

HELLENIC PRESENCE IN AMERICA

Nicholas Alexiou,

Department of Sociology & Hellenic American Project,
Queens College, CUNY

Diversity Presentations

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The Greek American demographic transition

- The Greek American community has undergone a demographic transition. Currently, there are more American-born Greek Americans than there are foreign born Greek Americans.
- This demographic transition changes the broader identity of Greek Americans from an ethnic enclave to Americans of an ethnic background.
- In order to secure its continuity, the Greek American community has to reflect on and respond to its demographic transition. It has to address the needs and interests of the American-born generation(s) and invest in education that is Greek American-focused. The focus of Modern Greek Studies programs is still, almost exclusively, mainland Greece. The time to fill this void is now.

Pre-1900 arrivals to the United States

- While mass Greek immigration to the United States begins in the Twentieth Century, the narrative of Greek arrivals to the United States begins much earlier, in 1528, with Don Teodoro Griego landing in Florida.
- Greek workers arrived to New Smyrna Beach, Florida, in 1768 with the promise of land. The original colony disbanded by 1777 but many of the colonists moved to neighboring St. Augustine and set up a successful settlement. The the oldest wooden school building in the United States (1716) is the first school of the Greek Americans in St. Augustine, Florida. It is preserved in its original form until today.
- New Orleans is the first city in the United States where a stable Greek community was established and by 1866 it had the first Greek Consulate in the United States.

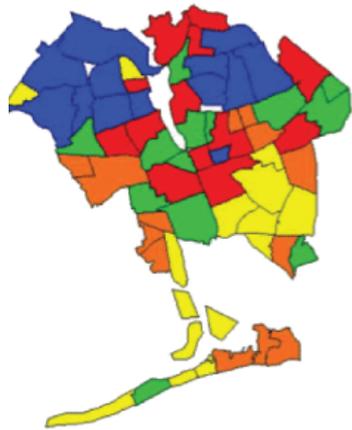
Mass immigration to the United States

- **First wave of mass immigration (1900–1924):** Greeks were among the last of the Europeans to immigrate to America during the Great Migration. Immigration and Naturalization Services data provide documentation that approximately 421,000 Greeks immigrated to the United States between 1890 and 1921. In actuality, this number is closer to 500,000 because many Greeks arrived with passports from other countries, including, Asian Minor and Egypt.
- **Second wave of mass immigration (1965–1980):** Approximately 160,000 Greeks arrived in the second wave of mass immigration. A unique characteristic of this wave that Greeks, unlike most European groups with the exception of Italians, immigrated twice on a massive scale to the United States in the same century.

Settlement patterns of Greek immigrants

- The settlement patterns of Greek immigrants show that the majority settled on the East Coast, primarily in Florida and New York, and in the industrial Midwest, in Chicago, Detroit, and Pittsburg.
- Greeks also formed enclaves on the West Coast, working in the construction, mining, and lumber industries.
- Greeks inhabited the Astoria section of Queens, New York, during the second wave of mass immigration. It has been considered the largest Hellenic settlement outside of Greece or Cyprus.
- Interestingly, Greek immigrants settled in or near urban centers even though they came from rural and predominantly agricultural towns and villages.

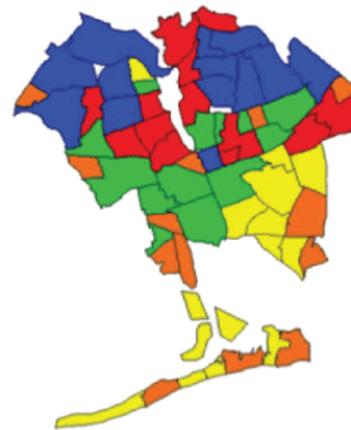
A graphical depiction of residential mobility of the Greek Americans in Queens, NY



Greeks in NYC: 1980
Persons with Greek ancestry - Population by Ancestry
NYC Neighborhoods in Queens



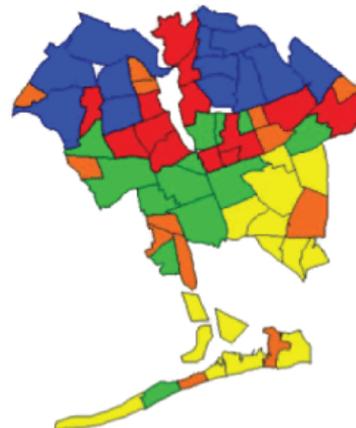
1980 Census from Bureau of the Census, US Department of Commerce



Greeks in NYC: 1990
Persons reporting first ancestry as Greek - Population by First Ancestry
NYC Neighborhoods in Queens



1990 Census from Bureau of the Census, US Department of Commerce



Greeks in NYC: 2000
Persons of any Greek ancestry - Ancestry (Total Ancestries Tal
NYC Neighborhoods in Queens



2000 Census from Bureau of the Census, US Department of Commerce

Greek Americans in all sectors

- Greek Americans are represented in all spheres of American society:
 - Dr. Georgios Papanikolaou (1883–1962)
 - Dimitris Mitropoulos (1896–1960)
 - Elias Kazan (1909–2003)
 - Johnny Otis (1921–2012)
 - Maria Callas (1923–1977)
 - Telis (Aristotelis) Savalas (1922–1994)
 - John Cassavetes (1929–1989)
 - Betty White (maternal grandfather was Greek)
 - Rita Wilson (mother was Greek)
 - Jamie Dimon (parents were Greek)
- and many, many more...

Selected population profile, persons of Greek ancestry in the United States, 2019

	United States All	United States Greek Ancestry
Total	328,239,523	1,247,142
Median age	38.5	39.5
Average family size	3.23	3.08
Native born	283,306,622	1,109,272
Foreign born	44,932,901	137,870
Speak only English at home	241,032,343	906,295
Speak English less than “very well”	25,464,167	56,496

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates, Selected Population Profile Greek Ancestry.

Selected population profile, persons of Greek ancestry in the United States, 2019

	United States All	United States Greek Ancestry
Total	328,239,523	1,247,142
In labor force percent	63.6%	66.6%
Median household income	\$65,712	\$82,036
Mean household earnings	\$92,324	\$117,822
Median family income	\$80,944	\$107,844
Married couple median income	\$96,571	\$121,529
Poverty all people percent	12.3%	7.4%
Poverty families percent	8.6%	4.9%
Poverty married couple families percent	4.2%	2.2%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates, Selected Population Profile Greek Ancestry.

Selected population profile, persons of Greek ancestry in the United States, 2019

	United States All	United States Greek Ancestry
Total	328,239,523	1,247,142
College or grad school percent	27.1%	30.2%
Population 25 years and over	224,898,568	871,687
Bachelor's degree percent	20.3%	28.2%
Graduate or professional degree percent	12.8%	19.5%
High school graduate or higher percent	88.6%	94.0%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates, Selected Population Profile Greek Ancestry.

A comparison of Greek Americans: 2000 & 2019

	Greek Ancestry Decennial Census 2000	Percent	Greek Ancestry 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates	Percent
Total	1,153,295	100.0	1,247,142	100.0
Native Born	975,667	84.6	1,109,272	88.9
Foreign Born	177,628	15.4	137,870	11.1
Speak only English at home	719,154	67.1	906,295	77.0
Speak English less than “very well”	97,870	9.1	56,496	4.8
Bachelor’s degree or higher percent	35.2	35.2	47.7	47.7

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census, Profile of Selected Social Characteristics Greek Ancestry; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates, Selected Population Profile Greek Ancestry.

Hellenic American Project
Queens Hall, Room 015
65-21 Main Street
Queens, NY 11367

<http://www.hapsoc.org>

