

IMMIGRATION IN GREECE

Humans, in their long course through history, were many times forced to leave their homeland in search of a better life, and they were often forced under painful and unbearable conditions.



When immigrants and refugees leave their homelands, they leave a part of themselves.

Their shadow is heavy

Immigration is a social phenomenon which varies from society to society and from era to era while shaping the particular attitudes of the population towards immigrants.

An illustrative example of our country is the Greek Colonization in ancient times, a gradual process made mainly for political, social and economic reasons. During the Second Greek Colonization that took place in the 8th century BC the city of Naples was established in southern Italy, initially named Parthenope, after the siren Parthenope from the episode with Ulysses.



In the modern Greek world, a part of Hellenism suffered persecution and violent eviction from their ancestral land and homes. After the Greek defeat in 1922 by the Turks, during the Asia Minor campaign, there was a generalized expulsion and extermination of a large part of the Greek and Christian population of Asia Minor. In 1922, about 900,000 refugees from Asia Minor arrived in Greece.







Fifty-two years after the Turkish invasion in Cyprus in 1974 , we have another black page in the history of Hellenism. Greek Cypriots are forced to leave their homes and properties and confine themselves to the southern part of the island while many of them seek refuge in Greece.



At about the same time, Greeks emigrated to America, Australia and Western Europe, mainly for economic reasons . In the first decade of the 21st century, for example, 303,761 citizens with Greek citizenship were registered in Germany.



After a relative economic recovery in Greece, however, our country becomes itself the new homeland for economic immigrants. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, large numbers of economic refugees from Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, Russia and other countries arrived in Greece to find work.

Indicatively, it is worth mentioning that in 2010 there were 459,390 people of Albanian citizenship in Greece. A large number of them have been integrated into the Greek reality. Men work mainly in construction work and in the agricultural sector. Women find work mostly in domestic employment and their children attend Greek schools.



As economic problems and wars unfortunately have no end in the history of mankind, today Greece due to its key geographical location receives a portion of immigrants and refugees and is used as a transit station to the rest of Europe

Worldwide, at least 82.4 million people have been forced to flee their homes. That number includes about 26.4 million refugees. Half of them are children.

The percentage of (im)migrants (without a EU citizenship) living in the European Union is 4.4% .

In Greece today, the legal immigrants who live mainly in urban centers are about 580,000.

The vast majority of immigrants in Greece (officially registered) are of Albanian, Bulgarian and Romanian origin, followed by Pakistanis, Georgians, Afghans and other nationalities, but also by people of unknown origin.



In Greece the gateway for the immigrants is the northern borders, mostly for the inhabitants of Albania. From the east and through Turkey, immigrants and refugees come to Greece, others advancing through the Evros area and others crossing the Aegean Sea. Many refugees, leaving from the Turkish coastline, enter Greece through the Aegean, using boats. Crossing the Aegean Sea is dangerous and several cases of drowning have been reported. According to media reports during the period 2007-2009, 511 immigrants drowned in the Aegean Sea in their attempt to enter Greece.





When immigrants enter Greece, they are taken to immigration detention centers. According to Médecins Sans Frontières, these centers are overcrowded and the living conditions extremely difficult.

Main reception centers are the islands of the eastern Aegean such as Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Kos and Symi but also Kastellorizo where immigrants and refugees arrive after having paid a fee to traffickers and NGOs, approximately € 1,200, to board a small boat.









Is there a difference?

Mothers, tragic figures





Immigrants and refugees in Crete

According to the latest official data, there are 34,107 immigrants and refugees in Crete and are allocated as follows:

Heraklion: 12.882,

Chania: 9.479,

Rethymnon: 6.652,

Lassithi: 5.094

Their country of origin varies from prefecture to prefecture. Generally, most of them come from Albania, followed by China, India, Pakistan, Syria, Russia, Georgia, Moldova, Egypt, Morocco, Serbia, Iraq, the Philippines and almost from all over the world, but in a very small percentage.

During the school year 2021-2022, our school, the 9th High School of Heraklion in Crete, has had 277 students.

The foreign students are: 11 from Albania, 3 from Romania, 2 from Iran, 2 from Iraq, 1 from Afghanistan, 1 from Syria, 1 from Bulgaria and 1 from Ukraine.

They were also exiled, "The flight into Egypt"



«Modern Madonnas»





Unfortunately, since February 24, 2022, when Russia invaded Ukraine, the war has been raging on. The consequences for the Ukrainians are catastrophic. Losses of human lives, destruction of cities and properties, despair, pain, uprooting. As of Saturday, May 14, 2022, there have been more than 27,000 Ukrainian refugees in Greece.







In the hope that one day wars and people's uprooting will stop.