

## Polity IV Country Report 2010: Cyprus

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Score:</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2009</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2010</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Polity:</b></td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Democ:</b></td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Autoc:</b></td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Durable:</b></td> <td colspan="3">36</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Tentative:</b></td> <td colspan="3">No</td> </tr> </table>	Score:	2009	2010	Change	<b>Polity:</b>	10	10	0	<b>Democ:</b>	10	10	0	<b>Autoc:</b>	0	0	0	<b>Durable:</b>	36			<b>Tentative:</b>	No			
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SCODE	<b>CYP</b>	CCODE	<b>352</b>	Date of Report	<b>1 June 2011</b>																				
<b>Polity IV Component Variables</b>																									
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP																				
3	3	4	7	5	5																				
<b>Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)</b>																									
End Date			7 December 1974	Begin Date																					
				8 December 1974																					
<b>Polity Fragmentation: Yes, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (37%)</b>																									
<b>Constitution</b>	1960																								
<b>Executive(s)</b>	President Dimitris Christofias (AKEL); directly elected 17 and 24 February 2008, 33.3% and 53.4%																								
<b>Legislature</b>	Unicameral: House of Representatives (83 seats; 56 proportionally elected, 3 observer members representing the Maronite, Roman-Catholic, and Goumenian minorities, and 24 allocated to the Turkish minority; most recent elections, 22 May 2011) Democratic Rally (DISY): 20 Progressive Party of the Working People (AKEL): 19 Other parties: 17 Minorities: 3 (24 Turkish minority seats remain vacant)																								
<b>Judiciary</b>	Supreme Court																								

### Narrative Description:<sup>1</sup>

#### **Executive Recruitment: Competitive Elections (8)**

Although the 1960 Constitution provided for a power-sharing arrangement between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Cyprus has been divided since 1975 along the UN-patrolled “Green Line” into an internationally recognized Greek-Cypriot state in the south of the island and an unofficial Turkish-Cypriot state in the north. The Turkish community in Cyprus, comprising 18% of the total population, had been living in enclaves in the north since the early 1960s, having fled the south after years of attacks by Greek Cypriot militants. The self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, a pseudo-state that comprises 37% of

<sup>1</sup> The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.

the island, is maintained by 35,000 Turkish troops that arrived after a 1974 coup by Athens-backed extremists in the National Guard who were intent on uniting the island with Greece. In recent years there have been numerous attempts at resolving this political and geographic division of the country, however, these talks have yet to produce any substantial change in this arrangement. Given the long-term independence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, it is treated as a separate polity and its political institutions and authority relations are not represented here.

With the exception of the short-lived military regime of 1974, the (southern-based, Greek-dominated) Republic of Cyprus has been a long-standing electoral democracy. After the death of its long-time leader and president, Archbishop Makarios, in 1977, representatives of all three major political parties (DIKO, AKEL, DISI) have held executive authority. In February 2008 the leader of the communist party (AKEL), Demetris Christofias, won the presidential election by a large margin. Ending the political division of the island was the main campaign theme of Christofias and, since his election, he has attempted to restart reunification talks with Turkish Cypriot leader, Mehmet Ali Talat. When Greek Cypriots overwhelmingly rejected the UN-sponsored plan to reunite Cyprus in 2004, most observers felt the chances for a solution to the island's problems had vanished forever. However, in 2008 the leaders of the two states agreed to set up working groups and technical committees to prepare the agenda for substantive talks to be held in late 2008.

**Executive Constraints: Executive Parity or Subordination (7)**

The Republic of Cyprus has a presidential form of government with a clear separation of powers and institutionalized horizontal accountability. The President of the Republic has the right to final veto any law passed by the House that concerns foreign affairs, defense and security. However, as far as all other types of legislation are concerned, the President has only a delaying power. If the House persists in its decision to pursue its legislation against executive branch delays, then the President is bound to promulgate the law or decision in question. The President cannot dissolve the legislature. The judiciary is independent from pressure by other branches of authority.

**Political Participation: Institutionalized Open Electoral Competition (10)**

Both the legislative and executive branches of government in the Republic of Cyprus are regularly filled through free and fair elections. Since the 1974 partition and ethnic segregation of the island, these elections have been conducted without repression or partisan violence. The Turkish-Cypriot minority, which has had its own self-proclaimed secessionist state since 1975, continues to be delegated 24 out of 83 seats in the legislature. These seats remain vacant. Political parties in Cyprus are stable and inclusive in character, revolving around ideological platforms rather than personalities and representing a broad spectrum of ideologies. The communist Progressive Party of the Working Peoples (AKEL) won a narrow victory in the May 2001 legislative elections and, in June 2001, the AKEL leader, Demetris Christofias, was elected President of the House of Representatives. In June 2001, President Rauf Denktash of the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus accepted the new National Unity Party (UBP)-Democratic Party (DP) coalition government formed by Prime Minister Dervis Eroglu following the collapse of the UBP-Communal Liberation Party (TKP) coalition in May 2001. No party received a majority of seats following legislative elections in December 2003, leading to a series of failed coalition negotiations and changes in Prime Minister.

International pressures on both the Greek and Turkish governments to reach an agreement to reunite the island remains strong. Despite the desire of Turkish Cypriots to end their political and economic isolation, little progress toward a settlement has been made to date. While travel restrictions between the two halves of the island have been eased in recent years; nonetheless, a 2004 EU proposal to hold twin referendums on this issue failed to produce any tangible political results. While the reunification plan was endorsed by Turkish Cypriots (although not by their leader, Rauf Denktash), it was overwhelmingly rejected by Greek Cypriots. Because both sides had to approve the proposal, the island remained divided as it joined the EU in May 2004. EU laws and benefits apply only to the Greek Cypriot community. While the peace process was renewed in 2006, the Greek Cypriots continued to voice their opposition to reunification. However, with the election of a pro-unification Greek Cypriot president in 2008, efforts to end the political division of the island have once again surfaced.