



الجمعية الخيرية اليونانية في بيروت  
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΣ ΒΗΡΥΤΟΥ  
GREEK COMMUNITY OF BEIRUT



*Ta Nea*

Issue 21  
February 2021

Editorial

## Get Connected to our Community...

It seems Greeks have long had a presence in the Middle East with the outbreaks of wars that helped shape that area. Our ancestors, traders mainly, established in this region at the very beginning and during the Ottoman occupation. It has been now a century that a Greek community found refuge back in 1922 when they were forced to exile Smyrna pursuant to the first major world conflict, when the Turkish-Greek war clashed.

We can all recall the tales told by our papoudes and yayades as a bedtime story on how they had to exile Turkey with no belongings just trying to survive the Turks' cruelty and longing for one day to be able to return to their beloved homeland, Greece.

Many of those refugees arrived to the shores of Lebanon, which was back then under the French mandate. Brought together by the harsh change of fate, they bonded a close-knit community and has since then kept on growing. It has continuously carried out social and cultural activities around its schools, organizations, embassies and consulates.

Today, the Greek Community's heart is still beating strong with near 6,000 Greeks living in Lebanon. But for it to beat strong, it needs all its members well connected. The Greek Community wishes to become a meeting point for all Greeks. The monthly newsletter was established in the summer of 2017 to serve that purpose.

The aim of our newsletter is to create a reference for the Greek diaspora based in Lebanon, to provide them with a sense of belonging while keeping them informed with various news occupying both the Greek and the Lebanese front.

We would love to hear your stories and include them in our newsletter. If you wish to publish your own article, you may share it with us, we will review it and consider it for the next issue. Kindly get in touch with our editorial department, Mrs. Stephanie Kowalski, from Monday to Friday between 10:00 and 16:00.

We would also like to inform you a competition will be launched next month to commemorate in our own special way the centenary of our Community. Further details will be provided in the next issue, stay tuned!

What matters is for all of us to be informed ...

**... and stay connected**



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Go Live! Go Online!

As the real world seems to be closing down in itself, a new world is emerging and taking over our lives: the online world. Here everything is done digitally, in a cyber space, where distance is no longer an obstacle. All you need is a strong connection and the world is yours!

A world that is bringing people closer together to overcome the harsh and critical situation we are living nowadays since this pandemic hit us a year ago. Business meetings are conducted online, birthdays are organized online, family gatherings are celebrated online, physical trainings shifted online, and even therapies are held online.

Pick a day, set the time and get the conversation going...





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Our Greek Language Center has continued to carry out its cultural activities around its school. All classes have shifted online, homeworks are being shared online, and even tests are undertaken online. Keeping our distance at this stage is crucial for our survival. You can be infected by breathing in the virus if you are within close proximity of someone who has COVID-19, or by touching a contaminated surface and then your eyes, nose or mouth. Wearing a mask at all times is equally crucial for our protection and from decreasing one's chance of getting infected with the virus. Our Community continues respecting measures aimed at containing the spread of Coronavirus and abiding by the imposed lockdown.

The virtual world has its setbacks nevertheless! Working, studying, exercising from home can drain you out and find you feeling unmotivated to take on any additional task. For some, this repetitive pattern makes you feel energized and healthy. The lack of interaction with others can however force us to become speculative or reflective about one's life, purpose and well-being. Working from home can also generate more working hours, while our workplace becomes our home and our home becomes our workplace. We feel trapped and stuck in a continuous loop forced to produce more working hours and decreasing the resting time. This imbalance forces us then to feel demotivated, exhausted and equally unappreciated. How can one regain his motivation back? Sticking to a normal schedule is crucial but also sometimes putting on nice clothes is all it takes to feel upbeat and get going.

To your wardrobes whether you're online or offline!



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#### IMPORTANT NOTICE TO GREEK CITIZENS

Kindly contact our Center by phone or email informing us about any change of address, phone number or social status helping us to keep our data list updated.



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## Celebrating the Greek Language Day



February 9 is considered to be the International Greek Language Day.

Why precisely February the 9th? It is the commemoration of the great Greek poet, the author of the national anthem, Dionysos Solomos.

“Submit to the language of the people and if you’re strong enough, conquer it” – Solomos.

The Greek language, one of the oldest living languages known for more than 3,500 years. It is the basis of many languages.

Almost every language contains Greek words. It has also influenced mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, and so on.

The initiative to establish a Greek Language Day highlights the fundamental role this language has played in world culture throughout the centuries.

For this year’s celebration, amidst a harsh financial and health crisis, our community hosted a zoom meeting streaming live on our Facebook page “Greek Community of Beirut (Official Group)” and under the auspices of the Greek Embassy of Beirut.

The event was held on February the 11th at 7:00 pm and aimed to celebrate our love for the Greek language, culture, history, and so on.





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## News from the Greek Embassy

### Welcoming the new Greek Consul Mrs. Athanasia Iliaki



On the 14th of January 2021, Mrs. Athanasia Iliaki took on her new assignment as the new Consul of Greece in Lebanon.

She was born in Athens and completed her studies in International & European Relationship. She wanted to become a Diplomat since the age of thirteen.

In 2018 she joined the Diplomatic Corps after returning from a training in Diplomatic Affairs she undertook in New York. Prior to that training she lived in Paris for a while and Brussels where she stayed two years working in the European Parliament. Her previous experience in 2019 was working in the Greek Ministry's Foreign Affairs Directorate for Turkey which proved to be an exceptional experience.

She chose Lebanon for its challenging and interesting political, economic and social stance. The Greek presence in this country is captivating and she is keen on getting to know the Greeks settled here.

Her major hobbies are tennis and photography, a passion she took on from her father.

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

This section has been specially created by the Greek Community of Beirut with the kind collaboration of the consulate of Greece in order to better serve Greek citizens who wish to have information on all administrative formalities before presenting their requests.

Consular Office can be reached by email at [grcon.bei@mfa.gr](mailto:grcon.bei@mfa.gr).



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## Everything you need to know about the consulate:

All requests should be addressed by email in order to obtain an appointment.

Visa Applications: For visa applications please visit our website  
[www.mfa.gr/missionabroad/en/lebanon-en](http://www.mfa.gr/missionabroad/en/lebanon-en).

Additionally, due to the lockdown and the restrictions, Greece is not issuing visas at the moment. Exceptions can be made to specific cases and only by appointment.

**Passport renewal or issuance:** You will get an appointment by receiving an email. Required documents are: 2 photo passport size (4x6), a Greek identity card or a birth certificate (that can be provided by us if you send us in advance any old Greek birth or family certificate).

For additional info kindly visit <http://www.passport.gov.gr/en/>

**Legalization of documents:** The Consular Office can legalize any Lebanese official document that has been stamped by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is advised to ask for an appointment by email.

**Power of Attorney:** The Consular Office can exceptionally provide a power of attorney to Lebanese citizens that have already made an investment in Greece and want to apply for a residence permit.

**Marriage, birth, death registration:** Required documents: The Lebanese certificates of marriage, birth or death stamped by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and translated in Greek (translations in English or French are accepted as well).

Any old Greek birth or family certificate to be sent in advance by email.

The Consular Office is currently upgrading the embassy's website in order to make it more friendly user and to provide all necessary information and downloadable documents.



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2021, the bicentennial of the Greek revolution

As part of the commemoration of the bicentenary of the Greek revolution of 1821, we dedicate a new section. Each month we will present a story and a famous person who actively contributed to creating the actual Greece.



D. Solomòs.

Dionysios Solomos was a Greek poet from Zakynthos. He is best known for writing the Hymn to Liberty, of which the first two stanzas (lines of poetry grouped together), set to music by Nikolaos Mantzaros, became the Greek and Cypriot national anthem in 1865 and 1966 respectively.

Born on April 8, 1798 on the island of Zakynthos which was back then known as Mer-Egée, one of the French-occupied “departments” of Greece, he was the illegitimate child of a wealthy count, Nikolaos Solomos, and his housekeeper, Angeliki Nikli. Nikolaos Solomos was of Cretan origin; his family were Cretan refugees who settled on Zakynthos in 1670 after Crete’s conquest by the Ottoman Empire in 1669. Dionysios graduated from the Pavia University law school in Italy in 1817. He relocated in Zakynthos a year after, in 1818. He modernized his approach on writing poems as until then, Greek poets relied on the language of Ancient Greece. Solomos style relied on writing in the same style of speech and this increased his popularity. In 1822, he met

Spyridon Trikoupis, a Greek statesman who helped him improve his studies of the country’s language, which proved crucial in leading to the poet’s later success, in particular for writing the well-know “Hymn to Liberty”. He started to suffer from strokes and other health issues in 1851 and died from apoplexy in February 1857.

The first important turning point in the Greek works of Solomos was the Hymn to Liberty that was completed in May 1823-a poem inspired by the Greek revolution 1821. The poem was first published in 1824.

“Hymn to Liberty” recounts the misery of the Greeks under the Ottomans and their hope for freedom. Inspired by the Greek War of Independence, Solomos wrote the hymn to honor the struggle of Greeks for independence after centuries of Ottoman rule. He describes different events of the War, such as the execution of Patriarch Gregory V of Constantinople, the reaction of the Great Powers, extensively the Siege of Tripolitsa and the Christian character of the struggle. Thanks to this poem, Solomos was revered until his death.

Follow this link to enjoy our Hymn to Liberty: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VkPRU6C-JQ>




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Registrations for the Official Exams have started on February the 1<sup>st</sup> and will remain open till March 21<sup>st</sup>. All those who wish to have their knowledge of the Greek language tested and would like to get a Certificate of Attainment, need to abide by the following instructions. Good luck!



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COMMUNAUTÉ HELLÉNIQUE DE BIENFAISANCE DE BEYROUTH



γλώσσας νομῶν

The Greek **Community of Beirut** in cooperation with the **Ministry of Education of Greece** and its official entity with the Greek Language Centre, will be operating as an examination center pertaining to the **Greek Language Certification Exams** at the Greek Community premises.

Examinations dates for the Certificate of Attainment for the year 2021 in Greece and abroad as follows:

Levels		Dates	Examination Price
<b>A1</b> (for children 8-12 years old)	Elementary Knowledge	Tuesday 18 May 2021 (morning)	65 euro
<b>A1</b> (for adolescents and adults)		Tuesday 18 May 2021 (morning)	
<b>A2</b>	Basic Knowledge	Tuesday 18 May 2021 (noon)	
<b>B1</b>	Average Knowledge	Tuesday 18 May 2021 (afternoon)	
<b>B2</b>	Good Knowledge	Wednesday 19 May 2021 (morning)	73 euro
<b>C1</b>	Very Good Knowledge	Wednesday 19 May 2021 (afternoon)	
<b>C2</b>	Fluency	Thursday 20 May 2021 (morning)	

**\*Oral examinations are held immediately after the written examinations.**

- Registrations will start as of 1st of February till 21st of March 2021.
- Applications can be either submitted electronically to <http://www.greek-language.gr/certification/application/index.html>
- Or on the spot at the **Greek Community** premises

For further clarifications **outside the lockdown**, you may contact the Greek Language Courses Administrator during the office hours

(M-F /12:00 PM – 6:00 PM) on the following contact details:

**Address:** Greek Community of Beirut Dekwaneh - Parallel Towers 232 Block A - 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

**Tel:**+ 961 1 493467/8 and on Mob: +961 81 410 848 **During the lockdown**

**E-mail:**[stephanie@greekcommunity.org.lb](mailto:stephanie@greekcommunity.org.lb)

**Website:** <http://www.greekcommunityofbeirut.com/>