 5.9 had full time

employment, 7.8 per cent casual employment

Those individuals who attended AGWS offices for assistance presented with multiple needs/issues relating to migration and settlement. Their main concerns were directly relevant to their visa status (71.10 per cent); next was their agony regarding their immigration eligibility and procedures (67.4 per cent); their prospects for employment and survival was also acute (55 per cent), as indeed was their distress to identify the new cultural environment seeking relevant information (43 per cent). One in every three neo-migrants was seeking access to services (29.35 per cent) and an equal proportion expressed anguish for the education of their children (29.3 per cent). Their accommodation was only relevant to 19 per cent of the incoming neo-migrants.

The AGWS has been providing casework services (not funded) to the newly arrived Greek migrants. This support includes practical assistance, financial support, short term counselling, referral to services (accommodation, emergency relief, health, education, employment amongst others), and advocacy. AGWS's aged care programs has provided employment opportunities for new arrivals including direct service delivery such as case managers and support roles, community care workers in respite programs and team leader positions. To date AGWS has found employment for approximately thirty people in the last year who are newly arrived from Greece. Many others are undertaking training to enter into the aged care field of employment.

As we have already noticed, the recommendation submitted to Minister Chris Bowen regarding the Working Holiday Visa program to be expanded to include Greece was met with reluctance, confusion and controversial politicking by both sides, Athens and Canberra. On 23 August 2013, more than two years after the initial approach in Melbourne and in Canberra, Australia's Immigration Minister, Chris Bowen, has repeated that Australia is ready to sign the agreement on granting visas to Greek young people from 18 to 30 years old for vacation and work. The Greek Deputy Foreign Minister Akis Gerontopoulos, in an interview to the daily broadcast of the Greek State Radio and Television of Australia SBS, also confirmed in early November 2013 that Greece is ready to sign the agreement. In reply to persistent inquiries by the GOCMV, Chris Bowen informed the President of the Greek Community

of Melbourne Vassilis Papastergiadis, prior to the September 2013 elections, that the file is in Athens waiting for Gerontopoulos's consent.

### **3. The returning Australian Citizens**

According to elicited data, from the records of community and ecclesiastic organizations, social welfare entities, Greek consular representatives and migration agencies,<sup>48</sup> during the period 2010-2013, from the total number of 135,000 members of the Australian Diaspora residing in Greece until 2009, approximately 80,000 Australian citizens of Greek descent repatriated with their spouses and dependent children to Australia. This number also includes approximately 10,000 returning Greek settlers who had previously repatriated to Greece or Cyprus for permanent residence.<sup>49</sup> According to the Greek Consul General in Northern Territory, John Anictomatis and the government minister Constantine Vaskalis<sup>50</sup> more than 10 to 12 individuals are returning to Darwin per week "*prior to bringing soon their spouses and dependent children*". During the period under study according to government sources<sup>51</sup> the number of returned individuals in Darwin was 2,100. According to Greek consular and community sources at least 450 Greek families returned and settled in Perth during the said period. Most of them are well-educated professionals, engineers, architects, solicitors and small businessmen. Most of them returned for economic reasons; there are also many who were well off in Greece, however, there are also those who returned as a result of a self-perceived lack of security and even safety in the prevailing socio-economic environment in their cities of settlement, mainly in Athens, Thessaloniki, Patra and Volos. Upon arrival, those returning Greek Australians seek refuge and advice from existing relatives, the Hellenic Community's resources and the Greek Consulate. Perth was also a strong recipient urban centre of 1,200 Greek immigrants who fled South Africa, particularly from the area of Johannesburg and settled as high-skilled tradesmen, professionals and small business, since 1990.

Most of the repatriating Australians of Greek descent settled in Melbourne (58 per cent), a city that remains the ethno-linguistic hub of Australia's Hellenism, followed by Sydney (34 per cent), Darwin, Adelaide and Perth. The returning Greek Australians maintain a loose rapport and communication with the Greek community organizations, relying more on their relatives and

their own knowledge of the socio-economic environment for support. More specifically from an estimate total of over 40,000 returned Greek Australian in Melbourne, the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria, Greek welfare organizations, Greek educational institutions as well as other ecclesiastic communities and parishes attracted inquiries by 16,500 individuals. The GOCMV alone received over 10,000 inquiries until October 2013 by means of electronic correspondence, numerous applications for employment attaching impressive curriculum vitae and requests for accommodation.<sup>52</sup>

The vast majority of the returning Greek Australians (64 per cent) are secondary school graduates; most of them administrative officers, service industry attendants and proprietors of small business. The percentage of those who had attained tertiary education was 33 per cent (*see Table Six below*), most of them (68 per cent) graduates of the so called “privileged” faculties of studies; mainly civil, constructing, electric and mechanical engineers, architects, geologists, medical doctors, specialists and general practitioners, dentists and legal practitioners; an additional seven per cent were highly-skilled tradesmen and highly-trained personnel, mainly public administrators, corporate and executive personnel, bank officials, social workers, agriculturalists, experts in tourism and other service industries, health related occupations, journalists and graduates of gymnastic academies. Approximately nine per cent of the returning Greek Australians as a result of the economic crisis were skilled labourers in the building and construction industries, motor mechanics, technicians and experts in pipeline constructions, natural gas and mines.<sup>53</sup>

**Table 6:** Type of employment possessed by repatriating Greek Australian citizens and Greek economic migrants from 820 cases in Melbourne (2013)

<b>Type of Employment</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
Military Schools	5	0	5
Bank related jobs	6	3	9
Business Executives	18	3	21
Directors of corporations	9	1	10
Civil Engineers	47	2	49
Electrical Engineers	11	0	11
Mechanical Engineers	8	1	10
Other engineers	18	1	19
Architects	21	3	24
I.T. expertise	18	3	21
Marketing expertise	15	6	21
Tourist officers	3	6	9
Journalists	8	2	10
Ecclesiastic Academies	4	0	4
Theologians	7	2	9
Health occupations	19	6	25
Medical practitioners	11	2	13
Chemists	5	4	9
Nurses	15	7	22
Dieticians	5	5	10
Humanities/Arts graduates	52	14	66
Teachers (secondary)	42	21	63
Teachers (primary)	32	11	43
Social Workers	14	4	21
Gymnastic Academies	7	2	9

Solicitors	17	7	24
Agriculturalist/forest experts	7	0	7
Developers	9	0	9
Plumbers	19	1	20
Car mechanics	22	0	22
Panel Bidders	14	0	14
High Skilled labourers	39	5	44
Natural Gas installation experts	11	1	12
Thermic installation experts	13	1	14
Small and medium business	39	14	53
Merchants and producers	27	1	28
Economists	38	7	45
Transport experts	12	3	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>667 (81%)</b>	<b>153 (19%)</b>	<b>820 (100%)</b>

*Source: Archives and Records of the Greek Community of Melbourne; Australian Greek Welfare Society; Records of the Hellenic Community of WA; Records of the Greek Consulate general in Northern Territory (2013).*

Most of those who sought the support of the Greek community organizations were mainly males (71 per cent), who used to live in large urban centres of Greece (87 per cent). The majority of the remaining individuals were Greeks who, as accompanied children of their repatriated parents, settled mainly in Western and central Macedonia and Thrace.

#### **4. Integration and adaptability**

Greek Social welfare leaders acknowledge that there is a need within the community of supporting the newly arriving Greeks immigrants and the returning Australian citizens, home. They assess their adaptability in the new employment market, their social environment and evaluate the available mechanisms and strategies for their smooth integration into the Australia realm. Here is how a talented social worker expert, Tina Douvos-Stathopoulos

assesses the current situation in Australia.<sup>54</sup>

*“We had contact with over 300 individuals or families who approached us the last months requesting advice and assistance. We developed the Greek Migration Service within the Greek Australian Welfare Society, a service which is not funded by the Commonwealth offering support on issues of settlement and visa migration. The families that came to us came under various types of visas, namely for tourist, partner, student, working sponsored visas. Normally we receive people with no financial standing; with limited connections within the Greek community and those families experiencing serious problems.”*<sup>55</sup>

*Currently there are legitimate and expertise organizations and offices that provide assistance and they are qualified people to perform such duties. Some of the settled cases that we came across are related to accommodation, employment, financial support, education and even psychological and family related support assistance.*

*Most of the contacted individuals see their migration experience from a different perspective; we have worked with a number of different organizations, including Centre Link, with housing accommodation services, with financial counsellors to support people and provide services; we even dealt with migration agencies and the Commonwealth health and welfare services for those repatriating Australian citizens of Greek descent. Most of those returning Australian citizens from Greece are naturally Australia-born; however they have now with them their partners and their children born in Greece. Hence the existing services applicable to them are not to their dependent members. Those arriving on a sponsorship arrangement are the fewer.*

*We collaborate with Migration Agency Registration Authority, the entity which provides us with a list of the registered migration agents which provide services to incoming Greek immigrants, both economic as well as the dependents of returning Australian citizens. They have to act on behalf of the immigrants; we are not allowed to partake on the transactions leading to various status of residence.”*

As it was already noted, certain individuals and families experience difficulties in obtaining information through the Australian Embassy in Athens



in finding what the migration laws are and there was a language barrier; most of them were rather encouraged to find information through the internet sites of the Immigration department. The Australian Greek Welfare Society (AGWS) the largest secular welfare society of the Hellenes was not asked to play a substantial role in the discussions between the GOCMV and the Department of Immigration in formulating a policy on the returning Greek Australians. The AGWS did not have any role in the October 2011 Athens Skills EXPO. However, it was important that the AGWS and the GOCMV collaborated in February 2011 in organizing an assembly of over seventy representatives of community organizations to form an awareness of the problems arising from the massive Greek neo-migration. This forum demonstrated that Greek community organizations were united in canvassing the migration problem and its consequences. Yet, it is also significant to note, that the well-advertised hub for services for the incoming immigrants was never implemented and the anticipated services were offered on a non-systemic way, by means of volunteer services.

It is a well-known fact amongst the social welfare and community organizations<sup>56</sup> that the incoming immigrants once in Australia establish their own assemblages, their own clusters to canvass their problems of settlement and survival. Douvos summarised her vast experience in dealing with those repatriating and neo-immigrants as follows:

*“The repatriating and neo-immigrants feel that they understand the migration experience; their settlement appears vastly different from the older stocks of immigrants. They also understand that there are sharp differences with the established community here of what their needs are, so they form their own networking, their own grouping; naturally there are people that arrive and mix well with the settlers, the existing clubs and church groups, Greek schools; however the youngest amongst the incoming immigrants opted for different networking groups and assistance. Most of the individuals and families that approached us, especially the younger groups, believe that in five or six years they will be able to return to Greece. However, this was also the trends in the 1950s and 1960s when they were coming in large numbers. The entire corpus of individuals who sought our support were Greek or Cypriot citizens of Greek descent. We have no resources or funding to expand our current services to in coming Greek*

*immigrants.<sup>57</sup>The burden is that many of those individuals are coming back for the third and fourth time. We are dealing with very complicated issues and there is no financial support from the Australian government. We have a number of people who volunteer their time; they are migration professional agents who offer their services for free, every fortnight. We also liaise with the Migrant Resource Centre, with private migration solicitors who are working for a fee and provide advice and information; I also believe that MARA is also offering services and advice on migration issues. An area of exploitation that came to our knowledge from the complaints that we received from the recipients of our services is related to under award payment making the cost of living agonising. There were also some issues around the education for their children. Certain community schools ought to perceive their needs with more understanding and the school fees ought to be seen with more leniencies.*

*“Broadly speaking, the newly arriving Greeks possess different cultural concepts and values of the community and the society if compared with us. They conceive their experience differently from our own assessment of the social environment. They have a different understanding of the community as such. Hence there are some people who would claim that they have not properly or adequately supported upon arrival, by their friends or their relatives or the broader community at large. There were also different anticipations amongst those who were arriving from Greece or Cyprus and their expectations were not properly communicated hence creating a conflict. We must understand that first generation of Greek immigrants are aging fast; they don’t have the ability or the stamina to be energetically supporting the incoming new immigrants. These aging immigrants do not have the gasp in understanding systems and institutions themselves. The incoming neo-immigrants have also to understand and realize the prevailing trends in their immigration”.*

Sakis Zafiroopoulos had an experience on migration issues working several years ago in the department of Immigration. *“The GOCMV approached me in May 2011 to compile an Immigration Report; there were more than one thousand newly returning Australian citizens and Greek immigrants, most of them well-educated, professionals who sought assistance. I have also been advised that a large number of neo-immigrants were caught in the nest of certain “migration experts” who were*

*exploiting them, promising visa arrangement and services in exchange of ludicrous amounts of money*". Zafiroopoulos as president of the *Fronthitha* and an administrative officer of the Department of Immigration had experienced over the last few years an increasing tendency towards exploiting the newly arriving immigrants from Greece: "There is also a tariff for given services. Certain stranded neo-migrants approached me personally. They inquired the accuracy of the advice that they had received claiming that they had been asked to pay large sums of moneys ranging from \$1,000 to even \$15,000 to obtain a visa". On several occasions, he also volunteered to assist the new arrivals from Greece at the GOCMV's premises. His experience with the workings and the deliberations of the Australian Embassy in Athens are clearly stated:<sup>58</sup>

*"I personally met and explained to Mrs. Bloomfield that I am receiving many complaints from individuals, who protest that have no access to the Australian Embassy resources in Athens. They argue that there is no telephone response and the embassy transfers their inquiries to Berlin or even to London depending on the issues, claiming lack of resources in Greece. The last few years it became apparent that Australia needed skilled labourers and professionals, especially nurses, specialists in mines, engineers. Greece has a large pool of experts. Hence, it is necessary for the Australian authorities to change their attitude on the affirmative. Unfortunately, following long negotiations with government authorities and despite the promises given we managed to bring only one qualified nurse from Greece. We currently employ 500 individuals of non-Greek language background and spent tens of thousands of dollars to improve their linguistic adequacy."*

In conclusion, it should be noted that following the European Economic Crisis and the collapse of Greek economy in 2009, a huge repatriation of the members of the Australian Diaspora in Greece commenced. The exodus from Greece had two different characters: (a) the repatriation and settlement in the first instance of approximately 80,000 Australian citizens with their dependent members, children and spouses until the end of 2013, mainly in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth and Darwin. If the current trends will persist, it is expected that a total of 110,000 persons will repatriate within the period 2009-2015; and (b) the immigration of approximately 10,000 new economic Greek settlers to Australia utilizing different forms of visas. This massive influx of more than

100,000 actual and/or prospective Australian citizens will substantially reinforce the aging Greek Community of 505,000 linguistically, socio-economically and culturally as most of them are members of the middle class, comprising of professionals, technocrats, businessmen, scientists, artists who had attained TAFE or tertiary education. However, neither the organized Greek community nor the Australian institutional life were prepared to receive this massive influx of fellow compatriots; currently, there are no communal or state infrastructure or networks to absorb, utilize or assist them to conform, adapt and acculturate. The lack of a bilateral agreement between Australia and Greece on issues of employment and visas and recognition of qualifications remains a serious problem, generating immense social problems and throwing in disarray and despair thousands of individuals, including returning Australian citizens.

#### NOTES

1. Hugo, Graeme, Dianne Rudd and Kevin Harris (2003), "CEDA Information Paper 80: *Australia's Diaspora: Its Size, Nature and Policy Implications*. CEDA (Committee for Economic Development of Australia).
2. The main sources of data for this study included: The Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australia's Migration Trends 2011-2012, the Community Information Summary of Immigration and Citizenship [DIAC]; interviews with the heads of Greek social welfare societies and organizations including, Constantinos Markou of the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria; Tina Douvos-Stathopoulos, deputy director, manager Family and Community Services of the *Australian Greek Welfare Society* in Melbourne; social workers Athanasios and Penny Anagnostou from the Greek community of Adelaide; the Greek Consul General and former Governor in the Northern Territory, Ioannis Anictomatis; the president of the Greek social welfare institution *Frontidha*, Sakis Zafiroopoulos, AO; the directors of the VET and ELICOS Colleges in Melbourne P. Iasonidis of ITHEA and M. Koumidis of the Akademia; managers and migration consultants of two migration agencies operating in Melbourne and in Sydney. The Archives and records of the Greek orthodox Community of Melbourne; the Archives and Records of the Greek Community of Sydney; interviews with thirty six newly arriving and settling economic migrants and repatriating Australians.

3. Tamis and Gauntlett in their study (1992:1) had argued: “*Barring the unthinkable (eg. a pan-Balkan conflict), it is unlikely that members of Greek –speakers in Australia will ever increase substantially again through immigration. The future of Greek in Australia has therefore to be seen in the context of maintenance within the established local community and extension of ties of trade, tourism, cultural exchange between Australia and Greece, Cyprus and the numerous communities around the globe, where Helenophone enclaves are established...*”.
4. Interview with Tina Douvos-Stathopoulos Deputy Director of the Australian Greek Welfare Society, File 850144, 14 November 2013.
5. The Australian bureau of Statistics ABS clearly defines that since the early 1980s Greek Australians possess the highest rate of integration into citizenship in Australia.
6. Over 3,800 people who were born in Greece and arrived as Greek citizens refrained from revealing that Greek was the language spoken at home; instead they declared fraudulently that their only language was Slavonic “Macedonian”. They also failed to record their ancestry as Greek. Similar political senaria emerged from Greek citizens who were born in Thrace declaring as their religion “Muslim”.
7. See Tamis (2005). For reasons of political convenience Greek Orthodox Church authorities and records estimate the total number to 700,000 or even to 900,000, whilst the estimates of the June 2011 Immigration Report compiled by the GOCMV (p. 4) suggests 600,000.
8. It is possible and expected that a number of individuals concealed or decided not to state their identity for political reasons or as a result of the Negating Identity Syndrome.
9. There was a persistent campaign by the Macedoslav community and its leaders encouraging Macedoslavs born in Macedonia, Greece to state as their ancestry the “Macedonian” and for their Slavonic dialect to state “Macedonian”.
10. It should be stated that the 2011 Census took place during August, when tens of thousands of Greek Australians were spending their vacations in their native lands, in Greece or Cyprus. During that year the Greek language newspapers were encouraging their readers to spend their time and savings in Greece, thus rallying their support to the ill-fated Greek economy.
11. *Adelaide Advertiser* newspaper, p. 49, April 16, 2012. Needless to say that Arabic accounts as the language of at least 17 different ethnicities in Australia and the Vietnamese is spoken by one of the most recently arriving ethnicity in Australia.
12. This is particularly true for the AGWS, the GOCMV, the *Froniditha*, the Greek communities in W.A and NSW.
13. During the 2011-2013, the controversial Consul General of Greece in Victoria used to frequently appear in radio 3XY and various social functions of the Greek community claiming that as a result of her efforts and co-ordination a bilateral

agreement between Greece and Australia was imminent or had been materialized. Quoting even sources from the Greek MOFA she was informing her audience that an inter-government agreement was signed allowing into Australia young Greeks to utilize the fruits of the Working Holiday visa. Until early November 2013 no bilateral agreement was ever signed between the two countries. The Greek Consul General also used to frequently intercept as a host various broadcasting segments providing data which were rather inaccurate to say the least. Unfortunately, these diplomatic appearances in the Greek language programs and the socials of Australia's Hellenes, also exposed some of the joined public appearances of the Australian Ambassador to Greece, J. Bloomfield, because they were disseminating the impression of a common approach. These theatrical appearances were aiming at reinforcing the diplomatic status of the said Greek diplomat in the Greek MOFA and feed her ambitions rather than resolving the true problems which were emerging from the repatriation and the immigration of the Greeks in Australia.

14. Numerous articles appeared in the Greek language and English language sections of the newspaper *Neos Kosmos* applying pressure to the Australian government regarding the incoming migrants and their nebulous settlement experience. The ABC television broadcasted a documentary on 11 October 2013 under the title "Return to OZ: the new wave of Greek immigrants" referring to the thousands of repatriating Australians. (<http://www.abc.net.au/news.2013.10.11/return-to-oz-th-new-wave-of-greek-immigrants/5017742?section=nsw>); see also articles in Australian media on repatriation and immigration including: [www.smh.com.au/business/more-greeks-apply-to-migrate-as-their-economy-collapses-20120316-1valp.html](http://www.smh.com.au/business/more-greeks-apply-to-migrate-as-their-economy-collapses-20120316-1valp.html)

[www.smh.com.au/business/more-greeks-apply-to-migrate-as-their-economy-collapses-20120316-1valp.html](http://www.smh.com.au/business/more-greeks-apply-to-migrate-as-their-economy-collapses-20120316-1valp.html); also in <http://www.cnbc.com/id/47808864> under title "Greeks Flock to Australia as Recession Hits Hard" dated 14 June 2012; also in [www.abc.net.au/news/2012-05-27/greek-crisis-sees-new-wave-of-immigrants](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-05-27/greek-crisis-sees-new-wave-of-immigrants), 27 May 2012, also <http://thebrooklynink.com/2013/04.07/52147-a-greek-tragedy-starting-over-in-brooklyn>, dated 7 April 2013; also

<http://www.onair24.gr/news/category/1/content/99343> dated 20 September 2013 under the title "Australia is the Land of Paradise for the Greeks; see also <http://au.greekreporter.gr/?p=8339> dated 24 September 2013; see also [http://news247.gr/eidiseis/kosmos/oi\\_ellines\\_omogeneis\\_epistrefoun](http://news247.gr/eidiseis/kosmos/oi_ellines_omogeneis_epistrefoun) dated 17 October 2013

15. During the Inter-War period (1918-1938) a large number of travel agents operated in the main urban centers of Florina, Thessaloniki and Athens who acted as unofficial and illegal migration agents leading to emigration of thousands of individuals, primarily male, to the neighbourhoods of Latin America, North America and Australia. These migration and travel agents used to promise their victims secured employment upon settlement subtracting large amount of money (Tamis, 1994, 1997, 2002 and 2005).

16. Registered migration agents appeared in large numbers amongst the Greek communities in the state capital cities representing a large number of agencies, including, *Orana Migration Group, Hellas Australia Visa Services, BWP Consulting*.
17. According to credible sources from the GOCMV, the AGWS and other social welfare sources it was possible to ascertain that there are currently over 30 individuals and agencies having as their exclusive profession the provision of services to incoming immigrants charging fees.
18. The DIAC sources, including the Community Information Summary data (2013).
19. *Australia's Migration Trends 2011-2012*, p.164, Department of Immigration and Citizenship.
20. The main type of visa used was the one called 457 visa.
21. Melbourne is being increased by 1,700 immigrants daily.
22. Hundreds of prospective immigrants sought refuge and assistance at the offices of the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria and were treated with compassion and care by its staff and the secretary General Kostas Markou; an additional 300 neo-immigrants and repatriating Greeks sought the counselling of the Australian Greek welfare Society in Brunswick, Melbourne.
23. Interview with the Secretary of the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria (GOCMV) Kostas Markou, 15 October 2013. Markou and the special secretary of the Community processed over 12,000 electronic and printed letters written by interested prospective migrants from Greece who wished to gain entry into Australia utilizing a legal type of visa.
24. Until June 2012 the department of Immigration and Citizenship maintained 107 different types of visas for permanent residence and delivery of citizenship to immigrants. There were types that were referred to spouse, children, parents, family, dependent aging relatives, business, the business talent, return of immigrants who had lived previously in Australia and so on.
25. A delegation of the Greek Community of Melbourne comprised of V. Papastergiadis, Kostas Markou, Elisabeth Hatziefremidou, Saki Zafeiropoulos and Panagiotis Iasonidis as co-ordinator of the Australian Hellenic Council in Victoria visited the office of Chris Bowen in Canberra (17 June 2011) and submitted a Memorandum of Policy requesting also federal funding to operate an office catering for the needs of the incoming migrants.
26. Chris Bowen was presented with an award by the GOCMV under the guidance of the Greek Consul General in Melbourne
27. The GOCOMV submitted a concise memorandum under the title *Immigration Report* (17 June 2011).

28. Consul General Eleni Lianidou in her public statements made several references to Ambassador J. Bloomfield presenting a rather romantic overview of the achieved tasks and the progress of an ever impending bilateral agreement, hence concealing from the people the negativity or idleness of the situation.
29. Newspaper publications and radio segments presenting statements made by the Greek Consul General, H. Lianidou were disseminating the notion an agreement was already signed and “the road to Australia was already open for thousands of unemployed youth who will have the opportunity to work in Australia...”
30. GOCMV’s Immigration Report, p.4, June 2011.
31. Reference is made here to the historic Greek Community organizations of Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, the AGWS, Social Workers’ entities and to a lesser extend Greek Orthodox Church institutions.
32. See amongst numerous articles in the Greek newspapers NEOS KOSMOS, KOSMOS, HELLENIC HERALD and TA NEA, also GOCMV’s Immigration Report, pp. 4-5, June 2011.
33. Similar EXPO sessions in Berlin attracted only 93 highly skilled labourers; most of them easily found their way to Australia.
34. Australian Broadcasting Corporation, by Mary Gearin Broadcast (10/11/2011).
35. See in particular S. Zafiroopoulos’s statement in *Neos Kosmos*, “Greeks look to Australia for salvation” article by Penni Pappas, p. 1, 16 October 2011 stating that “hundreds of Greek professionals desperate to migrate attended the Athens Skills expo last weekend in a bid to find out what Australia has to offer”.
36. According to *Australia’s Migration Trends 2011-2012*, p. 5 ff., the Australian immigration authorities in 2012 cancelled the visas to 67 Greek immigrants (60 males and 7 females) for a variety of reasons.
37. Interview with Sakis Zafiroopoulos, File 850145, 14 November 2013.
38. The GOCMV Immigration Report, pp. 17-18, June 2011 strongly suggested to the Minister for Immigration, Chris Bowen, for “*persons who are eligible for Australian visas or citizenship should be able to more easily obtain information from the Embassy about these matters...*”
39. Reference is made here to the interview with the Secretary General of the GOCMC, Mr. Kostas Markou.
40. *Ibid.* p. 18.
41. Letter by president Bill Papastergiadis of the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria to Minister Chris Bowen, 20 February 2012.
42. Letter by The Hon. Chris Bowen, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship to Bill Papastergiadis, President, GOCOMV, 23 February 2012.



43. The partner - countries of Australia with whom the *Working Holiday - subclass 417* was signed included: Belgium, Holland, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malta, Norway, Sweden, Taiwan and United Kingdom.
44. The partner - countries of Australia with whom the *Work and Holiday - subclass 462* was signed included: Argentina, Bangladesh, Chile, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Turkey and USA.
45. The relevant bi-lateral agreement signed on behalf of Australia, Minister Philip Ruddock and for Cyprus, its High Commissioner, Sotos Liassidis.
46. *Memorandum of Understanding* between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus Relating to Working Holiday Visas, 25 June 2002.
47. The institutions, government offices, community and welfare entities that were consulted and researched included the Australia DIAC, the officer-in-charge for the statistics, Peter Vardos, the Greek Communities in NSW, WA, Adelaide and Melbourne, the AGWS, the *Fronitha*.
48. The senior administrator of the DIAC, Peter Vardos, clarified that it is not possible to ascertain with accuracy the exact number of repatriating Australian citizens given the fact that the returning citizens on their entry can not be registered.
49. Sun newspaper, 27 May 2012, under the title “Greek crisis sees new wave of migrants”, where Consul General, John Anictomatis states that “on average about 10 new arrivals a week are coming back to Darwin, before they bring their families back to Australia”.
50. Minister Kostas Vaskalis from Northern Territory asked from the Commonwealth government to introduce a special permit for the new Greek immigrants to work in the natural gas project in Northern territory which were to begin in 2013. See *Sun newspaper*, 27 May 2012, under the title “Greek crisis sees new wave of migrants”.
51. The secretariat of the GOCOMV comprised of the secretary Kostas Markou and the special secretary Stavros Messinis received more than 10,000 letters and messages for support from Greece. Over 300 CVs were posted as attachments by professionals and scientist with postgraduate qualifications, seeking employment.
52. The data derived from the records of the GOCMV and the AGWS and a sample of over 2,200 electronic e-mails received by interested individuals.
53. Interview with Tina Douvos-Stathopoulos, 14 November 2013, File: 850144; Douvos is Deputy Director, Manager Family and Community Services unit of the AGWS.
54. 30-year-old Michael Kampatsidis a qualified graphic designer from Serres in Greece’s north. Facing 50 per cent unemployment in that region, he’s now

contemplating work as a cleaner in Melbourne as he pursues new studies. He's one of the many people now being hosted by that previous generation of Greek Australians, and Greek radio host Kostas Papakostas says he can't sleep for the night-time phone calls asking for help.

55. Interview with Tina Douvos-Stathopoulos Deputy Director of the Australian Greek Welfare Society, File 850144, 14 November 2013.
56. On 20 November 2013 the AGWS in conjunction with Oakleigh Grammar organized a public lecture in Oakleigh under the topic *Immigration law and Visa*, presented by solicitor Ioannis Kotsifas an expert on Migration law. Seminars and lectures were also organized by the GOCMV and other welfare organization. The AGWS organized in 2013 two seminars, attended by 250 people, one involving the issue of visas and the other one presented by an immigration agent.
57. Interview with Sakis Zafirooulos, 14 November 2013, File 850145.

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