

Greek

Ελληνικά

Spoken in: Greece, Cyprus, south Albania, Southern Italy, south Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, central and south Bulgaria, Turkey and surrounding countries

Region: The Balkans

Total speakers: 15 million

Genetic Classification: Indo-European Greek Attic Modern Greek

Official language of: Greece, Cyprus (and the European Union)

Greek language is a member of the Indo-European family of languages. It is the language of one of the major civilizations of the world and of one of the greatest literatures of all time. Many modern scientific and technical words in English and other Western languages are derived from Greek, and it has been estimated that 12% of the English vocabulary is of Greek origin.

Greek has been spoken in the Balkan Peninsula since the 2nd millennium BC. The alphabet normally used, was probably created by modifying the Phoenician alphabet in c. 1000 BC and, with minor modifications, is still used today. Greek words have been widely borrowed into the European languages: *astronomy, democracy, philosophy, thespian*, etc. Moreover, Greek words and word elements continue to be productive as a basis for coinages: *anthropology, photography, isomer*, etc. and form, with Latin Words, the foundation of international scientific and technical vocabulary.

The Greek alphabet consists of 24 letters, each with a capital and small form:

Α α, Β β, Γ γ, Δ δ, Ε ε, Ζ ζ, Η η, Θ θ, Ι ι, Κ κ, Λ λ, Μ μ, Ν ν, Ξ ξ, Ο ο, Π π, Ρ ρ, Σ σ ς (word-final form), Τ τ, Υ υ, Φ φ, Χ χ, Ψ ψ, Ω ω.

Currently SSWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service employs 0.5 FTE Greek interpreter and 5 sessional interpreters.