

Intergenerational Perceptions of Ageing Well within the Australian Greek Diaspora



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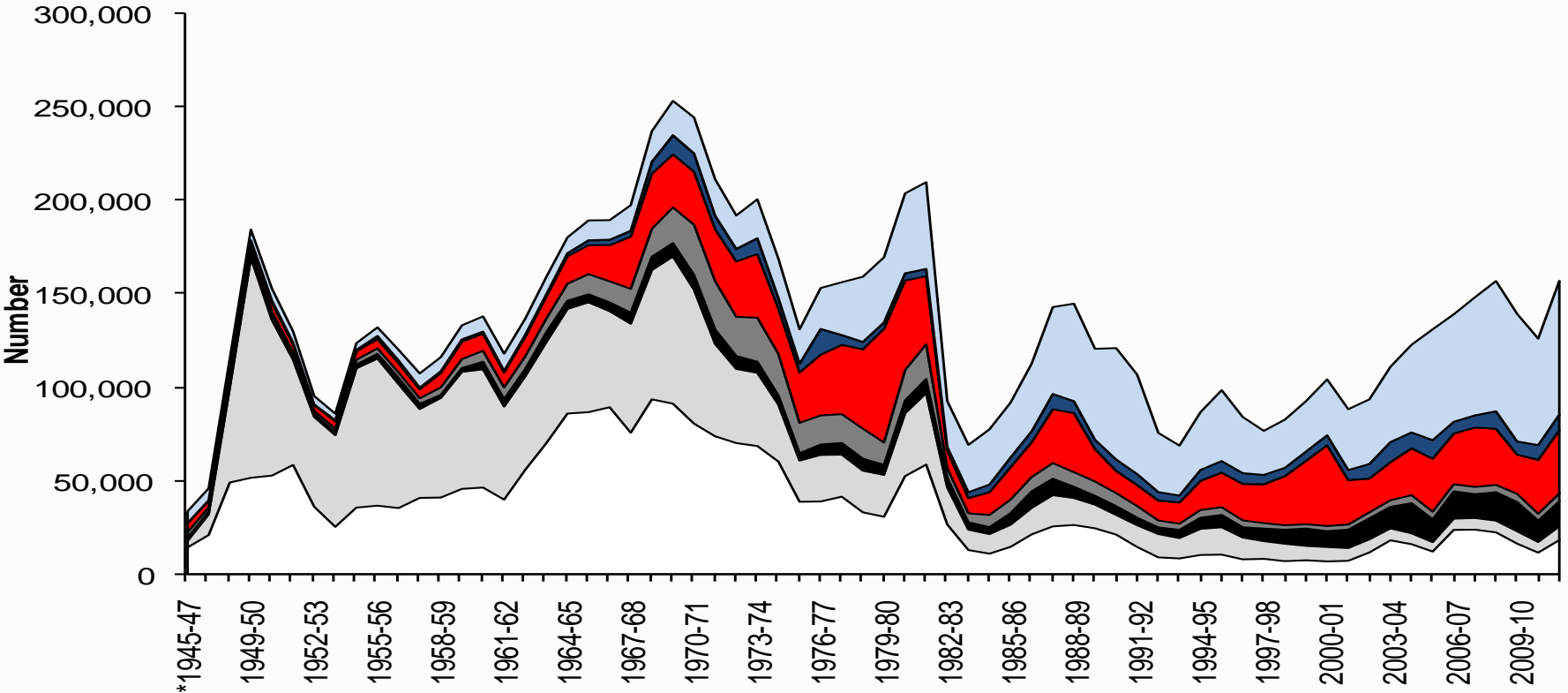
Indicators of Australian Diversity, 2011

Source: ABS, 2011 Census

Indicator	Percent
Born overseas	26.1
Born overseas in CALD country	16.6
Australia-born with an overseas-born parent	18.8
Speaks language other than English at home	19.2
Ancestry (multi response) in a CALD country (2006)	26.0
Non-Christian religion	22.3
Indigenous Population	2.6
No. of birthplace groups with 10,000 +	67
No. of birthplace groups with 1,000 +	133
No. of indigenous persons	548,369

Australia: Settler Arrivals by Region of Last Residence, 1947-2012

Source: DIMIA, *Australian Immigration: Consolidated Statistics*; DIAC, *Immigration Update*, various issues; DIAC, unpublished data



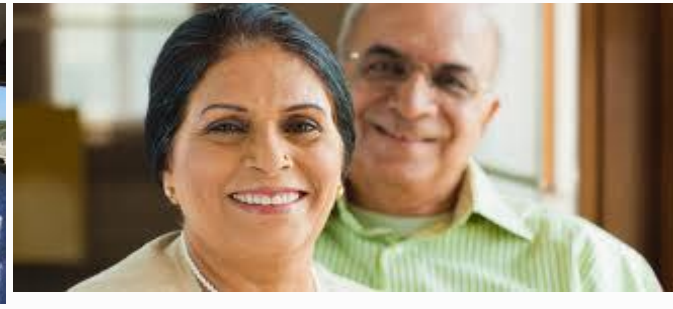
UK and Ireland
 Other Europe
 Africa
 Americas
 NZ and Pacific
 Middle East
 Asia

*July 1945 to June 1947

Note: Data from 2006-7 onwards are by region of birth

CALD Ageing

- There are over **1.3 million** persons aged 50+ living in Australia from a CALD background and over 150,000 aged 80+.
- Nearly one in five people living in Australia aged 50+ is a migrant from a CALD background.
- **A greater proportion of migrants from CALD countries are older compared to their Australia born/non-CALD migrant counterparts.**
- **Italy, Greece**, China, Germany and Vietnam are the CALD birthplace countries with the greatest overall number of people aged 50+ living in Australia.



Older CALD by Birthplace

Top countries of birth of the overseas born aged 65+ by age group, Australia, 2011

Aged 65 - 74		Aged 75 - 84		Aged 85+	
Italy	48 377	Italy	46 474	Italy	13 705
Greece	32 946	Greece	22 265	Scotland	5 808
Scotland	24 391	Germany	13 719	Poland	5 575
Germany	23 431	Scotland	13 510	Germany	4 778
Netherlands	19 270	China	12 028	Netherlands	4 348
China	15 875	Netherlands	11 562	Greece	3 908
India	12 102	India	6 489	China	3 751
Croatia	12 006	Croatia	6 449	Ukraine	2 235
Malta	11 884	Malta	5 990	India	2 082
Vietnam	8 630	Poland	5 566	Ireland	1 732

Older CALD Population Characteristics

Selected characteristics of largest CALD birthplace groups aged 65+ (and comparative groups aged 65+), Australia, 2011

	% Has need for assistance	% Speak English not well or at all	% Live alone	% No internet connection	% Own home outright
Italy	27.7	30.7	20.9	58.9	80.0
Greece	27.1	45.5	15.3	59.5	79.4
Germany	16.2	2.0	28.0	38.3	68.1
Netherlands	16.3	1.3	24.4	32.2	66.5
China	26.8	73.4	11.6	28.2	45.8
India	18.5	8.7	17.6	23.9	55.7
Croatia	24.0	27.2	20.9	56.5	74.2
Malta	21.1	10.1	20.6	53.8	77.9
Poland	33.3	18.5	33.3	48.3	65.3
Vietnam	33.2	81.4	9.0	31.7	39.5
Total CALD born	24.4	28.2	20.1	43.2	65.2
Total non-CALD*	16.8	0.1	26.1	37.5	66.3

Challenges for an Older Population

Some of the challenges faced by older people in Australia from ALL backgrounds:

- Declining mobility
- Greater chance of social isolation
- Increased need for services (health, transport, care etc.)

Some unique challenges for CALD older people:

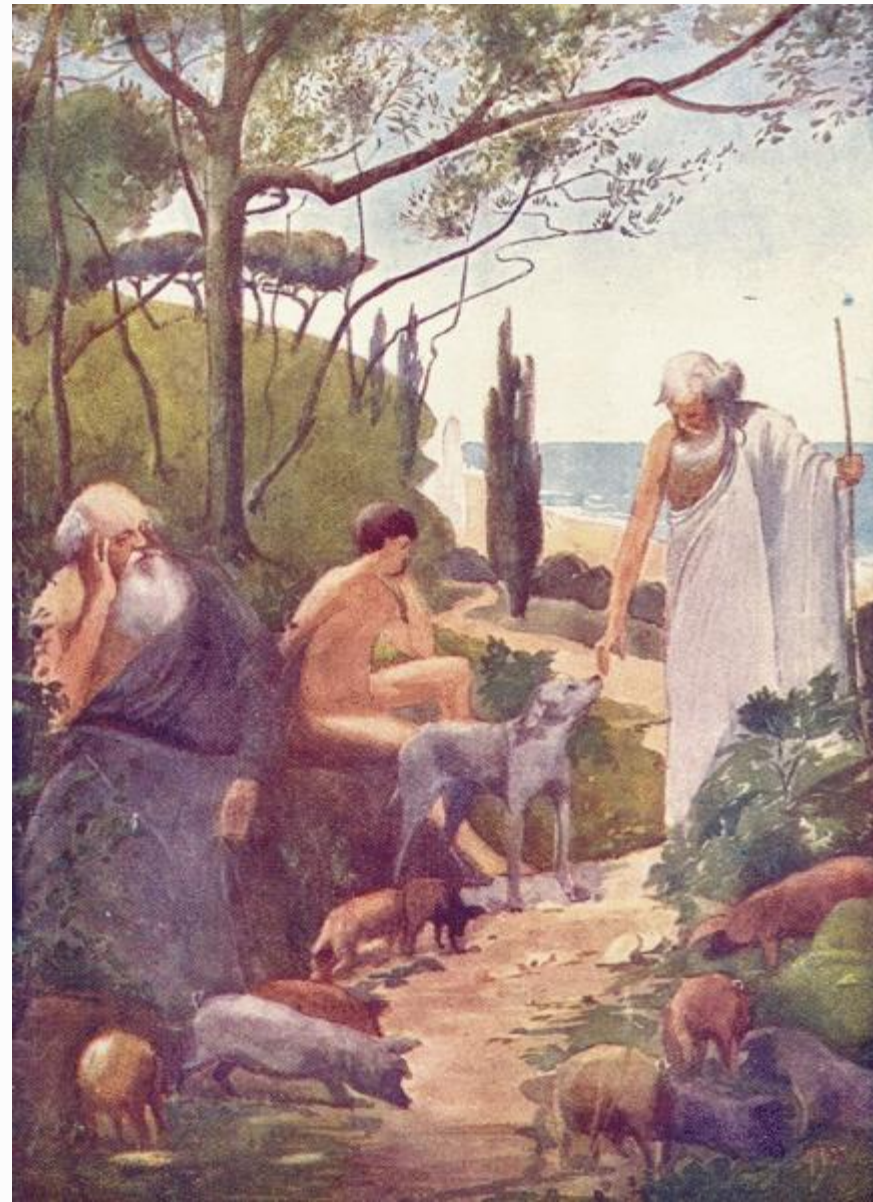
- Cultural complexities – different birthplace groups may have different preferences and expectations for ageing well
- Heavy reliance on family members for support
- New to Australia's aged care system
- Language barriers

AGING IN A FOREIGN LAND CONCEPT

- Migration
- Language
- Culture
- Education
- Lost in a Foreign Land
- Recognition

'My old friend, what are you looking for?
After years abroad you've come back
with images you've nourished
under foreign skies
far from your own country.'

'I'm looking for my old garden;
the trees come to my waist
and the hills resemble terraces
yet as a child
I used to play on the grass
under great shadows
and I would run for hours
breathless over the slopes.'



The 'Ageing in a Foreign Land' Study

Aims:

- To understand the **positive ageing** process from a culturally specific perspective
- To explore the **intergenerational** familial understanding and expectations of ageing and aged care services within different CALD groups
- To understand the **cultural**, spiritual, familial and community influences that enable older people from CALD groups to age well
- To develop a broader **research agenda** related to multi-cultural experiences of ageing and ageing well



The 'Ageing in a Foreign Land' Study

Methodology:

1. Analysis and mapping of Australian Census **data**
2. Face to face Interviews and surveys with individuals of **three family generations**
 - Gen 1 (overseas born, 70+ years)
 - Gen 2 (adult child of Gen 1)
 - Gen 3 (adult grandchild of Gen 1)
3. **Interviews** with age care providers

The Life Course – Gen 1

- Most arrived in Australia in **their 20's** (ranged from 4 to 49)
- Average number of years living in Australia **was 53**
- Most had come to Australia as a single person. A few had come to join other family members (siblings or cousins), only three came with a spouse *but all married someone born in Greece*
- Over 75% had only **primary school** education level or less
- Most had blue collar jobs in Australia or home duties reflecting the low levels of education
- A third were widowed, one individual was divorced and the rest were married
- 90% were now retired, 21% lived alone and almost one third lived with other generations in their family.
- **92% owned their own home** with no mortgage and most had been living in the same home for a long time – an average of 34 years.
- ***All said they came to Australia to seek a better life....***



The Life Course

*"I came for a better futureI wanted to come but I didn't want to come at the same time because there was a lot of poverty at that time, and many children. I thought I could get ahead here, **make some money and go back** But that didn't happen"*



[It came] out of a need to live....for a better future. Whoever was able to leave in those times, left!"

My brothers...they told me to come. One of them had bought a house so I thought, something's going on there, why don't I go and have a look. I came here for a bit...unfortunately, fortunately I stayed....at the beginning it was difficult but I got used to it.

Language and Community

“It gives me a life... mixing and socialising, eating and drinking, exercising and playing cards with friends – it passes the time, its nice”



*“It makes me happy you know, **doing things outside of the house.** I wish I could do more things with my friends”*

Language and Community

“I am happy with my friends, but I don’t see them often. Its not like Greece where people go from house to house whenever, everyone here stays in their own home...they don’t want to bother people”



*“Here in this land you have to have contact with our people, friends, you can’t live by yourself....**we are strangers here** and the few people we know, we must see them and they must see us too”*

Contact with Family

*“They may not come every day **but whenever I need them they are there**...but they have their own jobs too, you can't have them at your feet everyday”*



“They [my children] both help me whenever I need it. They always tell me – Mum, just pick up the phone”

“Yes, I'm happy...they have their jobs, but I get to see them, they love me.....for them to come everyday and ask Grandpa how are you? I don't want this”

Assistance and Care

“Mainly children from the family should help. Regarding the family; it depends if the family is able to, then OK...but if they can't....it's very unfortunate”

“If the children can assist them they should. As parents from a Greek background we believe that the children should provide help”

“Families should help the elderly, if there is a need with a particular thing then they should help. The children and grandchildren should help. However, [I don't] like the thought of burdening children”



Assistance and Care

“My assistance is essential. Due to their lack of transport and English speaking skills their daily and weekly needs would not be met without my help”

“I always try and help, I manage my work commitments to help them when required. I’m on call to help them whenever, whatever”



“My mum, auntie and uncle provide informal assistance; I generally don’t. This is because they are my grandmother’s children and they are closer to her and have always been the ones to help out over the years”



Formal Assistance and Care

“[Help] from the children...but if they can’t then certainly from services.....but since I have the children, why should I bother the government?”



“I would prefer assistance from my own family, on the occasions that they can’t because of work or family commitments then I would turn to other services “

Happiness in Later Life

*“If you have **health** then you are good, then with all other issues you can get by”*



*“**Family**....to have them around, to be concerned for one another, respect and love”*



“Family ...to have a good loving family and for them not to worry a lot”

“Health and to be well...money is important too because without money nothing else can be done, but if you are not well then you may not age well”

Regrets

*“I should have learned how **to drive**”*

“I should have learnt English better....but I didn't have the opportunity to learn English very well, I was always surrounded by Greeks and all things Greek”

“Not to have the need to have left Greece and gone far away....to be in a foreign land and away from your people, its very horrible”



“Not have come to Australia. My mother did not want me to leave, she never forgave me for coming here. I wanted to go back but I didn't”

Regrets

“Greece is the mother for us. Australia is stepmother...but she is still good. I am very happy”

“Return to Greece? I am a stranger there, things have changed there. My life is here now”



“It’s hard....It’s different to be in your own country, the motherland, and different to be here”

“We should all be satisfied, in the motherland things are much worse”

In conclusion....

Cultural norms combined with life course events **impact** on how older people view older age and ageing well and both must be considered in service delivery



Where to next....

Planned national project with other CALD communities using the same methodology through an **ARC** Linkage:

- Creating good partnerships for the larger project
- Further analysis of the census data, including a spatial analysis of different CALD populations to inform the larger national project
- **Selection of key CALD communities** to include in the larger study
- Roll out the study across Australia, with the potential for international comparisons in the future.

THANKYOU

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