



January 2025

GREEK TRIBUNE

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AUSTRALIAN NEWS

More Australians becoming homeless, report says

A new report, co-authored by Homelessness Australia and the University of New South Wales, has revealed that homelessness across the country has surged, with figures indicating a 22 per cent increase over three years.

The report noted that the crisis was driven by soaring rents, with a 29 per cent real increase over four years pushing many into homelessness.

Of the new homeless, 4636 are sleeping rough, while others couch surf or stay in short-term accommodation. The data confirms that ten-thousand addi-

tional people have become homeless, each month, over the past three-year period.

Frontline services now supported 95-thousand people monthly, a figure which included part-time teachers and nurses unable to afford rising living costs.

Despite government commitments to build 50-thousand social housing units this decade, experts warn this won't meet the growing demand.

Homelessness Australia CEO Kate Colvin called for immediate emergency funding, saying "the system is buckling under pressure."

Majority of children in detention are Indigenous boys

A report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has outlined youth detention trends from June 2020 to June 2024.

As of June 2024, 845 young people were in detention on an average night, 90 per cent of them being teen boys.

Six-in-ten detainees were Indigenous children, while 39 per cent

were non-Indigenous, with the detention rate for First Nations youth, aged 10 to 17, increasing.

Indigenous children were 27 times more likely to be detained than their non-Indigenous counterparts.

Of the 845 children in custody, 317 were in Queensland, 240 in New South Wales, and 88 in Victoria.

Smartphones driving professionals to distraction

A new study has revealed that mobile phones account for one in every four cases of distraction behind the wheel, among drivers in Australia, despite regulations banning phone use in vehicles.

The study, conducted by Canberra-based driver monitoring company Seeing Machines, found that mobile phone distractions were most common between 3 pm and 4 pm, particularly on Sundays.

Fatigue was another significant issue, with more than 84-thousand instances detected, mainly on Saturdays.

The report has highlighted concerns over Australia's slow adoption of driver-monitoring technology, compared to countries like China and the US, and in Europe.

The company warned that without regulatory action, Australia risked falling behind in addressing rising on-road risks.

The report comes following the recent announcement by Federal Transport Minister Catherine King, that there would be a review of the Australian Design Rules for roads, which could potentially incorporate guidelines for driver-monitoring technology.

GREEK COMMUNITY TRIBUNE

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Nine hundred and fifty still missing in Cyprus

The bi-communal body responsible for establishing the fate of Greek and Turkish Cypriots who went missing during the inter-communal fighting of 1963 to 1964 and the events of 1974, managed to identify the remains of 11 individuals in 2024.

According to recent data presented on Thursday by

Leonidas Pantelides, the Greek Cypriot representative to the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus (CMP), two of the 11 individuals were Greek Cypriots, the Cyprus News Agency reported.

Seven were on the CMP's official missing persons list, while four were not listed and are believed to be fallen com-

batants.

The CMP conducted digs at 102 locations in 2024, uncovering remains at five previously unexplored sites: Aloa, Trachoni, Karavas, Lapithos and Bellapais, including military areas.

To date, 1,051 of the 2,002 people who went missing during the conflicts have been

identified, along with 216 individuals not officially listed.

Current numbers include 756 identified Greek Cypriots and 295 Turkish Cypriots, with 754 G/Cypriots and 197 T/Cypriots still unaccounted for. Seven excavation teams continue work across the island, while approximately 300 cases are under investigation.

KATERINA SAKELLAROPOULOU

President sends holiday message to diaspora

President of the Hellenic Republic Katerina Sakellariopoulou extended holiday greetings to Greeks abroad, recognizing their vital role in preserving Greece's ideals and promoting its cultural heritage worldwide.

"The Greek State is grateful for your contributions in maintaining our values and advancing our heritage," Sakellariopoulou said. "Your achievements in science,

business and culture inspire us and strengthen Greece's international presence."

Sakellariopoulou also addressed global challenges, noting, "As we enter 2025, we face geopolitical tensions and social challenges. Greece, committed to international law, continues to build bridges of friendship with other nations while safeguarding its national rights."

She emphasized the dias-

pora's influence in bolstering Greece's global standing, adding, "Your initiatives and energy play a key role in reinforcing Greece's position worldwide."

Concluding her message, Sakellariopoulou expressed hope for continued collaboration with the Greek diaspora, wishing all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year filled with health and success.



Australian wine exports to China increasing rapidly

Half a billion dollars' worth of South Australian wine has been exported to China in just seven months following the removal of import tariffs in April according to latest ABS figures.

South Australian exporters sold \$558 million of wine to China in the 12 months to October, with more than 99 per cent of those sales occurring in the seven months since Chinese tariffs were lifted.

Wine exports from the state to all markets exceeded \$1.7 billion in the year to October, up 38 per cent on the previous year, South Australian sales contributed two-thirds of the \$2.5 billion exported by Australian producers.

This includes a more than 30 per cent growth of the state's second-largest wine export market, Hong Kong, now valued at \$237 million.

The Albanese Government, under the stewardship of Ministers Farrell and Wong, worked tirelessly

to repair the relationship between the Australian and Chinese governments, and to normalise trade between the two countries.

The Chinese government removed its remaining import tariffs on Australian wine in April.

Anticipating the removal of tariffs and aware of the need to act swiftly in the period that followed, the Malinauskas Government in March was ahead of the curve when it announced a \$1.85 million reengagement package for wine exporters looking to sell to Chinese buyers.

The package continues to support local producers to attend important regional trade shows, and provides on-the-ground support from trade experts both at home and abroad.

It also facilitated the return of Chinese wine buyers to South Australia this week, where they met with representatives from more than 70 wineries across eight



different South Australian wine regions.

Trade and Investment Minister Joe Szakacs has led crucial trade missions to China and Hong Kong since May, impressing upon Chinese officials and importers the premium quality of South Australian wine, and the Malinauskas Government's commitment to renewing economic ties with its number one trading partner.

China's tariffs have now

been removed on all South Australian exports.

In October the Australian Government and Chinese Government announced a timetable to resume imports of live Southern Rock Lobster from Australia.

Exports are expected to resume later this month.

Trade Minister Joe Szakacs said our Government is committed to supporting our producers to sell their world-renowned South Australian wine across the globe.

Adelaideans donate ambulance to Kos

In a moving ceremony held at the Kos Emergency Medical Service facilities in Platani on 6 November 2024, the Adelaide Pan-Koan Society "Hippocrates" donated a state-of-the-art ambulance to the island's Emergency Medical Service worth \$132,000 at the presence of the Director of the Aegean Emergency Medical Service, Mr. Savvas Karatapani.

The donation is a valuable gift for the Kos community, as it enhances the capabilities of the Emergency Medical Service to provide immediate and effective care to the citizens and visitors to the island.

Community Life



The photo is from the ceremony on the island of Kos for the handover of the new Ambulance by the Adelaide Kos Society

The new ambulance is equipped with the latest medical equipment and will

contribute to better handling of emergencies, reducing response time and improving

patient transport conditions. The modest ceremony, which was attended by the Honorary President of the Adelaide Kos Association "Hippocrates", Mr. Manolis Koutelas, was also attended by many local dignitaries and citizens.

In her speech during the ceremony, the Kos District Commissioner, Mrs. Dina Svinou, praised the Adelaide Kos Society for their patriotic contribution to their island and congratulated them for the symbolic donation of the ambulance.

We note that the Kos Society of SA, after the sale of their club, donated a total of \$786,000 to charitable institutions in Adelaide and their birthplace island of Kos.



Cultural, social and political events in South Australia

Contact: Harri on 0484 387 818 - or email your community's news or a photo: info@greektribune.com.au



President Giorgos Gronthos and members of the Board of Directors of the Ikarian Brotherhood of SA, together with the judges in front of the competing wines, olives and pies, at the annual Ikarian Wine Festival that took place on November 10 at the Ikarian Hall. In the photo are, Wayne Martin, Eleni Karapeti, Zoran Djukanovic, Afroditi Karatsinidis, Theo Karatsinidis, Viola Mougiannis, Antonis Mougiannis, Manolis Glaros and Socrates Tsapaliaris

Uncertainty for refugees returning to Syria

The fall of the Assad regime in Syria is fuelling optimism among the millions of Syrian refugees scattered across the Middle East and around the world about returning home.

But there is still great uncertainty as to whether it is safe to make that journey, given there is so much still unknown about the rebel fighters who have seized control of the country and have installed a new caretaker government.

In the narrow, winding lane-ways of the Shatila refugee

camp in the Lebanese capital, many Syrians who fled the civil war and sought safety in Beirut have already packed their belongings and attempted to cross the border.

"As soon as they reached Syria, they kneeled and prayed on their country's soil," refugee Sahar Kamal.

The 55-year-old mother is not joining them, just yet.

Her son Abdul Rahman did attempt to return over the weekend, only to be killed in an explosion.

She fought back tears as

she spoke of her loss, and blamed the now-deposed dictator for his death, and the killing of multiple members of her family during the 13-year civil war.

"When my son came with me to Lebanon, he was five. Yesterday was the first time he'd gone back to Syria," Sahar Kamal said.

Erdoğan threatens more bloodshed

In the meantime, the Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan, said on Wednesday, Kurdish militia in Syria will be

buried if they do not lay down arms.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan said on Wednesday that Kurdish militants in Syria will either lay down their weapons or "be buried," amid hostilities between Turkey-backed Syrian fighters and the militants since the fall of Bashar al-Assad this month.

Following Assad's departure, Ankara has repeatedly insisted that the Kurdish YPG militia must disband, asserting that the group has no place in Syria's future.

GIORGOS SEFERIS

The First Greek Poet to Win the Nobel Prize

On December 10, 1963, Greek diplomat and poet Giorgos Seferis was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature by King Gustav of Sweden. Seferis was the first Greek to receive the esteemed award.

Seferis was born in Urla, a town in Asia Minor, now Turkey, in 1900. The poet received an international education. His family moved to Athens when he was a teen, and he later traveled to Paris, where he studied law at the Sorbonne.

While Seferis was a student in Paris, Turkish forces burned the Greek and Armenian sections of the cosmopolitan city of Smyrna, forcing the surviving Greeks of Asia Minor to flee the region for Greece.

Destruction of Hellenism in Asia Minor had major impact on his life, career

Although not there at the time, the event was traumatic and left its mark on Seferis' life and career. His entire extended family was forced to leave the region, and the Greek poet would not return to his native land until over 25 years after the Smyrna Catastrophe.

Many people attribute Seferis' fixation on Odysseus, the ancient Greek hero who embarked on a years-long quest to reach home, to the displacement of Greeks in Asia Minor and his own yearning to return to a home that no longer exists.

The Catastrophe was a defining moment for a great

number of Greek writers and artists of his generation, who were disturbed by man's capability for destruction and brutality, and whose ideas regarding culture and ethnic identity were upended by the influx of millions of refugees from the region.

Seferis resisted the Junta

Seferis became a diplomat and had a successful career serving in various countries around the world, including Turkey, Jordan, Albania, and Iraq.

When the military dictatorship, or Junta, took power in Greece in 1967, Seferis immediately began to resist the brutal regime.

He publicly spoke out against the Junta, in a period during which anyone viewed as contrary to the dictatorship's ideas could be detained, tortured, killed, or exiled.

Seferis died in 1971, tragically just three years before the end of the Junta. His funeral served as an act of resistance, however, as thousands of mourners carried his coffin through the streets of Athens, reciting his works of poetry that the dictatorship had banned.

When Giorgos Seferis won the Nobel Prize

Seferis' poetry became known internationally in the 1950's. He was nominated twice, in 1955 and 1961, before finally receiving the coveted prize.

The October 24, 1963



telegraph from the Swedish Academy announced that Seferis had won the prize "for his wonderful lyrical style, inspired by a deep feeling for the Greek cultural ideal."

Seferis, who at the time was bedridden at home because of ill health, said "By selecting a Greek poet for the Nobel Prize, I think the Swedish Academy wanted to express its solidarity with the living, spiritual Greece, the Greece for which so many generations have fought, trying to keep its long cultural tradition alive."

"I also think that the Swedish Academy wanted to show that today's humanity also needs poetry - from all peoples - and the Greek spirit."

Seferis was competing for that year's Nobel in a field of stellar writers including literary giants such as Irish playwright Samuel Beckett, English-American poet W.H. Auden and the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda.

At the December 10th ceremony at Stockholm City Hall,

Seferis spoke about the direct and unbroken continuity of the Greek language from antiquity to the present age.

He stated, "I belong to a small country. A stone cape in the Mediterranean, which has no other good than the struggle of its people, the sea, and the sunlight. Our country is small, but its tradition is enormous and ... it was delivered to us without interruption."

"People never ceased to speak the Greek language. It had its alterations, like everything that is alive, but there are no gaps in its existence," he noted.

He also referred to the necessity and function of poetry in the modern world, saying "It is important that Sweden wished to honor this poetry, and all poetry in general, even when it addresses a limited number of people."

Seferis concluded by saying "I believe that this modern world we live in, full of fear and anxiety, is in need of poetry."

Victoria: Calls to turn away from gas

Major medical and equity organisations are calling on Victoria's premier to provide greater rebates for replacing gas appliances, highlighting the "dangerous" health risks associated with gas use, including asthma and leukaemia.

Healthcare workers and community advocates gathered at State parliament this week to deliver an open letter to Premier Jacinta Allan.

The letter, signed by 15 groups, including the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Asthma Australia and the Australian Federation of Medical Women, urges

the Premier to introduce an equitable electrification program, offering more financial assistance for households to switch from gas to electric appliances.

Currently, the 140-dollar-rebate offered is insufficient for most households to make the switch, and low-income households and renters could be left behind, facing higher gas charges, as others transition to electricity.

This push follows Premier Allan's ban on gas in new Victorian homes, part of a broader plan to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045.

Housing plea as millions more at risk of being homeless

A recent report by Homelessness Australia has revealed a sharp increase in homelessness, with the number of Australians at risk rising by 63 per cent to three million.

The report highlights that many frontline services are overwhelmed, unable to meet demand, and often forced to turn away those seeking emergency accommodation.

Homelessness Australia CEO Kate Colvin described the situation as critical, citing a lack of resources and the urgent need for more social housing

to support vulnerable Australians.

Families with children, and individuals without children, face frequent service refusals due to capacity constraints, while staff report closures and unanswered requests for help.

The findings come as the federal government seeks to advance housing reforms, including new social housing initiatives.

Advocacy groups are urging immediate investment to address the growing crisis and ensure long-term housing security for those in need.

Woolies workers' strike secures 11% pay rise

An extensive 17-day strike by Woolworths distribution centre workers has cost the retail giant approximately 140 million dollars in lost sales and an estimated 50 million dollars in profits.

The workers had stopped work over pay disputes and safety concerns with an algorithmic performance management system, ultimately securing an 11 per

cent pay rise over three years.

The strike disrupted stock levels, with shelves needing to be urgently restocked ahead of the busy Christmas period.

The strikes come as Coca-Cola workers at the Northmead factory in Sydney also walked off the job, claiming lower wages compared to rival Pepsi.

Strict gambling reforms introduced in Victoria

The Victorian government will introduce significant gambling reforms, cutting the maximum poker machine load-up limit from 1,000 dollars to 100 dollars and mandating pre-commitment schemes with a default loss limit of 50 dollars.

From mid-2025, carded play requiring player cards to operate machines will be piloted, becoming mandatory by 2027.

This follows Crown Casino Melbourne's earlier adoption of carded play after a recent Royal Commis-

sion uncovered unethical practices. New pokies, approved after December 2025, must also slow spin rates by 40 per cent, reducing losses.

Gaming areas in pubs and clubs (excluding Crown) must now close between 4am and 10am.

Gaming Minister Melissa Horne emphasised the disproportionate impact on low-income areas, with Victorians losing 3 billion dollars annually to pokies, despite declining participation rates.