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*Engaging Greek-Australia:  
A key to advancing Greek relations with the  
Asia-Pacific Region*

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# **Engaging Greek-Australia: a key to advancing Greek relations with the Asia-Pacific Region**

## **Abstract**

This paper discusses how the Greek-Australian diaspora could act as a conduit for Greek economic and cultural engagement with the Asia-Pacific region. The aim of the paper is to contribute to debates about how the Greek diaspora in Australia could assist Greek economic and cultural development. Despite the sizeable Greek diaspora in Australia and continued linkages to Greece, the economic relationship between Greece and Australia has been limited while Australia's engagement with the Asia-Pacific region has gained traction in recent decades. Firstly, in the context of the current economic difficulties in Greece, the paper will explore the reasons why this has been the case. It will do so by investigating how the Greek-Australian diaspora has historically considered the homeland while revealing recent trends in how Greek diaspora business in Australia have engaged with Asia. Secondly, through a comparative analysis of how Asian countries have recently engaged with their diasporas for the promotion of economic development, it will be suggested that formal Greek institutional engagement requires serious preparatory work. Thirdly, it will be proposed that the capacity to design effective diaspora engagement policies should be based on sustained institutional support that looks beyond the diaspora as a bridge for traditional bilateral ties. Such engagement could utilise Greek-Australian relations with the Australian government with the intention to strategically learn from Australia's advanced engagement with the Asia-Pacific region. In short, this paper will propose that established Greek-Australian organisations and individuals can be mobilised as tactful conduits for Greece to lure sustainable and multifaceted economic engagement Asia-Pacific region.

## **Keywords:**

Diaspora Engagement, Greek-Australia, China-Greece, Migration, Development

## **Greek-Australia's Diasporic Advantage**

In October 2017, Katia Gkikiza, Greece's new Trade Commissioner in Australia attended an exclusive luncheon organised by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI). At the luncheon a question-and-answer session was held with senior representatives from the Australia China Business Council, the Australia China Council, the Asia Society, and the Australian Chamber of Trade and International Affairs ('Greece's Trade Commissioner at ACCI event', 2018). The following month the Greek Ministry of Economy, Development, and Enterprise Greece, in conjunction with the Greek Embassy in Australia, organized an investment roadshow that visited major Australian state capitals. Titled 'Greece on the Turning Point: 2017 Investment Roadshow in Australia', the roadshow held seminars,

provided information on 'the latest business developments in Greece', and outlined the potential for investment opportunities in 'Tourism, Real Estate, Energy, Agrifood, Logistics, Technology, and in Public and Private Assets' ('Greece on the Turning Point: 2017 Investment Roadshow in Australia', 2017). After the roadshow, Dimos Papadimitriou, Greece's Minister of Economy and Development, spoke to Victorian State parliamentarians in Melbourne. Announcing the opening of a Melbourne-based Enterprise Greece office (a government agency to promote exports and incoming investments), Papadimitriou referred to the recent roadshow and informed his audience that 'Greece is in a critical turning point and we should not listen to the siren song of petty interests but keep steering the economy with a steady hand' ("Greek Economy Minister Announces "Enterprise Greece" Melbourne Office", 2017).

The appointment of an Australian-based Trade Commissioner, along with the positive economic image that was presented at the investment roadshow and reinforced by the Minister, are emblematic of a renewed effort by the Greek government to attract investment into the country through diaspora engagement. Such efforts are part of a wider global phenomenon in which national governments are increasingly attempting to connect with diasporic communities in order to tap into the resources and networks they offer for domestic developmental purposes (Yong & Rahman 2013, Quist-Adade & Royal, 2016). However, as the Asia-focused representatives who took part in ACCI question-and-answer session reveals, recent Greek diaspora engagement in Australia has begun to broaden the Greek government's strategic awareness of how to engage more effectively with the thriving economies in the Asia-Pacific region. Despite this, official operations of Greek diaspora engagement in Australia tend to be rooted in essentialist and ethno-nationalist discourses – a key criticism of the diaspora-development nexus (Sinatti & Horst, 2014, Ang, 2004).

In her study on homeland-orientated development and the Greek diaspora in Australia during the Greek economic crisis, Elizabeth Mavroudi (2015) notes that Greece's attempt at diaspora engagement has been characterised by simplistic expectations and a narrow imagining of how to keep Greek ethno-nationalism alive. In order for the Greek government to effectively harness the Greek diaspora in Australia, Mavroudi has emphasised that an 'uphill struggle' awaits – a struggle in which the Greek state must shape an image of itself as trustworthy, curb constraining corruption and bureaucracy, and provide practical incentives for Greek-Australian entrepreneurial investment. Recognising the multiplicity of 'emotions and (dis)connections' that underly diaspora experiences, this paper

claims that is necessary for the Greek diaspora engagement policies to reconceptualise the historical, socio-cultural, and economic nuances of the Greek diaspora in Australia.

In an effort to offer an alternative path to reconceptualising the processes of Greek diasporisation in Australia, I echo historian Ioanna Laliotou's (2004, p. 4) call to think beyond generalised notions of diaspora and to reframe understandings of the Greek diaspora in Australia in relation to 'contextual and historical specificity'. By outlining how the Greek state and formal Greek diaspora bodies could reframe the understanding of the Greek diaspora in Australia, this paper locates and explores historical and contemporary Greek-Australia diasporic specificities that could be used to broaden and deepen the mechanics of Greek diaspora engagement while also offer comparative insights into Asian diasporic engagement policies. Given Greece's relatively large and multigenerational self-identifying Greek-Australian population, I argue, that smart diaspora engagement should move beyond building bilateral economic ties for the purposes of nation-building endeavours. Instead, I propose, diaspora engagement policies could work collaboratively and more effectively with pre-established diaspora bodies and prominent Greek-Australian individuals and businesses, in an effort to transcend national divides and to embrace broader global perspectives and common interests. Such an approach does not seek to narrate a form of diaspora engagement practice that is oppositional to other more commonplace forms of bilateral engagement. Quite differently, through stressing the capacity to think past a pragmatic emphasis on bilateralism, I attempt to advance already existing forms of diaspora engagement by framing a wide-ranging, historical, and mutually beneficial form of exchange that moves towards a global reciprocity yet acknowledges 'the situational entanglements migrancy' and fluidity of diaspora and nation between Greece, Australia, and Asia (Laliotou, 2004, p. 17).

In an age when the world's attention is increasingly centering its focus on the economic 'the rise of Asia', the question of how Greece should manage and respond to economic investment from China, for example, has become a significant factor in how the country is redeveloping its long-term economic viability (Tipton, 1998). Cognizant of this global phenomenon, and its particular impact on Sino-Greek relations over the past decade, this paper will argue that facets of the Greek diaspora in Australia could advantageously

enhance Greek-Asia relations.<sup>1</sup> Building stronger transnational diasporic links across the Asia-Pacific region is in the national interest of Greece because it will, over time, allow Greece and the Greek diaspora in Australia to become more integrated within a region increasingly characterised by overlaying networks of cross-border connections and historical relationships.

### **The Greek diaspora in Australia: *an historical overview***

Greek Australian studies is a relatively uncharted field. In particular, there is very little robust inquiry into how the Greek state has engaged with Greek diaspora in Australia. The first monographs and edited volumes on Greeks in Australia fell within the celebratory social science tradition of immigration studies, a tradition that originated from the Australian multicultural movement and focused on the ability of an ethnic group to maintain a distinctive culture while integrating into the mainstream Australian culture. This tactical appeal to the 'slow and complicated' process of assimilation in studies of Greek migration, as explored by the Greek migration scholar Michael Tsounis (1975), noted the contribution of Greek migrants and their children to Australia, emphasising in particular, their incorporation into the middle class through 'hard work, frugal living and luck'. This emphasis on contribution and respectable labour practices within the host nation aimed to counter the pervasive, xenophobic, and deliberate vilification of Greeks outside-yet-within the contours of the Australian settler colonial nation (Bottomley & De Lepervanche, 1984, Banivanua Mar & Edmonds 2010, Veracini, 2010). As Tsounis noted, 'although Australian attitudes varied considerably, Greeks did not on the whole experience and enjoy the reputed Australian qualities of mateship and egalitarianism, nor were Greeks always treated generously by the Australian economic system' (1975, p. 47). In a similar vein to other Greek migrant historiographies in the settler-colonial Anglosphere, the conceptualising of Greek

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<sup>1</sup> The 51 per cent acquisition of the Piraeus Port by the Chinese state-owned firm COSCO Shipping is the most recent – and controversial – development in Sino-Greek bilateral economic relations. The Greek Ambassador in China, Leonidas C. Rokanas, for example, has promoted the role that such investment can play in enabling Greece to become 'the main entry point for Chinese exports to southern, eastern and central Europe'. See, Wong., C. (2017, December). 'Why Greece is banking on China's modern-day Silk Road to help its economic recovery'. *South China Morning Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2125506/why-greece-banking-chinas-modern-day-silk-road-help-its>

migration to Australia through the lenses of integration, or assimilation, incorporated Greek migrant narratives into Australian historiography as a contributing factor to the history of Australian national accumulation.

The preoccupation with assimilation, however, has constrained scholars interested in exploring the multiplicities of Greek-Australian sociality and cultural production, consuming their time, and impeding the explication of Greek culture in Australia and abroad. Maria Koundoura (2007), a first-generation migrant who lived in five-year intervals between Greece and Australia and a contemporary academic in the United States theorizes her Greek identity as ‘something that prefaced and conditioned’ her being Australian. She recollects that her immediate access to Greece made her in the eyes of fellow students and teachers ‘more contemporarily European than the time-lagged memory of earlier Greek migrants’. ‘In order to belong’, she asserts, she had to translate herself into a ‘lagged version of the Greekness’ of established Greek Australian mentalities and in essence, write her ‘experience of Greece out’. She emphasises that she was continually forced to translate her ‘Greekness against a Hellenic ideal or against the stereotype of the Greek-Australia’, and in turn translate those, ‘against the ideal Australian and the ideal Greek’. For Koundoura, her weaving through identity, or identities, was erased in an effort to uphold ‘a glorious and uniform past’ (p.108).

The issue of diasporic nationalism is surprisingly under-investigated in studies in both modern Greek history and histories of the Greek diaspora. Histories of Greece have long been consumed with the development of Greek nationalism (in its multiple forms), and many have acknowledged that nationalist thinkers lived, wrote and organised from the diaspora (Chaconas, 1942, Beaton & Ricks, 2009). However, there is no developed historiography on how the great wave of Greek migrants in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries attempted to influence specific trends within Greece and how the Greek state attempted to maintain connection with Greek migrants.<sup>2</sup> It is estimated, for example, that Greeks who had settled in the United States sent home roughly five million dollars each year between 1903 and 1914 (Gallant, 2015, p.308). This monetary connection is only one example of linkages between the making of modern Greek nationalism and emigrant

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<sup>2</sup> An exception includes Gregory Jusdanis (1991), “Greek Americans and the diaspora”, *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1(2), pp. 209-223.

communities.

Further research into Greek migrant remittance sending patterns, for example, could build on the notion that mobility and ideas about the nation are interconnected (Hobsbawn, 1987, Bhabha, 1990). During Europe's great age of nineteenth-century nationalism, migration was a demographic fact of life, and new nation-states like Greece sought to claim and 'nationalize' their emigrants (Manning & Trimmer, 2013, p.149). In the course of the evolution of Greek citizenship laws and their application in an historical context, the term *genos* (race, decent) became the key element of Greekness and an actual legal category distinguishing between those who were of Greek decent and those who were not (Christopoulos, 2009). Under modern Greek law, for example, the Greek Kingdom extended citizenship to the descendants of Greeks living abroad. The Greek government viewed emigration as part of a nation-building project, where emigrants, and their descendants, were potential conduits of influence abroad. In 1912, for example, John Zavitchanos, a representative from the Greek national society 'Hellenismos' and resident in South Africa, toured the Australian state capitals in an effort to raise funds for what he regarded as a 'great national undertaking' – the 'emancipation' of ancient Greek territories from 'the yoke of the Turk' ("Old Greece: Pan-Hellenic Society", 1912). The archival residue reveals that Zavitchanos was able to acquire 'liberal monetary assistance' from Greek settlers in Australia ("Greek Lecturer in Melbourne", 1912). Curiously, no compressive estimations on the phenomena of Greek-Australian remittances exist and qualitative research into this history would aid our understanding of how the Greek diaspora in Australia 'gave' to the homeland during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Furthermore, there is the need for more research to be conducted on how the Greek state engaged with Greek diaspora in Australia during the second-half of the twentieth century – a period when Greek migration to Australia significantly increased (Alexakis & Janiszewski, 1998, Doumanis, 1999, Damousi, 2015). Mavourdi (2015) notes, for example, that it was not until the 1950s that sustained efforts to 'reach' out to its diaspora began as a political/economic strategy, largely due to the important role that remittances and diaspora tourism were playing in the Greek economy. Elpida Volgi (2012) claims that diaspora engagement was slow to formalise, partly due to a romanticised nineteenth century notion of the Greek nation. Nonetheless, since the economic crisis productive initiatives driven from the diaspora itself have taken place.



In 2007, for example, a diaspora group called 'Friends of Kastellorizo' (formally 'Australian Friends of Kastellorizo') was launched ("Giving back", 2017). Focused on providing 'skills and resources for the benefit of Kastellorizo' the group has raised significant funds which have productively and sustainably contributed to the environmental, educational and cultural sectors of the island. The motto of the group ('giving back to the island of our forebears') and the commitment of resources to the reforestation of the island ('Greening Kastellorizo') reveals a transhistorical diasporic attachment that is locally situated yet works in collaboration with the municipal, national, and transnational authorities.<sup>3</sup> Diasporic-homeland permutations such as this point to a multifaceted nexus of diaspora engagement that supersedes the hegemonic notion of nation-state orientated diaspora development.

Furthermore, in the words of ethnographer Yiorgos Anagnostou (2009, p. 228), there is promise that the casting of a wider research net into the multiplicities of Greek ethnicities could yield hitherto 'untapped resources' that would enhance homeland development. For example, investigation into the emotional factors that drive return-migration and diasporic tourism, the modalities of economic investment, brain circulation, and family and kinship business networks, could be demarcated, located, catalogued, and disseminated. The specificities of Greek-Australian ties with Asia-Pacific region, in particular, has the potential to innovatively and creatively boost Greece's economic and cultural ties with this important geopolitical region. The Hong Kong High Court Judge and human rights advocate, Kevin Zervos, for example, is an apt contemporary figure within the Asia-based Greek-Australian diaspora. Zervos had Kastellorizian heritage, holds Australian nationality, and lives in Hong Kong. He is highly regarded within Hong Kong's legal circles, regularly visits Kastellorizo (where he redeveloped the ancestral family home), and participates in events organised with the Eastern Orthodox Metropolitanate of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia ("Face to Face With Kevin Zervos, Judge of the Court of First Instance, High Court", 2013, "An Australian Prosecutor's Awakening in Hong Kong", 2013). Embodying what Aihwa Ong (1999) has termed, 'a split between state-imposed identity and personal identity' (p. 2) Zervos' flexible

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<sup>3</sup> The project Greening Kastellorizo, for example, is affiliated with the Greek-American diasporic initiative 'Plant Your Roots in Greece Foundation' – a foundation committed to the preservation of Greece's natural environment. For further information on the organisational structure of 'Friends of Kastellorizo' and its projects the webpage <http://kastellorizo.com/>; On the 'Plant Your Roots in Greece Foundation' See, <http://plantyourrootsingreece.org/>

subjectivity is informed by migration, education, modes of activism, religious affiliation, and changing global markets. His expertise and cultural competency within the region could provide a conduit towards harnessing knowledge-based capital for the Greek state, particularly during this current period of economic transformation and engagement with China.

In addition, durable Greek-Australian business who have had extensive dealings with Asian companies, investors, and individual business elites could circulate practical knowledge that could aid Greek-Asia relations. In March 2016, for example, the seafood processing, wholesale and export business Kailis Bros. sold a ninety per cent proportion of the company to the Chinese investment group Legend Holdings (“Chinese investment firm buys 90% of Aussie seafood giant”, 2016). Kailis Bros. was opened in 1926 by the Kastellorizian settler George Peter Kailis and the business credits its foundational success on its Greek origins. Tapping into export opportunities in the 1990s the company established relationships with major wholesalers and restaurant chains in Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia and today it handles seventy per cent of all commercial fish caught in Western Australia (“The Beginning – History”, 2017). The luring of Chinese investment by Kailis Bros. was applauded by representatives from the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council and the Australia China Business Council for ‘providing continuity of access to international markets’ (“Kailis Bros sells bulk of seafood business to Chinese company”, 2016).

At a more boutique level, the company Paspaley Group – a pearling and pastoralist company – has had enduring historical ties with Asia. A third generation Greek-Australian family owned company, Paspaley Group began its business operations when the Kastellorizian migrant Peter Paspaley started to work collaboratively with Malay and Macassar pearl fishers in northern Australia – a region in the country that has a history cross-cultural mobility, encounters, and interaction (Piperoglou, 2016, Martinez & Vickers, 2015). Today it is recognised as ‘pioneers’ of the Australian South Sea pearling industry and is internationally recognised as the producer of the most valuable pearls, having distribution centres in Japan and Hong Kong. Through its Melbourne retail premises, the company has developed a close relationship with the Australia China Business Council and host networking

events for business executives.<sup>4</sup> Each business and their respective Asian engagement strategies offers nuanced examples of how ‘disidentification and resignification’ of the Greek diaspora in Australia has changed over time and place (Laliotou, 2004, p. 199). An exploration into such modes of exchange suggest the importance of transhistorical identifications with Greece while also revealing how situated forms of the global economy have impacted how the Greek diaspora in Australia positions itself within intersecting cultural and political settings. Extracting knowledge from these businesses could create alternative diaspora engagement policies that could enhance the vitality of contemporary Greek culture, Greek diasporic culture, and Greek-Asian relations.

### **Asian Engagement with Asian-Australian Diasporas**

While investigations into the permutations of Greek-Australian engagement with Asia can better inform how the Greek state can learn from its diaspora, learning how Asian countries have engage with the Asian-Australian diasporas and understanding of how the Asian-Australian diaspora is changing the Australian economy can also provide important insights for Greek diaspora engagement. Fazal Rizvi (2017), for example, has revealed how the Chinese and Indian governments are deeply conscious of their global diasporas and have developed comprehensive strategies to utilise the knowledge and skills of their ‘settled’ emigrants. China and India, he notes, are exploring ways of using the resources that their ‘skilled’ diasporas abroad represent and are conscious of the importance of ‘knowledge transfer and innovative collaboration’ (p. 116). Chinese and Indian governments are therefore working on strategies to ensure that long-standing legal, political and administrative barriers that may constrain the participation of their diasporas for economic development are overcome.

Recent efforts by the Greek state, for example, suggest that significant resources have been placed on the initial phase of engagement but have neglected to implement a constructive feedback loop. For diaspora engagement to have a long-term viability, ongoing

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<sup>4</sup> The most recent networking event launched the Australian China Business Council Executive Women's Forum, an initiative designed to assist Chinese businesswomen working in Australia and Australian women who do business in and with China. See, ‘Paspaley Pearl Discovery and Launch of the ACBC Executive Women's Forum’, Upcoming Events, [http://www.acbc.com.au/events\\_1122-1](http://www.acbc.com.au/events_1122-1) accessed 14 April 2018.

monitoring, evaluation, and frequent adjustments should form the foundation of any diaspora institution. Without structured monitoring and evaluation, it is difficult to fully assess the effectiveness of diaspora institutions, not to mention their impact on development efforts back in the homeland. Even if the Greek state effectively facilitates diasporic engagement or has built up an active network of diaspora members, it is crucial to monitor programme implementation, measure impact, and use findings to further improve engagement within and outside government initiatives. In addition, comparative analysis on Asian diaspora engagement strategies can offer important lessons.

For example, Indian diaspora engagement strategies suggest that the implementation of diaspora engagement institutions requires serious preparatory work aimed at understanding diasporas' needs, wants, and potential; and learning from the experiences of other countries. The Ministry of External Affairs in India, for instance, tasked a high-level committee with recommending a broad but flexible policy framework and country-specific plans to engage the Indians abroad. For two years, a five-person committee undertook a mapping exercise focused not only on identifying the size and locations of the diaspora but also its members' skills, capacity, and willingness to engage (Sahai, 2013). Moreover, how institutions are created and how their activities are chosen are also critical indicators of success. During the planning phase, for instance, it is important to delineate clearly the division of responsibilities inside and across government agencies and to establish sufficient buy-in from key actors. Such delineation will enhance legitimacy and inhibit the potential for political manipulation. Careful planning and communication are also important because, as Mavourdi (2015, p. 181) indicates, segments of the Greek diaspora in Australia have little trust with the Greek state. The perception of pervasive corruption and ineffective governance at home should therefore be strategically tackled. Finally, in an effort to generate trust and ownership, diaspora-engaging bodies should outwardly encourage diaspora involvement in setting their agendas. Governments should take care, however, to avoid creating a privileged "insider" group of diaspora partners.

### **Reimagining Greek-Australia as a conduit for Greek relations with the Asia-Pacific**

In looking at Asian diaspora engagement strategies, opportunities exist for Greece to reimagine the Greek diaspora in Australia, and to create a road map for maximising the economic potential for Greek-Australia-Asia engagement. Greek-Australian's with their

developed skills and knowledge could facilitate Asian investments in Greece and could take part in programs that move beyond harnessing financial capital. Elements of this road map align with aspects of already established initiatives, yet this paper stresses that evaluating how Asian countries are engaging within Australian-Asian business diasporas can broaden the scope of such initiatives. Certainly, a piecemeal approach is not sufficient. What is required is a coordinated and sustainable approach that considers ways in which the increased representation of Greek- Australian businesses and individuals could support national programs and research collaborations and assist with advancing Greek capabilities within agencies and organisations that can provide advice, skills, and resources on how to do sustainable business in Asia.

Further ways in which Greece can groom such capabilities is through sincere engagement with the multi-generational assortment of Greek-Australian students and by surveying the amount of early career professionals who have studied, worked, and lived in Asian countries. Also requiring attention are ways in which trade delegations might be able to improve their relevance and return on investment. It is not clear, for example, how much business was actually conducted during the trade roadshow that was introduced in the opening of this paper. Diaspora engagement endeavours must also reconsider the historical specificities of Greek settlement in Australia and acknowledge how the variability of Greek-Australian history influences the complex terrains that self-identifying Greek-Australians negotiate. This suggests a step forward from previous notions of homeland/diaspora relations, pointing to a more apt policy approach that is more informed with the ways that people of Greek background 'live' in Australia and 'imagine' Greece, while also recognising how the diaspora visits, works, and liaises with the Asia-Pacific region.

What is needed is a vision for Greek diasporic engagement that recognises the complexities of Asia-Pacific region and seeks a deeper understanding of how the Greek diaspora in Australia imagines its regionality and historicity. A thorough mapping and analysis of the Greek-Australian engagement with Asia is therefore required. Of particular relevance would be to trace how Greek-Australians – as managers, educators, public servants, investors, business owners, financiers – are positioned, and position themselves, within the Australian business community, while investigating how these forms of positioning have shaped Greek-Australian engagement with Asia. By pursuing a multilayered research path that takes into account historical and intergenerational dynamics, the

knowledge and perception gaps that bedevil the Greek state's engagement with the Greek-Australian community could be remedied.

Certainly, fertile conditions for fluid engagement between people, policy and place has the potential to be better position Greece's economic viability. The individual and business practices that have been introduced in this paper, reveal successful diaspora entrepreneurs and businesses who seek opportunities that move beyond bilateralism, linking them with regionally specific investors, collaborators or customers. Yet Greece does not make enough use of these networks and the linguistic and cultural resources inherent in their business and administrative practices. Greek-Australians bring with them linguistic skills, social networks and cultural knowledge, but their skills and contributions are insufficiently recognised. Enormous creativity, mobility, and flexibility can be observed and a more adequate research model could better accommodate the multitude of possibilities that diaspora engagement could peruse.

In short, Greece's engagement with the Greek-Australian diaspora should be inward and outward driven and be able to foster connection beyond cultural retention, migrant remittances, and bilateral ties. An innovative and flexible approach to understanding the historical and contemporary diversity of the Greek-Australian diaspora could lead to mutually beneficial ties. Multidirectional relationship-building in the spirit of pan-Hellenism could leverage established Greek diasporas to partake in a multilayered web of brain-circulation that has the potential to turn digital divides into digital dividends while also nurturing and supporting intra-diasporic connectivity. Promoting and aiding creative transnational networks should be viewed as necessary for structuring the mechanics of sustainable and ongoing development that moves across seemingly disparate borders. Engagement, or rather re-engagement, should therefore be viewed a multidirectional process that is mutually beneficial for key interlocutors. Greece should reconceptualise the Greek diaspora in Australia, and facets of the Greek-Australian diaspora should re-evaluate the how to better engage with Greece outside of bilateral engagement. In doing so, both Greece and the Greek-Australian diaspora through reciprocal dialogue can expand the contours of diasporic exchange within a globalised system of interconnectivity and interdependence – a system within which the Asia-Pacific region enjoys an increasingly dynamic and central position.

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The SEESOX Diaspora Working Papers series is a forum for research and debate about emigration and diasporas from Greece, the Southeast Europe and beyond. It involves academic and policy relevant research and provides quick-turnaround publication of research and policy papers as well as theoretical discussions by scholars whose research focuses on diaspora issues. The working papers contain original, unpublished research in progress and undergo an internal peer-review process.

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