



Cyprus

Europe

The country is divided as a result of Turkey's 1974 invasion and occupation of the north. The Greek and Turk populations are separated: the north calling itself the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and the south claiming the whole island as the Republic of Cyprus (ROC). The ROC is internationally recognized as the legal government of the whole island; only Turkey recognizes the TRNC. Some statistics below apply to the whole island and some to the two entities, necessitated by an absence of unified data.

Geography

Area 9,251 sq km. Strategic island in northeast Mediterranean Sea. ROC in the south is 64% of the island, TRNC in the north is 36%.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010 879,723	1.02%	95/sq km
2020 970,100	0.97%	105/sq km
2030 1,052,680	0.76%	114/sq km

Capital Lefkosia (Nicosia) 243,000. **Urbanites** 70.3%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 19%. **Life expectancy** 79.6 yrs.

Peoples

Literacy 96.8%. **Official language** Greek. **All languages** 6. **Indigenous languages** 4. **Languages with Scriptures** 3Bi.

Economy

HDI Rank 32nd/182. **Public debt** 49% of GDP. **Income/person** \$32,745 (69% of USA).

Religion

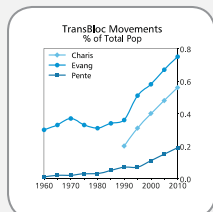
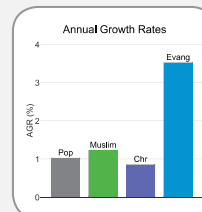
The Christians are almost all in ROC and Muslims in TRNC. There is freedom of religion in both ROC and TRNC, but proselytism by minority groups is carefully monitored.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	72.42	637,095	0.9%
Muslim	23.67	208,230	1.2%
Non-religious	3.60	31,670	2.8%
Hindu	0.15	1,320	5.6%
Buddhist	0.07	616	13.0%
Chinese	0.04	352	16.1%
Sikh	0.03	264	9.6%
Jewish	0.02	176	1.0%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	21	0.48	4,000	3.6%
Independent	15	0.25	2,000	5.2%
Anglican	1	0.33	3,000	-1.3%
Catholic	3	1.59	14,000	1.5%
Orthodox	6	66.31	583,000	0.9%
Marginal	3	0.46	4,000	1.1%
Unaffiliated		3.00	26,000	-2.2%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Orthodox Church	O	292	204,643	573,000
Catholic Church	C	8	7,143	14,000
Armenian Apos Ch	O	3	5,604	10,200
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	17	1,520	3,800
Anglican Church	A	6	1,160	2,900
Charismatic fellowships	I	23	1,167	1,750
Protestant groups	P	12	700	1,400
Greek Evangelical Ch	P	4	420	798
Other denominations[15]		37	1,597	2,871
Total Christians[49]		402	223,954	610,719

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	0.8	6,616	3.5%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	0.6	4,947	4.2%
Pentecostals	0.2	1,630	5.1%



Republic of Cyprus

Geography

Area 5,896 sq km. The southern, less-fertile two-thirds of the island. **Capital** (divided) Lefkosia (Nicosia) 219,200. **Pop under 15 yrs** 21.4%. **Life expectancy** 79.2 yrs.

Peoples

Cypriot 92.0%. Greek Cypriot 91.8%. **Foreign** 8.0%. Arab 3.4%; British/American 1.6%; Russian, Filipino, Sri Lankan, others. **Literacy** 97%. **Official languages** Greek, Turkish; English widely used.

Economy

Crippled by Turkey's seizure of the north and by a third of the population being made refugees.

Rapid recovery and development of light industry and tourism. One-sixth of the world's merchant ships are registered in Cyprus.

Politics

Ruled by 11 foreign empires over three millennia. Independent from Britain in 1960. The 1974 abortive coup (supported by Greece) and subsequent Turkish invasion partitioned the island. As a result, 230,000 people became refugees. All efforts to achieve a settlement have foundered due to Turkey's desire to maintain influence, the mistrust between the communities and the intransigence of the politicians. Cyprus joined the EU in 2004. Membership and EU laws apply to the whole island, but are suspended for the north.

Religion

Christians 94.4%; Non-religious 4.5%; Muslim 0.7%; Other religions 0.4%.

Challenges for Prayer

- 1 The 50-year conflict between the two communities**, fuelled by the involvement of foreign powers, has gone on too long. Political intransigence by a few hampers the reunification seemingly favoured by the majority. Pray that old grievances and bitterness might be overcome by forgiveness. Pray that external meddling would stop and that Cypriots might move forward into a unified future. Since 2004, Cypriot and EU citizens have been free to cross the dividing line. A greater degree of interaction between the communities has shown that, for most, it is possible to live together in peace.
- 2 The Orthodox Church** is a crucial focal point for Greek Cypriot culture and identity. The challenge lies in encountering the gospel amid the ethnic-cultural-political traditions. Cyprus is very religious for an EU country, but church attendance is largely practiced by rural folk and the older generation. Pray for the Holy Spirit to draw religious Cypriots into a living relationship with Christ and for renewal within the Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Church has taken to distributing NTs in the public schools; pray that this might bear much fruit among the students.
- 3 Evangelical churches among Greeks are few.** Negative prejudice is easing, but still holds many back. Pray that the unease of Cypriots with evangelicals may be removed and that significant church growth may begin. Few workers and ministries focus on the majority – **YWAM** is one ministry that does.
- 4 Ethnic minority evangelicals have grown rapidly** among the English-speaking, Russian, Filipino, Sri Lankan and Iranian communities. Pray for their active and effective witness to their own communities and to the indigenous population. Several ministries work in this area.
- 5 The Logos bookstore (CLC)** is a vital centre for books, tracts and BCCs. Logos is also the core of a range of Christian education ministries that are a boost to the evangelical witness. Pray for its effectiveness and that of The Bridge Christian bookshop.
- 6 Cyprus is a major base for Christian organizations** ministering to the surrounding Middle Eastern states. Most expatriate Christian workers are involved in these rather than in local outreach. Pray specifically for:

- a) *A number of missions that have headquarters* or regional centres in Cyprus (MECO, CCCI, YWAM, Interserve, others).
- b) *Christian literature* in Arabic, Greek and other languages that is both printed and stocked for distribution throughout the region. The Bible Society has distributed many Greek NTs throughout the ROC.
- c) *SAT-7*, which is based in Cyprus. This key, innovative, Christian satellite TV ministry is hugely influential, with a wide audience and good response, and is impacting the whole of the Arab world with its daily programmes.
- d) *Christian radio programmes* broadcast over Cyprus in Greek, English and most of the immigrant languages, amounting to over 35 hours per week. No Christian radio is yet available in Turkish.
- 7** **The two large British military bases.** Pray for the ministry of Mission to Military Garrisons, working with the 3,000 British military personnel and their families. Pray also that a clear witness may be given by Christian service personnel to the Cypriots. Pray also for opportunities to share the gospel with the multinational UN peace-keeping force.
- 8** **There is proportionately a very large population of foreign workers** – legal and illegal – from Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Many are believers; many others are open to the gospel. Pray for effective outreach to all of these groups in Cyprus's newly cosmopolitan society.

Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

Geography

Area 3,355 sq km. The northern third and 55% of the coastline of the island. **Population** 205,800. Augmented significantly by Turkish immigrants/colonists, offset by Turkish Cypriot emigration. **Capital** (divided) Lefkosa (Nikosia) 49,200.

Peoples

Turkish Cypriot/Turkish 98.6%.

Other 1.4%.
Official language Turkish.

Economy

A lower standard of living than the south due to diplomatic and economic isolation. Heavily dependent on Turkish subsidies and trade. High unemployment.

Politics

A democratic government set up after the 1974 partition, but diplomatic isolation followed the declaration of the separate state of TRNC in 1983, which Turkey alone recognizes and acts as its only lifeline. The pull of EU access and employment is proving irresistible to many, as thousands take Republic of Cyprus passports.

Religion

A secular republic with two established religions – Islam (99%) and Christianity (0.4%).

Challenges for Prayer

- 1** **Almost the entire population is Muslim**, but also quite secularized. Pray that the historic, ethnic and cultural prejudices against Christianity would not prevent spiritual openness.
- 2** **The slow move toward political reunification** presents new opportunities for Turkish Cypriots. Pray that what unfolds in the politico-economic sphere also brings chances to encounter the true gospel.

3 **Small numbers of Turkish Cypriots have become believers.** Pray for numerical and spiritual growth. Pray for protection, wisdom and fruitfulness for those seeking to share Christ with those in the north.