



# Republic of Cyprus Risk Assessment Report



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## Executive Summary

The Northern third of the island is the primarily Turkish Cypriot & Turkish settler “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.” Although arguably *de facto* sovereign, TRNC is recognized as a state by only Turkey. The internationally recognized government *de jure* of all of Cyprus is the Republic of Cyprus with its capital in the south. This report undertakes an analysis of conflict risk based on risk assessment indicators and stakeholders (internal and external). It analyzes the relationship of stakeholders to the conflict in Cyprus, and investigates what the stabilizing and destabilizing factors of the risk assessment indicators are. The report concludes that the most likely outcome in the short term in Cyprus is a continuation of the status quo with high militarization, unpopular austerity measures, unsuccessful reunification talks and substandard treatment of refugees.

## Background History

Cyprus achieved independence in 1960 from the British. Relations between Turkish Cypriots in the Northern third of the island and the rest of Cyprus have been rocky since the 1974 attempted coup and Turkish invasion of Northern Cyprus, which prompted a mass exodus of Greeks from the north to the south, and Turkish Cypriots from the south to the north.<sup>1</sup> Despite repeated UN Security Council resolutions calling for Turkish withdrawal,<sup>2</sup> Turkey has maintained its presence north of the 1963 Green Line. Reunification talks failed in 1985, 1989 and 1992 before violence in the buffer zone killed two Greek Cypriots.<sup>3</sup> Talks failed again in 1997. The listing of Cyprus as a potential EU member then sparked new tensions between Cyprus and Turkey, particularly after Russian involvement in selling anti-air missiles to Cyprus. In 2001, Turkey threatened annexation of the north if Cyprus joined the EU prior to a reunification settlement. Reunification plans failed again in 2003, but Green Line border restrictions were lifted. In 2004, a referendum for reunification failed as it was rejected by the South, although accepted by the Turkish Cypriots in the north.<sup>4</sup> Cyprus joined the EU that year despite Turkish opposition. The benefits of this membership, however, only apply to the Republic of Cyprus with its internationally-recognized government and not to the TRNC.<sup>5</sup> Cyprus adopted the Euro in 2008, just before the financial meltdown. The economic crisis in 2008 forced Cyprus to begin drilling for oil, renewing tensions with Turkey, which raised maritime zone issues over areas that were being drilled. In 2013, the European Court of Human Rights ordered Turkey to pay €90 million in damages to Cyprus for the 1974 invasion, a ruling that Turkey refused to comply with. Reunification talks resumed in 2015. Cyprus President Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci appeared on TV together for the New Year’s address in 2016 signalling continuation of peace talks. The two leaders also met with Ban Ki Moon at Davos in January 2016.<sup>6</sup>

## External Stakeholders

Actor / Impact	Effects
Turkey <i>(Negative)</i>	Turkey is the only country that legally recognizes the TRNC. <sup>7</sup> In October 2015, the 80-kilometer water pipeline that runs 250 meters deep in the Mediterranean Sea and which cost around €380 million began supplying the TRNC with Turkish water. <sup>8</sup> Turkish aid for the TRNC amounted to 1.5 billion Turkish lira (\$548 million) in 2014 and both parties are working on a project that will address the TRNC’s electricity problem. <sup>9</sup> To sum up, Turkey’s ties to the TRNC are very strong.
Greece <i>(Negative)</i>	In 2013, 15% of Cyprus’ imports originated from Greece. <sup>10</sup> The latter describes its relationship with Cyprus as “excellent”. <sup>11</sup> Greece is “endeavouring to become a transit country for Cypriot, Egyptian and Israeli natural gas en route to Europe” and it supports Cyprus’ sovereignty in the EEZ. <sup>12</sup>
Israel <i>(Mixed)</i>	Turkey and Israel are making progress on normalizing relations with reports of the possibility of a détente and energy cooperation in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. <sup>13</sup> It is reported that 1-3% of the Cypriot Aphrodite natural gas fields extend into Israeli waters. <sup>14</sup> On January 28, 2015 the leaders of Israel, Greece and Cyprus signed an energy agreement that would result in an electricity cable (EuroAsia Connector) running between these countries by 2019 and the transfer of natural gas to Greece by 2022 and eventually, to Europe. <sup>15</sup>
European Union (EU) <i>(Mixed)</i>	The year 2016 marks Cyprus’ twelfth anniversary as an EU Member State. In 2013, nearly 50% of Cyprus’ exports were destined for the EU, making the EU one of its top trading partners. <sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, their relationship is strained by the bailout agreement which led to mistrust and frustration among Cypriots. <sup>17</sup>
Troika <i>(Mixed)</i>	In November 2015, Cyprus had its eighth and potentially final Troika evaluation. The last disbursement will be up to €350 million; Cyprus is set to leave the bailout programme at the end of March 2016. <sup>18</sup> To date, Cyprus has received a total of €7.12 billion in aid in eight tranches. <sup>19</sup>
United Nations (UN) <i>(Positive)</i>	On January 28, 2016, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2263 (2016) to extend the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to July 31, 2016 and to “increase force levels to 888”. <sup>20</sup> The UNFICYP is the longest-standing peacekeeping force; it administers the buffer zone, and undertakes humanitarian activities. The UNFICYP has acted as a third party mediator numerous times; most recently in 2008 with the end goal of “a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, with political equality and a single international personality”. <sup>21</sup> The Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders met with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2016 and signaled the possibility of ending the conflict soon. <sup>22</sup>

## Internal Stakeholders

Actor / Impact	Effects
Greek Cypriots	59% of the island state is controlled by the internationally recognized government, which is primarily

(Neutral)	inhabited by Greek Cypriots. Generally, there is a relatively low level of violence.
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) (Negative)	36% of the island self-proclaimed itself as the TRNC, which is only recognized by Turkey. The international community considers this Turkish occupation to violate international law. Tensions between Turkish Cypriots in the north, and Greek Cypriots in the south, continue.
Syrian Refugees (Negative)	Despite international calls for humane treatment of refugees, public opinion of refugees is negative, and the treatment in detention centres for refugees is substandard. As such, there have been increasing amounts of refugee protests, which could result in unrest.
Military (Negative)	The Cypriot National Guard in the south and the Turkish forces in the north are increasingly militarizing, which increases the level of tension in the divided island state.

Risk Assessment Indicators					
High Risk		Medium Risk		Low Risk	
↑ Improving		→ Stable		↓ Deteriorating	
History of Armed Conflict		Low Risk		→ Stable	
<b>Stabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Buffer Zone</u>: The UN administered buffer zone with peacekeeper presence since the 1960s has been a major factor in preventing any outbreak of conflict, barring a few cross-border incidents. Border restrictions have been lifted, allowing more freedom to cross.</p> <p><u>Better bilateral relations with Turkey</u>: When Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, Turkey did not annex North Cyprus.</p> <p><u>Reunification</u>: Cyprus President Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci appeared on TV together for the New Year's address in 2016 signalling continuation of peace talks.</p>				
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Attempted Coup</u>: The 1974 attempted coup and Turkish invasion of Northern Cyprus prompting mass exodus of Greek Cypriots from the north and Turkish Cypriots from the south remains the biggest armed conflict in Cyprus in recent history.</p> <p><u>Russia-Cyprus-Turkey Relations</u>: Russian arms sales to Cyprus nearly caused a military crisis in 1998 with Turkish opposition to the deal.</p> <p><u>EU Membership</u>: In 2001, Turkey threatened to annex TRNC if Cyprus joined EU without a reunification settlement.</p>				
<b>Assessment</b>	With increasingly fewer reasons to resort to military conflict in Cyprus, the risk of armed conflict appears low. Ongoing economic troubles make military engagement less palatable, although there are concerns that a severe economic shock or large-scale refugee migration may cause unrest in the small island state.				
Governance and Political Stability		Low Risk		→ Stable	
<b>Stabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Democracy</u>: Cyprus has a representative government with no major destabilization since the failed 1974 coup and Turkish invasion of the north. Freedom House gave Cyprus the status "Free" with a very high 1.0 rating for freedom, civil liberties and political rights.<sup>23</sup> However, this organization raised concern about reports that Turkish Cypriots were being turned away from the polls during EU elections. The north is not recognized as sovereign by the EU, and are required to vote in the south for EU elections. These scores have remained constant since 2006, showing no reason to fear instability.</p> <p><u>Reunification</u>: Talks are making very slow progress. However, there appears to be an appetite for reconciliation since the two leaders on the island appeared on TV together to wish residents a happy holiday season.</p>				
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Economy</u>: Cyprus continues to struggle with downgraded credit ratings since the financial meltdown and Euro crisis forced Cyprus to take EU bailout loans. Austerity measures put in place to pay back these loans have led to some unrest.</p> <p><u>Refugees</u>: Cyprus' treatment of Syrian &amp; North African refugees have been condemned. Many refugees are housed in detention camps for long periods of time, facing uncertain futures. In 2014, a detention facility in Menoyia went on hunger strike to force the government to hold residency hearings.</p>				
<b>Assessment</b>	With stable governance, likelihood of political instability low, and indications of continued peace talks, there are few reasons to expect significant deviation from the status quo in the near future.				
Militarization		Medium Risk		→ Stable	
<b>Stabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Multilateral Relations</u>: Tensions in recent times have not reached as high as the Cyprus missile crisis in 1997-1998 between Cyprus and Turkey over Cyprus' plans to install Russian anti-air missiles.</p> <p><u>UN Peace Keepers</u>: The Green Line buffer zone has operated as a peaceful border with crossing points. The UN administers the buffer zone in between the two north and south, and the Peacekeeping Force has been active since 1964 to prevent recurrence of clashes between the two regions. The potential UNFICYP withdrawal has not come about since it first was a possibility in 2011.</p>				
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Over-Militarization</u>: Cyprus is among the ten most militarized countries in the world according to the Global Militarization Index, and has been since 2006. In 2014, it was number 7 in the world.<sup>24</sup> Turkish military forces in Northern Cyprus, officially the Cyprus Turkish Peace Force Command, outnumbers the Greek forces.</p> <p><u>UN Presence Likely Not Permanent</u>: The 2011 announcement that UNFICYP may not be in Cyprus much longer cannot be discounted. Uncertainties surround the potential for peaceful coexistence without UN presence.</p>				
<b>Assessment</b>	Cyprus' over-militarization is concerning, but is consistent with its own perception of threat. Countries more militarized than Cyprus include Israel, Jordan, Singapore and Russia. With reunification talks underway and an economic crisis to weather, militarization will likely be viewed as a way to keep the peace and deter any military aggression during these uncertain times.				
Population Heterogeneity		Medium Risk		↓ Deteriorating	
<b>Stabilizing</b>	<u>Ethnic Diversity</u> : The area of the Republic of Cyprus that is controlled by the internationally-recognized government				

<b>Factors</b>	is largely homogenous, with 98.8% Greek, 1% 'other' (includes Maronite, Armenian, Turkish-Cypriot, unspecified). <sup>25</sup> <u>Religious Diversity</u> : The majority of the Republic of Cyprus is Christian (89.1% Greek Orthodox Christian, 2.9% Roman Catholic, and 2% Protestant/Anglican) with 1.8% Muslim (most Turkish Cypriots practice Sunni Islam), 1% Buddhist, and 3.1% 'other' (Maronite, Armenian Church, Hindu, and Atheist). <sup>26</sup> <u>Language</u> : The Republic of Cyprus has two official languages, with 80.9% of the population speaking Greek and 0.2% Turkish. The remaining population speaks various languages such as English, which was the sole official language during British colonial rule, as well as Romanian, Russian, Bulgarian, Arabic, and Filipino. <sup>27</sup>		
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<u>Refugees</u> : Approximately 3,000 Syrian refugees have come to Cyprus since 2011, which is small compared to the 1.1 million who have gone to the EU. Only 3% have refugee status. <sup>28</sup> Given the negative public opinion and the poor conditions for refugees, protests take place at detention centres in Cyprus. <sup>29</sup> <u>Northern Turkish Minority</u> : Approximately 300,000 people live in the north. <sup>30</sup> The Turkish occupation of this area, considered a violation of international law, continues to be a source of tension for this island state. <sup>31</sup> <u>Internally Displaced Persons</u> : 212,400 Turkish and Greek Cypriot IDPs, some since 1974. <sup>32</sup>		
<b>Assessment</b>	While the south is relatively homogenous, with a Greek majority, tensions continue with the northern Turkish minority. Incoming Syrian refugees are cause further tension, although the numbers are low due to the negative experience that refugees have in terms of poor detention facilities, with long wait times, and low likelihood of obtaining refugee status. The continued pressures from the IDPs, some of which have been displaced since the ethnic violence in 1974, also play a role in the domestic ethnic tensions.		
<b>Demographic Stress</b>		<b>Medium Risk</b>	<b>➡ Stable</b>
<b>Stabilizing Factors</b>	<u>Population</u> : 1.2 million people live in Cyprus, with a low growth rate of 1.43%. <sup>33</sup> Life expectancy at birth is approximately 79 years. <sup>34</sup> Maternal and infant mortality is relatively low, ranked at 153 worldwide. <sup>35</sup>		
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<u>Urbanization</u> : 66.9% of the population living in urban areas, which is relatively high, with a 0.89% annual rate of change for urbanization. <sup>36</sup> <u>Age Distribution</u> : While there is a relatively normal age distribution, youth unemployment is one of the highest in the EU. <sup>37</sup> Long-term unemployment also increased significantly in Cyprus in 2014. <sup>38</sup> This has a potentially destabilizing effect, although it has not yet manifested as a source of violence.		
<b>Assessment</b>	Demographic factors in Cyprus are of limited concern. Pressure from the high level of urbanization and the high youth unemployment is a key consideration for risk assessment.		
<b>Economic Performance</b>		<b>High Risk</b>	<b>➡ Stable</b>
<b>Stabilizing Factors</b>	<u>TRNC</u> : The market-based economy in the north is approximately one-fifth of the size of the south, since it is seen as an illegal occupation and does not benefit from EU markets. <sup>39</sup> The north was not as badly affected by the financial crisis as the south. It uses the Turkish Lira, which remained quite stable. <sup>40</sup> Its economy experienced 2.8% growth in 2013, and 3.8% in 2015. <sup>41</sup> <u>Oil</u> : There are potentially lucrative off-shore hydrocarbon deposits, which the government of Cyprus plans to start drilling in 2016/17. <sup>42</sup>		
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<u>Financial Crisis</u> : Despite initial growth in the first five years of joining the EU in 2004 and using the Euro in 2008, the Republic of Cyprus' economy went into recession in 2009. <sup>43</sup> <u>Greek Influence</u> : Cyprus' two biggest banks were among the largest holders of Greek bonds, which intensified the financial crisis effects. <sup>44</sup> <u>Bailout Loans</u> : Cyprus became the fifth EU state to request an economic bailout program from Troika in 2012. <sup>45</sup> This was under the condition of financial and structural reforms. <sup>46</sup>		
<b>Assessment</b>	A recent IMF report notes that the recession in 2014 was "milder than expected and GDP growth was positive in the first quarter of 2015 for the first time in almost four years". <sup>47</sup> There is concern that the political environment will make it challenging to fully implement Troika's demands, and that a further recession in Greece could throw the island state back into recession. On the other hand, the north has maintained a relatively stable economy throughout this period.		
<b>Human Development</b>		<b>Low Risk</b>	<b>⬇ Deteriorating</b>
<b>Stabilizing Factors</b> <sup>48</sup>	<u>Health Indicators</u> : Over the last decade life expectancy increased by 2% to 79.9 years (2003- 2013). <sup>49</sup> The mortality rate for children under five was nearly cut in half from 5.1 deaths per 1,000 births in 2004 down to 2.9 in 2014 <sup>50</sup> whereas the fertility rate has remained at a constant 1.5 births per woman. <u>Education</u> : <sup>51</sup> The primary school completion rate has fluctuated around 100 percent with the exception of a one-time 13% drop to 87.6% in 2004 (interestingly the same year Cyprus joined the EU) from which the rate bounced back to 100.1% in 2005. The gross secondary school enrolment ratio fluctuated in the 96 to 98% range between 2002 and 2009, followed by a 7% decrease in 2010 from which it is still recovering; it was measured at 95.3% in 2012.		
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<u>Unemployment</u> : The unemployment rate has been on the rise since 2012, last recorded at 15.6% in 2014. In the years prior to this, the unemployment rate ranged from 4- 6% (2003- 2011). This spike in unemployment was also seen among youth where it jumped from 26.8% in 2012 to 36.9% in 2013, followed by a slight decrease to 35.7% in 2014; these rates were alike for both sexes. <sup>52</sup> <u>Human Development Index</u> : <sup>53</sup> Cyprus saw an increase of over 27% in its HDI value since 1980 and a value of 0.850 for the year 2014, placing it in the very high human development group as 32 <sup>nd</sup> out of 188 countries and territories—a rank shared with Qatar <sup>54</sup> Despite this, Cyprus ranks below the average of the countries in the very high human development group and the average for the countries in the EU. <sup>55</sup>		
<b>Assessment</b>	When compared to the EU, Cyprus falls 0.5 years below their life expectancy in 2013 but Cyprus maintains a similar fertility rate (within a 0.1 margin) and a lower mortality rate for children under five (2.9 in Cyprus and 4.6 in the EU in 2014). In terms of education, the primary and secondary school enrolment rates for Cyprus mirror those at the EU level. The most notable discrepancy is in their unemployment rates: 10.2% of the total labour force of the EU versus		



	15.8% in Cyprus; and 25.1% of youth in the EU versus 35.7% in Cyprus in 2014. Thus while Cyprus has very high human development on the world stage, it is underperforming in its region and the youth unemployment rate may contribute to civil unrest.		
	<b>Environmental Stress</b>	<b>High Risk</b>	<b>↓ Deteriorating</b>
<b>Stabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Changes in Population Size:</u><sup>56</sup> The annual population growth has been declining steadily over the last 25 years<sup>57</sup>, reaching a low of 1.0% in 2014. Yet the population density has increased by over 13% in the last decade, reaching a high of 124.9 people per square kilometer of land in 2014.<sup>58</sup></p> <p><u>Diversification of Energy Consumption:</u> Cyprus has made efforts to diversify its energy that accounts for 71% of its national greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by introducing natural gas to its grid.<sup>59</sup> In 2012, 94.6% of electricity production was comprised of oil sources and 5.4% from renewable sources.<sup>60</sup> The discovery of the Aphrodite natural gas field in Cyprus' exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in 2011 is a first step in the diversification process but also a source of conflict with significant associated costs.</p> <p><u>Air Quality:</u> The air quality is reported to have improved with the exception of the Ozone and PM<sub>10</sub>, mainly caused by transboundary pollution, anthropogenic sources and natural sources such as sea salt.<sup>61</sup></p>		
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Climate Change:</u><sup>62</sup> The side effects of climate change are causing extensive droughts, which affect the Cypriot water supply, biodiversity and other sectors.<sup>63</sup> Until 2012, Cyprus was the only EU Member State that had not made a commitment to reducing GHG emissions. One explanation is Cyprus' 52% increase in GHG emissions between 1990 and 2012. Since 2008, its total national GHG emissions have reduced by approximately 3% annually.</p> <p><u>Waste Management:</u> In 2011 Cyprus had one of the highest rates of per capita waste generation in the EU (683 kg/cap/y).<sup>64</sup> While separate collection and energy recovery have helped reduce this rate, Cyprus needs to continue to implement its Waste Management Strategy, especially given the size of its territory.</p> <p><u>Aphrodite Natural Gas Field:</u> In December 2015 Israel and Turkey renewed their relations and solidified their interest in building a natural gas pipeline between their countries. Such a pipeline would either run through Lebanese and Syrian waters or the Cypriot EEZ.<sup>65</sup> Cyprus' lacks the financial capacity to build its own expensive pipeline and establish itself as an energy hub which is further complicated by the TRNC's claim to part of the Aphrodite field.</p>		
<b>Assessment</b>	The most significant environmental stress faced by Cyprus is that of its energy dilemma. In 2012, Cyprus imported 95.2% of the energy it used. <sup>66</sup> The Aphrodite natural gas field presents a chance for Cyprus to free itself from its energy dependence; however, building a pipeline is very costly. Cyprus has the option of cooperating with other actors with resource interests in in the Eastern Mediterranean such as Israel. Cyprus' energy policy will have long-lasting implications for its international and domestic relations.		
	<b>International Linkages</b>	<b>Low Risk</b>	<b>➡ Stable</b>
<b>Stabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>Memberships:</u> In 2006 Cyprus received a score of 2.0 for the <i>UN Organizations Index</i> and 2.0 for the <i>Multipurpose and Miscellaneous Organizations Index</i> which both indicate high membership such as in UN associated organizations. Cyprus has never been elected as a member of the UN Security Council since 1946<sup>67</sup> whereas both Turkey and Greece have.<sup>68</sup> Cyprus also received a score of 5.0 in 2005 for the <i>Economic Organizations Index</i> which is the middle of the road. Cyprus was invited to the Small States Forum of the Small States Network for Economic Development in 2006<sup>69</sup> and it is not a member country of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development despite Turkey and Greece's membership.</p>		
<b>Destabilizing Factors</b>	<p><u>International Disputes:</u> The UN has spent over 52 years trying to help the parties resolve the territorial dispute over the northern part of the island Cyprus.<sup>70</sup> This dispute is at risk of escalating due to resource interests in the EEZ.</p> <p><u>Military/ Security Alliances Index:</u> Cyprus was assigned a 9.0 in 2006, the lowest score for this index which indicates extremely low membership. Cyprus is not a NATO member country (both Turkey and Greece are members) but it is a participating state in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe alongside Turkey and Greece.</p>		
<b>Assessment</b>	Cyprus is not a member of the OECD or NATO and it has never been elected as a member of the UNSC, demonstrating room for improvement in its international linkages. The most important consideration in its international linkages is its approach to resolving its enduring territorial dispute.		

<b>Possible Scenarios</b>	
<b>Best Case</b>	Peace talks succeed in leading to reunification. Improved social cohesion, and reconciliation helps with Turkey's accession to the EU. Cyprus pays its debt from the bailout and reforms its practices on refugee detention. Cyprus successfully exploits its energy resources to bolster its economic recovery.
<b>Worst Case</b>	Cyprus continues to excessively militarize, fails to weather economic crisis defaulting on debt and UN peacekeeping force pulls out. Likelihood of armed conflict increases, creating possibility of proxy war between Greece and Turkey.
<b>Most Likely Case</b>	The UN peacekeeping force continues in Cyprus for the immediate future. Continued impasse between the Republic of Cyprus and the north. The protracted nature of this social conflict will continue in cycles of unsuccessful talks. Treatment of refugees continues to be of international concern. Austerity measures continue with social unrest.

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- <sup>12</sup> Hellenic Republic- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “The Cyprus Issue,” <http://www.mfa.gr/en/the-cyprus-issue/> (accessed February 3, 2016).
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