UNIVERSITY OF NICOSIA          KADEM          UNDP

# Youth in Cyprus

## Aspirations, Lifestyles & Empowerment



**CYPRUS** HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2009

www.undp-act.org

# YOUTH
## IN CYPRUS

### ASPIRATIONS, LIFESTYLES AND EMPOWERMENT

CYPRUS HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2009

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# FOREWORD

It is no coincidence that worldwide efforts to build peace and resolve conflict involve young people. In wars it is often the youth who take part, and in some cases combatants have become increasingly younger – most notably the child soldiers who have been part of some of the most brutal conflicts of recent times. At the same time, however, very often the energy and courage of reconciliation and making peace come from the youth of our global society. In Cyprus, the UN has spent several years working with such young peacemakers and supporting their efforts to break down barriers and promote reconciliation across the island.

Young people have the most to gain from peace, since the political agreements and solutions reached today will determine the shape of tomorrow. The question is whether young people can have a role in helping to shape how that future will look. Perhaps, the most significant finding of this first ever Human Development Report for Cyprus is that a majority of the island's young people believe that they need to be part of the reconciliation process and also want to take an active part in that process. This indicates a degree of responsibility which young Greek Cypriots and young Turkish Cypriots wish to shoulder in the effort to improve the future lives they will lead. However, this willingness to take responsibility for the future needs to be supported by the adults who currently design the social, economic and political space in Cyprus. In this way young people also need to be empowered to realise their ambition and be provided with the opportunities, skills and knowledge needed to take on the responsibilities of peacemaking in order to make a worthwhile and meaningful contribution.

Over the next three years Action for Cooperation and Trust will continue to support the peace building efforts of Cypriots through projects which focus on enhancing inter-communal cooperation and strengthening civil society's capacity to actively participate in the process of reconciliation. This will include supporting the youth of Cyprus in their efforts to make their voices heard. We are hopeful that the *Cyprus Youth Charter*, which is part of this report and designed by young Cypriots, will become a clarion call for the island's youth irrespective of ethnic background. The *Cyprus Youth Charter* should be seen as a starting point for dialogue and exchange of views in a process of reaching a mutual understanding of how young people can work with their peers and elders to meeting head on, and overcoming, the challenges ahead.

When reading the Report, I was reminded of a story that is often told in African communities. It is about a young person who went to an elder in a village to ask the person a trick question. The young person had caught a beautiful butterfly, which he had enclosed in his hands. The question asked to the elder was whether "the butterfly is dead or alive". If the answer given was that the "butterfly is alive", the young person could gently squeeze the life out of the butterfly. If the answer from the elder was that the butterfly is dead – then the young person could release the butterfly to show that it is still alive. The answer that came from the elder in the community was: "my dear young person, I don't know if the butterfly is dead or alive – all I know is that the answer is in your hands". The findings of this Report and the issues it raises provide tremendous insights into youth opinions and aspirations throughout Cyprus. Although we are not sure how these results will be used we and our partners are sure that the answer to the future of the island is indeed in the hands of young Cypriots.

*Jaco Cillers*
*Senior Programme Manager*
*Action for Cooperation and Trust*

# CONTENTS IN BRIEF

# CONTENTS

## Boxes

## Tables

**Figure**

## OVERVIEW

### Introduction

This first **Human Development Report** for Cyprus focuses on the lives and aspirations of the island's young people[i] and is unique as it is the first time that aspects of the life of youth in both the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities have been mapped out in tandem. This is significant given the long existing division between the two communities that has resulted in young Cypriots growing up apart from one another. The Report is largely based on the results of the comprehensive, island-wide **Youth Aspiration Survey** (YAS$_1$), administered to over 1,600 youth between November 2007 and March 2008. The research study used two modern research techniques: Participatory Action Research and Interpretive Reproduction, which focused on *research with* youth as opposed to *research on* youth. A **Youth Advisory Board** (YAB), consisting of 24 young people from both communities, assisted the research team in the development of the initial survey and, later, in the interpretation of its results.

The human development approach aims to go beyond indicators of national income and economic growth as measures of development by placing individual human beings at the heart of the development process. The Human Development Index (HDI) for Cyprus is 0.914, ranking the Republic of Cyprus 32nd out of 182 countries (2009). Human development in Cyprus is complicated by the long-standing political problem facing the island, as a result of which, both communities have suffered various losses.

### Youth Development through Empowerment and Responsibility

In the case of this Report, human development can be seen to focus specifically on the development of Cypriot youth – that is, the growing capacity of a young person to understand and act on the social environment. Youth development may be used as a tool to build skills among the young, contributing to youth empowerment and their development of a greater sense of personal and social responsibility. Empowerment cannot exist without responsibility and young people must learn to possess a sense of individual and social responsibility towards their community, environment and the socio-political development of their society. The ultimate outcome of youth development is to enable all young people to thrive in the communities and countries in which they live. While it is the responsibility of parents, educators, civil society, the media and the leaders of both communities to empower Cypriot youth, young Cypriots themselves must be active in seeking out and making full use of the available opportunities for empowerment.

### Cypriot Youth: Navigating the Road from Childhood to Adulthood

A special category, between childhood and adulthood, 'youth' is a modern concept related to the industrial revolution and the rise of modern society. Social scientists generally agree that there is no universal concept of 'youth'. How 'youth' is constructed varies according to history, time, space, and country. Cyprus has undergone rapid changes in the last few decades, transitioning from an agricultural to a service economy, and witnessing a dramatic increase in mass education, as well as in other indices of modernisation, such as urbanisation, the expansion of mass media, a developing consumer society and women entering the workforce. This has resulted in the considerable prolongation of the period of 'youth' as compared to traditional Cypriot society. Today Cypriot youth face the modern-day challenges typically experienced by young people in western societies, made doubly difficult as they must find their way in a society which is rapidly modernizing, while living in a deeply divided country, territorially separated since before they were born. The modern history of Cyprus has left a powerful imprint on the way young Cypriots view the future. This history is coloured by an anti-colonial struggle and independence from the

British (1960), inter-communal conflict (mid 60s), a Greek-Cypriot coup backed by the Athens military junta and the subsequent military affront by Turkey (July 1974), which led to violence, loss of life and the *de facto* division of the island.

Several attempts to solve the Cyprus Problem have come and gone. In 2003 crossing points were opened along the Green Line, enabling those displaced to visit their homes and villages, and providing an opportunity to the long time segregated communities for interaction – albeit within limits. After a UN supported plan leading to a referendum (April 2004) failed to unite the island, Cyprus joined the European Union (May 2004) with the *aquis communautaire* consequently applied only in the southern part of the island. Post-accession elections on either side of the divide have resulted in new leaders for both communities, and sparked renewed interest and activity towards finding a final settlement to the Cyprus Problem.

The division makes it difficult to present a clear picture of the demographic data pertaining to youth in Cyprus. However it is estimated that the number of young Cypriots between the ages of 15 and 24 ranges from 135,000 to 148,000, comprising approximately 15.5% of the total population.[II]

## The Cypriot Family: A Pivotal Institution

Traditionally, the family has been the primary social, economic and moral unit in both the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities; even though Cypriot society has seen dramatic changes, the family remains the central institution. Nowadays, Cypriot youth are freer than in past times in areas such as their choice of life partner, field of studies, and type of employment. However, either by necessity or habit, young Cypriots continue to depend on their parents' financial or other assistance, even after completing their education. This support ranges from significant contributions (such as buying a car or putting down the deposit towards an apartment or a house), to smaller, domestic ones (such as the supply of home cooked meals, washing and ironing). The flipside to this support is a number of problems that may derive from the dependency often entailed in relationships with parents, which can potentially spill over into other domains of the lives of Cypriot youth, such as education, lifestyle and socio-political participation.

Without doubt, the family unit will continue to play a pivotal role in society and in the lives of young Cypriots. Young Cypriots need to be empowered and to become less reliant on their parents. Parents ought to support their children's life choices, development and independence, not necessarily through monetary support but by moral and emotional support as well.

## Investing in a Multicultural and a Multi-perspective Education System is Vital

In general, young Cypriots across the island are extremely well educated as Cypriots place a great deal of importance on education. Nowadays, more young Cypriots pursue higher education, either in Cyprus or abroad, consequently delaying their entry into the workforce.

Education has played a divisive role in Cypriot society, and has served to alienate each community from the other. Textbooks are largely imported from Greece and Turkey (so called "motherlands") and many young Cypriots continue their university education there. Within the school curriculum of each community, the history of Cyprus has been presented as an extension of the history of either Greece or Turkey; this became all the more pronounced after the division of the island. In 2003, a newly elected Turkish-Cypriot leadership began implementing an educational reform by changing the history books to present Turkish-Cypriots as a distinct people, autonomous from Turkey and open to reconciliation with the Greek-Cypriots.[III] As yet, similar changes have not been implemented in the Greek-Cypriot community though the new government of the Republic of Cyprus (2008) seems intent to implement changes in this domain. The challenge is accomplishing

such educational reform without discarding the past and the unique identity of each community. The opening of the crossing points along the Green Line has attracted a number of Turkish-Cypriot students to schools and universities in the south. The presence of young Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots in schools and universities is seen by the young respondents as a positive measure which can work towards bringing the two communities closer together.

In spite of these changes the education systems in both communities continue to be largely ethnocentric in character. In the spirit of providing the skills for the open, multicultural environment of the 21st century, moulded by the forces of globalisation, the educational systems in each community should move towards more critical, diversified methods of study, which can prepare young Cypriots for the important challenges of the modern world. This becomes even more necessary given the changing fabric of Cypriot society, which is becoming increasingly multicultural. The educational system must reflect this change and take a leading role in promoting the values of openness to difference, tolerance, cultural diversity and co-existence, and the resolution of problems through peaceful means.

## Young Cypriots in the Local and Global Economy

The twenty-first century labour market is unforgiving, especially for young people attempting to make the transition from education to employment. Greek-Cypriot youth are fortunate in that their unemployment rate (10.2%) is among the lowest in the EU. The rate is higher among Turkish-Cypriot youth (23.8%), reflecting the existing disparity between economic conditions in the north and south of the island. This reality influences the attitudes of young Cypriots towards employment. Greek-Cypriots indicate that, in selecting their current job, the main appeal revolved around "good pay and benefits", followed by a "good working environment". Most Turkish-Cypriots, on the other hand, chose their current jobs because "it was better than being unemployed". Both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth agree that the main challenge facing young people in employment is that there are not enough job opportunities available for young people. The limited opportunities for youth employment, compared with the high qualifications earned by Cypriot youth, usually result in young Cypriots having to accept employment in positions (and salary scales) which often do not match their qualifications and skills.

Both the private and public sectors stand to benefit greatly from the knowledge and skills accumulated by Cypriot youth through their modern education. Today's young Cypriot workforce is equipped with new ideas and concepts, as well as the ability to use the latest modern technologies. As such, they should be regarded as an asset by SMEs and larger organisations as they can contribute new and fresh approaches and help to strengthen businesses and the local economy.

## Healthy Lifestyle Choices Foster Youth Development

The way in which young Cypriots engage in entertainment activities is characteristic of the youth culture which has developed in western societies. Leisure time activities are important as they equip youth with valuable technical and/or generic skills that may be transferable into other areas of their lives, such as their school work or their jobs. Moreover, engaging in certain leisure activities allows young people to develop a sense of autonomy that, in turn, can lead to their engagement as independent, active citizens in society. Television and radio represent the top two activities engaged in: over four-fifths of Cypriot youth surveyed listen to music and watch television on a daily basis. As is the case in most countries, the use of various Information and Communication Technologies continues to grow in Cyprus.

In general Cypriot youth appear to be quite healthy. Nevertheless, recently there have been growing rates of obesity and eating disorders (particularly in the Greek-Cypriot community) and

the proliferation of drugs (especially within the Turkish-Cypriot community, where drugs are easily accessible and affordable). Smoking and reckless driving are risk behaviours shared by the youth of both communities. In recent decades young Cypriots have increasingly begun to experiment with their sexuality, especially within their personal relationships. Still, relationships with parents and teachers do not appear to be liberated enough so as to allow young Cypriots to freely discuss such matters with their seniors. The educational systems in the south and the north have been criticised for the absence of any formal sexual education programme. Although abortions are officially frowned upon by Cypriot society, women often secretly choose this option instead of enduring the stigma typically associated with raising a child as an unwed mother.

There remains a great deal of room for improvement as regards information sources and support mechanisms that would assist young Cypriots in avoiding and/or overcoming such high risk behaviours. Above all, young Cypriots need to be made aware of the health services available to them, as well as how to easily access these.

## Civic Participation Needs to Be Detached from Political Interest

As in many other countries levels of socio-political participation among Cypriot youth are low and declining. Almost half of the Cypriot youth surveyed admitted that they did not actively participate in any socio-political organisation, faith-based organisation, human rights organisation or charity organisation. Instead, young Cypriots are attracted to sports clubs and outdoor activities, as well as associations or organisations dealing with education, music, culture or the arts. Turkish-Cypriot socio-political participation is higher than that of Greek-Cypriots in all cases – except in the case of political parties (where it is slightly lower) and youth organisations (where it is the same). Although direct participation in political parties is not high, Cypriot youth do get involved with, or come under the influence of, political parties in various ways: for instance, most sports clubs are associated with a political party, or a political ideology.

Young Cypriots from both communities indicate that they feel disempowered when it comes to influencing the decisions that govern their lives. Only a fifth of Greek-Cypriots and a third of Turkish-Cypriots felt that they had the ability to have an impact on their neighbourhood, while only one tenth believed that they had an input into matters concerning their municipality, and on issues related to their country. The Human Development Report encourages the adoption of special measures to increase the level of socio-political participation of Cypriot youth by generating genuine interest and concern in the area of civic concern and duty, even if this involvement is autonomous from political parties.

## Cypriot Youth: A Case of Multiple Identities

The issue of identity among Cypriot youth is neither simple nor clear-cut. Given the island's location, at the crossroad of three continents, its unique position within the European Union and the two communities' association with Greece and Turkey, Cypriot youth have at their disposal a number of identities with which they build a multi-layered self. Approximately two-thirds of youth from the two communities felt more 'Mediterranean' than 'Middle Eastern' or 'European'. Additionally, 43% of youth surveyed (48% of Greek-Cypriots and 39% of Turkish-Cypriots) identify themselves as 'Cypriot', while a further 30% felt 'equally Cypriot and Greek' (28% of Greek-Cypriots) or 'equally Cypriot and Turkish' (32% of Turkish-Cypriots).

A closer examination of what the term 'Cypriot' signifies to young people highlights that, a striking 86% of Greek-Cypriots and a corresponding 55% of Turkish-Cypriots, when using the term 'Cypriot', refer exclusively to Greek-Cypriots or Turkish-Cypriots, respectively (i.e. to their own ethnic community, and not to all Cypriots). Obviously a lot needs to be done to foster a common Cypriot political identity which embraces diversity and celebrates difference.

## The Cyprus Problem: From Disenchantment to Optimism

Youth opinions on the best solution to the Cyprus Problem largely reflect the official discourses of the two communities. Greek-Cypriots tend to place emphasis on a unified/integrated Cyprus, which will return things, as much as possible, back to the pre-1974 era; Turkish-Cypriots rather emphasize autonomy and equality. Nevertheless, Cypriot youth appear to have a realistic grasp of the existing obstacles to reaching a solution that would allow the two communities to live together peacefully. Although contact between the youth of the two communities is still not a mainstream activity, those few cases of interaction which do take place, demonstrate that they could serve as one way that could allow Cypriot youth to foster a greater sense of understanding, compassion and responsibility towards the people with whom they share the island.

Young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots feel that the division of the island has undermined their personal opportunities. The fact that a significant proportion of the island's youth (60% of Greek-Cypriots and 48% of Turkish-Cypriots) share a common frustration with their inability to live in a place of their choosing reflects the strong emotions associated with displacement and the cost of conflict, which still affect both communities. The data shows that, in relative terms, Greek-Cypriot youth feel more strongly about this issue, reflecting the widespread Greek-Cypriot view that the partitioning of the island was, and continues to be, something totally unacceptable. Turkish-Cypriots also consider the inability to live in a place of their preference as a problem but this is one among a number of difficulties they attribute to the consequences of division – the opportunity to find decent employment, to live abroad and to have a better standard of living being other important concerns.

## Supporting Cypriot Youth in their Role as Agents of Change

Young Cypriots have not been expected to have any input in the ongoing negotiations, even though they will be expected to live with the consequences of the outcome of the decisions made by those who direct the politics of Cyprus. Cypriot youth, like their counterparts around the world, possess the various traits which could make them ideal agents of social change and peace builders. As the new generation, Cypriot youth are imbued with significant levels of creativity, inventiveness, and an orientation towards the future. Instead of harnessing their energy and optimism, Cypriot youth have been relegated to the part of passive bystanders. As a result Cypriot youth feel as though they are neither included, nor valued by the rest of society.

Cypriot youth were asked to define what "a peaceful Cyprus" or "peace in Cyprus" meant to them. Among Greek-Cypriot respondents, the most cited response was "freedom", followed by "everyone co-existing in harmony". The most popular definition of a peaceful Cyprus among Turkish-Cypriot respondents was "living together without borders" and the "absence of war and conflict". Over half of the Cypriot youth surveyed agreed that young Cypriots have a responsibility to assist in finding a peaceful solution to the Cyprus Problem, while nearly half of Cypriot youth surveyed wished to play an active role in the reconciliation of the island.

Young Cypriots proposed various measures, which in their opinion, could contribute to building peace in Cyprus. Greek-Cypriot youth favoured direct talks between the leaders of the two communities, as well as joint events between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. Turkish-Cypriots supported more practical measures, like the sharing of common spaces, such as schools or the workplace. Overall, Cypriot youth suffer from a lack of knowledge or awareness as to how they might be able to become more engaged in bringing the two communities closer together. While it is the right of every young person to participate in society and the decision-making process that can shape their realities, it is the responsibility of adults to encourage the participation of youth. Adult actors, be they family members, educators, politicians, civil society activists or religious leaders, must strive to harness the untapped potential of Cypriot youth across the island and provide them with the chance to make their voice heard, not just vis-à-vis the Cyprus Problem, but in all facets that affect their lives and their collective future.

## What is the Cyprus Human Development Report on Youth?

This is the first time that a Human Development Report has been published for Cyprus. This initial attempt to explore key human development dynamics in Cypriot society focuses on one of the most critical stakeholders in the future of the island, namely youth. More specifically the Report attempts to bring to the fore the voices of young Cypriots through a research study, which, for the first time, maps the aspirations of youth in both the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot communities. The research study methodology also marks another first: the substantial input in the design of the study by young Cypriots themselves. The qualitative and quantitative research, which supports this Report, provides a wealth of evidence which academics and researchers on youth issues will be able to use for years to come. Aside from its academic value, this evidence also points towards key policy messages for the future welfare of young people and Cypriot society. This is achieved by examining the role young Cypriots may play in shaping the future direction of Cyprus, and their ability to contribute to the unfolding process of peace-making on the island that resumed in 2008. This is why the message of the Report underlines the significance of *Youth Empowerment and Youth Responsibility*, as complementary images in a future vision of Cyprus, as a full and productive member of the international community, which is at peace with itself.

The story of the Cyprus Human Development Report began in June 2007, when the *United Nations Development Programme – Action for Cooperation and Trust (UNDP-ACT)* announced an initiative that involved engaging young Cypriots in an island-wide research and dialogue process. The *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project* aimed to encourage inter-communal dialogue amongst Cypriot youth from the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities by bringing Cypriot youth from both communities together in an informal, supportive environment to identify their aspirations, hopes and fears for the future.

As part of the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project*, the *University of Nicosia* and the *Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre (KADEM)* conducted an island-wide study, designed to examine the attitudes and perceptions of Cypriot youth on a number of important issues. The research team sought to gather comparable data pertaining to young Cypriots from both communities, covering a wide range of topics, which are of interest in the present, but which would also serve as a basis for the examination of changing trends through future longitudinal studies. In order to achieve the aims of the study, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized, through the administration of a structured survey, the *Youth Aspiration Survey (YAS$_1$)* and a series of in-depth interviews. The University of Nicosia and KADEM used the same methodology and tools, and the implementation of each project stage was conducted in parallel.

A *structured questionnaire* consisting of 81 closed, structured questions was designed and used for the simultaneous collection of information relevant to both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth. In addition to obtaining general data about the participants, the survey attempted to obtain information about the respondents' families; their choices and views on education, work and leisure activities; their attitude towards their country and the European Union; their interaction with individuals from the other community; and their views on religion, health, the bi-communal conflict in Cyprus and on the peace building process.[1]

The survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews with young Cypriots, between the ages of 15 and 24, using a proportionate stratified random sampling method. The latter entailed identifying individuals in the population according to a series of relevant criteria previously agreed upon – such as place of residence (including both urban and rural areas in the south and

north of Cyprus), gender and age. The survey was administered to a total of 1,612 young Cypriots between November 2007 and March 2008. All respondents were assured of their anonymity and their details were kept confidential. Each variable was assigned a unique code and all completed questionnaires were inputted into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), which was used for the statistical analysis of the data.

In addition to the survey, 60 *in-depth interviews* were conducted with 30 Greek-Cypriots and 30 Turkish-Cypriots, between the ages of 15 and 24. Selected randomly, these interviews allowed the research team to probe deeper into the attitudes and beliefs of young Cypriots, while simultaneously permitting respondents to elaborate on their thoughts and opinions; furthermore, various underlying concerns, conflicts and contradictions were brought to light.

Due to significant developments, that occurred shortly after the administering of $YAS_1$, among which included the election of a new government in the Republic of Cyprus and a renewed effort towards finding a settlement to the long-standing political problem on the island, it was deemed necessary to conduct a *follow-up survey (YAS$_2$)* that would supplement the data already collected through $YAS_1$ and the in-depth interviews. Implemented in July 2008, the follow-up study, consisting of a mixture of closed and open-ended questions, was carried out through a telephone survey with 803 respondents from the initial sample.

The results from the surveys are presented throughout this Report, along with quotes and analysis based on the in-depth interviews. Additional resources utilized include, among others, data and information available from the public statistical services of Cyprus, academic journal articles, international and local reports, as well as current press articles.

## The Youth Advisory Board: Giving Young Cypriots a Voice in the Research Process

An innovative feature of the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project* was the use of two modern research techniques: Participatory Action Research and Interpretive Reproduction. In recent years, *Participatory Action Research (PAR)* has emerged as a significant methodology for intervention, development and change within communities and groups. Utilized by several international development agencies, university programmes and local community organisations, the PAR approach focuses closely on research participants, as well as their own views and evaluations.[2] Similarly, *Interpretative Reproduction* is a research method focusing on *research with* youth as opposed to *research on* youth. The latter technique seeks to highlight the innovative and creative aspects of youth's participation in society, while simultaneously recognising that young people are active contributors to cultural production and change.[3]

In order to successfully practice the aforementioned research techniques and to actively involve Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth in all aspects of the project, including the survey design and the analysis of the findings, a *Youth Advisory Board (YAB)* was formed. As a significant element of the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project*, the *YAB* consisted of 24 Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, ranging from 15 to 24 years old. Twelve Greek-Cypriots and twelve Turkish-Cypriots were selected after a two-step application and interview procedure; every effort was made to choose individuals representing the different genders, ages, socioeconomic groups and regions of Cyprus. Playing a supportive role, the *YAB* assisted the research team in the development of the initial survey and, later, in the interpretation of its results.

The *YAB* convened for a series of 3 one-day workshops. These took place in July 2007, and April and December 2008, and were held in the capital, Nicosia. During these workshops, members of the *YAB* interacted with peers from the respective Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot communities,

spending time together exploring the various aspects of the lives, values and belief systems of young people living in Cyprus today.

At the first workshop the *YAB* members were presented with a working draft of the questionnaire and, facilitated by the research team, were encouraged to express their thoughts and opinions regarding the choice, as well as the phrasing of each question. They were also invited to suggest additional questions that could be incorporated into the questionnaire. This process resulted in the revision of the questionnaire so as to include some of the insights and suggestions presented by the *YAB*. During the second workshop, held after the administration of the survey, the *YAB* was presented with the main results, which showcased the similarities and differences in the views, attitudes and beliefs of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth; *YAB* members were encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions at any point during the presentation and the general discussion that followed. Consequently, their interpretations, insights and ideas on the results were incorporated into this Report. At the third and final workshop, members of the *YAB* worked together with the research team to devise a *Cyprus Youth Charter*. The Charter, along with this Report, aim to represent the 'voice' of Cypriot youth and will hopefully serve as a tools for their thoughts and views to be heard across the island.[4]

# EXAMINING CYPRIOT YOUTH THROUGH THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LENS

## Human Development in Cyprus

This Report strives to employ the human development approach when studying the current state of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth residing on the island today. Accordingly, the emphasis of the Report will be on Cypriot youth: their attitudes and beliefs, the quality of their lives, their life chances, as well as their problems, fears and hopes for the future.

The human development approach aims to go beyond measures of national income and economic growth as "development" indices. It places individual human beings at the heart of the development process. An emphasis on human development aims to widen people's choices by creating an environment in which people's capabilities are expanded so that they may develop their full potential in order to lead productive and fulfilling lives, in accordance with their needs and interests. In general, human development focuses on improving the well-being of individuals, achieved by *extending people's choices and freedoms*, while at the same time, *increasing their human capabilities*.

The United Nations (UN) has published the Human Development Index (HDI) each year since 1990. More than just a measure of GDP, the HDI attempts to quantify the general well-being of individuals. This is achieved by providing

a composite measure of three dimensions of human development – namely, the ability:

• To enjoy a long and healthy life
• To have access to education
• To have access to a decent standard of living

Measures of life expectancy, literacy/education enrolment rates (at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels) and GDP per capita are all used in the development of the HDI of each country. The philosophy underpinning the human development perspective takes into consideration the four principles of productivity, equity, sustainability and extension of opportunities and participation. It is premised on the belief that development should be *driven by the people of a country* through their ability to generate income and obtain decent pay for their work. Furthermore, people should have *access to equal opportunities* and should *have a say in decision-making processes* that affect their lives. Finally, every effort must be made to ensure that the resources and opportunities utilised are not at the expense of future generations.

The HDI for Cyprus[5] is 0.914; this ranks the Republic 32nd out of 182 countries with a calculated HDI.[6] The average life expectancy is 79 years; just over 97% of individuals aged 15 and above are literate; and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment ratio is 77.6%.

| Cyprus' Human Development Index 2007 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Life expectancy at birth (years) | Adult literacy rate (% of ages 15 and older) | Combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (%) | GDP per capita (PPP US$) | Overall HDI value |
| 79.6 | 97.7 | 77.6 | 24,789 | 0.914 |
| 19th | 30th | 72nd | 36th | 32nd out of 182 countries |

**Table 1.1: HDI and Other Development Indicators for Cyprus**

Typically, HDI measurements are high for advanced, peaceful countries (0.968 for both Iceland and Norway, which rank 1st and 2nd, respectively, out of 179 countries) and low for less developed countries, many of which face political turmoil (0.329 for Sierra Leone, the lowest country ranked).[7] Upon first glance, Cyprus seems to be doing well, if judged by the various conventional human development indexes – reflecting a country that enjoys high levels of literacy, a strong economy and a healthy population. These measurements, however, belie the conditions facing the island, which has been culturally, politically and territorially divided for decades, with consequences impacting on the quality of life of Cypriots.

As this Report attempts to highlight in the following Chapters, the human development of Cypriots, and in particular, Cypriot youth, is not as strong as the HDI may imply. For instance, Cyprus is still one of the most militarised countries in the world, and young male Cypriots have to go through compulsory military service.[8] While there is almost universal access to education, and the level of literacy is quite high, the content of education reinforces dominant ethnic views, which in turn help sustain negative stereotypes of the ethnic other, leaving little space for more critical perspectives, which could aid new ways of thinking, moving things forward as regards the island's seemingly intractable political problem.

Human development in Cyprus is thus complicated in many ways by the longstanding political problem. When compared to other conflicts around the world, the Cypriot conflict can easily be labelled a 'dormant' or 'frozen' one, given the few and infrequent acts of violence that have occurred in the thirty-plus years following the events of 1974. Nevertheless, the continued physical division of the island and the segregation of the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities foster the abnormal living conditions which continue to exist until today. As a result of the political situation, both communities have suffered various losses which have, at best, hampered, and at worst, infringed on their path to human development.

A solution to the Cyprus Problem has the potential to alleviate many of the obstacles to human development which exist today, making the current peace process all the more significant and essential. The cohabitation of the two communities under a common political roof would allow Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots greater opportunities for cooperation and improvement in many domains of life, thereby allowing them to enjoy conditions of greater political stability and security, as well as a better standard of living – achieved through permanent peace and a greater access to the knowledge and resources necessary for achieving this.

The vast majority of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth have grown up separated from one another, deprived of the right to learn about the lives, hopes and dreams of each other. Given this, Cypriot youth have the most at stake, as a solution to the Cyprus Problem will have a direct impact on their lives and on the lives of future generations to come.

Human development is about enhancing people's opportunities. This simple statement encompasses a wide range of challenges that are particularly relevant for any report addressing issues of youth – and for this Report on youth in Cyprus in particular.

Human development is a holistic concept. It states that apart from economic aspects of life (reflected basically in money we have to cover our daily needs) there are other areas of human life that are important for materializing people's potential and capabilities. Those areas are not limited to the dimensions of the human development index (incomes, education and health) and include environmental sustainability, human rights, access to decent housing opportunities, personal security and safety, political participation opportunities and human dignity. Some of the areas of human development are measurable through quantitative indicators; others are not, which does not make them less significant. This is also the reason why a "human development report" is not necessarily a report containing estimations of the HDI; it is a report addressing the issues that are crucial *from* a human development perspective – and addresses those issues *in* human development perspective, i.e. putting the human beings at the centre of the analytical and development endeavour. Putting people first simply means that all the other areas of human activity (economic growth in particular) should be means to enhancing people's opportunities and not the end in itself.

How does youth relate to human development? Seen from a human development perspective, youth challenges are the ultimate human development challenges. Being the future of every society, young people have the capacity and the potential necessary for its progress. The way they see their role, the degree to which they can (or cannot) materialize that potential is in fact predetermining the society's future progress or regress. To a large extent it also determines the specific way progress or regress will be achieved. This is the reason why knowledge on young people's aspirations and their perspective on the ways to achieving them, is vital from a pragmatic development point of view.

In the particular case of Cyprus the story is even more fundamental. The heritage of a conflict that has pulled two communities apart is there – and to a large degree determines the lens from which both current and future perspectives are being perceived. But the first step towards bringing both communities together is bringing young people together. And the first step towards bringing young people together is clearly defining their aspirations, their visions of themselves and of the *other,* and defining the common areas of shared future.

In every society conflict is highly correlated with deteriorated human development opportunities. Statistical evidence illustrates that negative link. The link however has also its reverted meaning: increasing human development opportunities requires deliberate efforts for overcoming the causes of the conflict and its outcomes. This is easier said than done – but that is what it takes in a post-conflict environment if sustainable human development is at stake. This is exactly what the current Report (and the research behind it, with young people's participation and inputs) attempts. It suggests that it is not easy – but not impossible either.

*Andrey Ivanov*
*Human Development Advisor*
*United Nations Development Programme*
*Bratislava*

As subsequent sections of this Report will highlight, the voice of Cypriot youth is presently both feeble and little listened to in their respective communities and across the country as a whole. Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth, in their capacity as agents of change and as peace-builders, must be empowered to play an important, necessary and valuable role in their country's development and in the ongoing peace process.

## Defining Youth: The Transition from Childhood to Adulthood

Social scientists generally agree that there is no universal concept of 'youth'. A special category, between childhood and adulthood, 'youth' is a modern concept related to the industrial revolution and the creation of modern society. In traditional societies, based on agricultural production, children transitioned directly

into young men and women, without the in-between period constituting 'youth'; children worked in fields and households from an early age and married in their early teens. With the advent of the industrial revolution, children began working in factories, mines and other sites of modern production. Additionally, this period marked the beginning of mass education, which served the needs of the rising bourgeoisie. From these changes stemmed the creation of 'youth' as a distinct social category, whereby individuals were no longer children but not yet adults either, burdened with the responsibility of work and raising a family.

It is obvious from the above, that the term 'youth' is a social and historical construct[9], shaped by the predominant socio-economic conditions.[10] Various historical studies demonstrate that the very meaning of the term 'youth' changes dramatically over time, given varying economic, social, political and intellectual influences. The period of time in an individual's life, defined as 'youth', is associated with the culture and society in which each individual lives. Thus, how 'youth' is constructed varies according to history, time, space, and country.

Different societies have different ideas as to what constitutes a young person. 'Youth' can be defined by biological indicators; the period between puberty and parenthood for example. Alternatively, youth can be defined in terms of cultural indicators, possessing a distinct social status with specific roles, rituals and relationships.[11] The definition of youth may be bound by lower and upper age limits – again, these vary from country to country. An example, that is cited often, is that of Malaysia, which defines youth as being up to the age of 40. Nowadays, in most South Eastern European countries the age range of what is taken as young people varies from a lower limit of 14 to 16, to an upper limit of 24 to 30 years of age.[12] In Western Europe the age range is somewhat smaller, ranging from the early teenage years up to the age of 19; in recent years, given social and demographic changes, this has been extended to the age of 25. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) define youth as being

between 10 to 24 years of age, while the United Nations Programme on Youth (UNPY) uses a narrower range – between 15 and 24 years of age.

Cyprus has undergone rapid changes in the last few decades – since Independence in 1960 and especially since 1974 and its aftermath – transitioning from an agricultural to a service economy, and witnessing a dramatic increase in mass education, as well as in other indices of modernisation (such as urbanisation, the expansion of mass media, a developing consumer society, and women entering the workforce). This has resulted in the considerable prolongation of the period of 'youth' as compared to earlier, traditional Cypriot society. As the authors of the Council of Europe Report on youth policy in Cyprus observe, the term 'youth' in Cyprus appears to be weakly defined. They point out that "there seems to be [...] fluidity in understanding the 'idea' of young people".[13] For the purpose of the present Report, the UNPY definition has been adopted, so that the terms "Cypriot youth" or "young Cypriots" refer to individuals between 15 to 24 years of age.

Bourdieu emphasises that "the frontier between youth and age is something that is fought over in all societies". The division between young and old represents a 'sharing out' of power;[14] by classifying 'youth' using age, young people are granted certain attributes and rights (e.g. virility) while other rights (e.g. wisdom) are assigned to older people. In this way, a type of high "order" is created – between the young and the old – which each person must adhere to, "keeping himself in his place".[15] Moreover, as noted earlier, the concept of 'youth' is a relative one and its precise application relates to such variables as social class and location. For example, working class youth drop out of education earlier than middle class youth, entering the workforce before the latter.

The elusive nature of youth and the difficulty faced in pinning it down to a single definition is indicative of the, often turbulent, transition from childhood to adulthood that young people experience. Youth is a period in the life of an individual during which a state of partial

dependence is experienced as the individual moves through stages of high dependence (characteristic of childhood) to substantial independence (characteristic of adulthood). During this life stage, the social status of young people differs from that of children as they increasingly come to enjoy various rights but also to face certain responsibilities. Obviously, young people do not enjoy the same privileges and autonomy as adults, especially during the early stages of youth.[16] Specifically, during 'early youth' (15 to 18 years old), individuals begin to experience increasing levels of independence from their parents in areas of minor importance, such as selecting their friends, clothing and hobbies. Subsequently, during 'mid youth' (18 to 22 years old) young people acquire the right to vote, to drive and to consume alcohol. 'Late youth' (22 years old and over) is usually characterised by the right to live on one's own, as well as entering into marriage and starting a family.

In the last two to three decades, the experiences of young people have changed quite radically. Young people, perhaps more than any other age group, feel the impact of recent social and economic developments affecting western societies. Most of the changes, directly impacting youth, are attributed to the changing face of country populations, labour markets and the pursuit of education. Furlong and Cartmel propose that young people around the world face "new risks and opportunities" as traditional links between family, school and work seemingly weaken.[17] These new risks and opportunities have not been experienced by their parents. As such, the authors suggest that young people "embark on journeys into adulthood, which involve a wide variety of routes, many of which appear to have uncertain outcomes".[18] Moreover, they believe that young persons may feel that their journeys are unique and that they are likely to face any obstacles as individuals rather than as members of a collective society.

Based on a review of various theoretical approaches, Koulaides and Dimopoulos high-light six trends, which shape the identity of youth.[19] These include changes in demo-graphics, the result of which is an increasingly aging world population, the extension of youth as a period in the life of individuals, the emergence of both non-linear life courses and individual life paths, continuously increasing standards of living and a culture increasingly focused on youth.

Cypriot youth face the modern-day challenges typically experienced by young people in western societies. These are made doubly difficult as young Cypriots must navigate living in a society which is in the process of quickly transforming itself from a highly traditional to a more modern one. Additionally, today's young Cypriots live in a deeply divided country, physically separated since before they were born. This division has had a dramatic impact on the attitudes and perceptions of young Cypriots, and on their lives as a whole. In order to better understand young Cypriots it is necessary to describe the geographical, political and social context in which they live, receive their education and grow into active citizens in society.

## Setting the Context: A Brief Introduction to Cyprus

The island of Cyprus, located in the eastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea, lies at the crossroads of three continents – Africa, Asia and Europe. With a total geographical land mass of 9,251 square kilometres, Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean. The strategic location of the island was one of the major factors which attracted a chain of colonists and conquerors throughout its history – among which the Greeks, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Persians, Ptolemies, Romans, Byzantines, Franks, Venetians, Ottomans, and, most recently the British. Each of these left their mark, contributing to the culture of the country; but the Greeks and Ottomans, who settled on the island in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries B.C. and the sixteenth century A.D., respectively, had the most long-lasting influence in shaping Cypriot culture and society (the former on the Greek-Cypriot, Christian community and the latter on the Turkish-Cypriot, Muslim community).

| BOX 1.2 | Fast Facts about Cyprus |
|---|---|
| Total Area, km2 | 9,251 |
| Capital | Nicosia (Lefkosia in Greek, Lefkoşa in Turkish) |
| Population (2006) | 867,600 |
| Independence | 1960 |
| EU Accession | 1 May 2004 |
| Official Languages | Greek and Turkish; English is widely spoken |
| Religion | Christian Orthodox (Greek-Cypriots); Muslim (Turkish-Cypriots) |
| Human Development Index | 0.914 (32nd in the world) (2009) |
| Currency | Euro (since 1 January 2008) |

Cyprus has the third smallest population among the 27 EU member states, after Malta and Luxembourg. Recent statistics estimate the total population of the island to be a little less than a million (approximately 870,000). Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots form the two main communities on the island, and account for approximately 76% (660,600) and 10% to 14% (88,900-126,000) of the population, respectively.[20] Included among Greek-Cypriots are members of the Maronite, Latin and Armenian communities living in Cyprus that make up a little more than 1% of the total population.[21] It is significant to note that the Turkish-Cypriot community has been decreasing steadily since 1986 and it is estimated that approximately 57,000 Turkish-Cypriots have emigrated since the 1974 events; from that same historical juncture, Turks from mainland Turkey have been increasingly settling on the island, and are estimated to have equalled or exceeded the number of local Turkish-Cypriots.[22]

In addition to Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, the Republic of Cyprus is home to more than 118,100 foreigners, which constitute approximately 14% of the total population.[23] The Republic of Cyprus began to receive a steady flow of immigrants during the 1980s, many of whom sought out the island due to political or economic instability in their own countries. These included Palestinians, Lebanese and Serbians, as well as Russians, Ukrainians, Bulgarians and Romanians. Furthermore, a large number of individuals from the Philippines and Sri Lanka reside in

the Republic of Cyprus and are employed as domestic workers or in other unskilled, manual occupations. It is estimated that the total number of foreigners is considerably higher than the one officially quoted; this is attributed to the large number of "illegal" (unregistered) foreign workers on the island.[24] Similarly, slightly more than 8,000 foreigners (other than mainland Turks) live in the north; more than a third of which hail from the UK.[25]

The modern history of Cyprus is marked by a gradual process of increasing separation of the two main ethno-national communities. By the latter part of Ottoman Rule (1571-1878), the island was already culturally divided along ethno-communal lines; however, the division became more entrenched during British Rule (1878-1960), becoming institutionalized through important bodies and practices (such as the Legislative Council and separate Educational Boards). Deepening this divide were the loyalties developed by the local communities towards their "mother countries" – Greece for Greek-Cypriots and Turkey for Turkish-Cypriots. Each community celebrated the national holidays, played the national anthems and flew the flags of its respective "mother country".

A Greek-Cypriot anti-colonial struggle (1955-1959), aiming at *enosis* (unifying the island with Greece), was juxtaposed by Turkish-Cypriot efforts toward *taksim* (partition of the island), with respective armed guerrilla organizations pushing in the two opposite directions. The 1959 Zurich-London agreements brought a

temporary end to the escalating tensions, leading to the creation of an independent, bi-communal state in 1960, the Republic of Cyprus. Differing visions and interpretations of constitutional provisions led to conflict and the withdrawal of Turkish-Cypriots into self-administered enclaves three years later; thereafter the Republic continued to operate under Greek-Cypriot administration. Inter-communal tension continued intermittently throughout the 60s, while attempts to reach a political solution did not reach fruition. In July 1974, a Greek junta-inspired coup to overthrow President Makarios led to Turkey's military (re)action[26], invoking its "guarantor" status specified by the Treaty of Guarantee.[27] This led to the island-wide territorial separation of the two communities on either side of a dividing line. The latter, dubbed the Green Line, was first established in 1963 and divided Nicosia into two sectors; as of 1974 it divides the whole island, east to west, the southern part controlled by Greek-Cypriots and the northern part by Turkish-Cypriots.

In 1960, the approximate population of the island was 570,000, made up by 78% Greek-Cypriots and 18% Turkish-Cypriots. As a consequence of the events of 1974, 142,000 Greek-Cypriots (about 25% of the population at the time, and 80% of individuals living in the north) were displaced from the northern part of the island to the south; parallel to this, 60,000 Turkish-Cypriots moved from the southern part of the island to the north. This effectively resulted in the de facto division of the island with two thirds under the control of the Republic of Cyprus and the remaining third under Turkish-Cypriot control. The self-styled "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)" in the north (following a unilateral declaration of independence in 1983) is to this date only recognised by Turkey.[28]

Several attempts to solve the Cyprus Problem have come and gone. Despite these failures, substantial inter-communal contact developed throughout the 90s, fuelled by the initiatives and activities of the bi-communal movement and of the political forces in favour of rapprochement. As a result of mounting pressures within the Turkish-Cypriot community, the checkpoints partially opened

in April 2003, enabling those displaced to visit their homes and villages, and providing an opportunity to the long time segregated communities for interaction – albeit within limits.

Shortly afterwards, on 1 May 2004, Cyprus joined the European Union. It was hoped that the accession into the EU would serve as the necessary catalyst that could lead to the resolution of the Cyprus Problem. In the period leading up to accession, the UN increased their efforts in an attempt to assist the two communities to reach a solution, which would allow the island to enter the EU united. UN efforts, spearheaded by its General Secretary, Kofi Annan, in consultation with the EU, led to the formulation of a comprehensive plan for the settlement of the Cyprus Problem. On 24 April 2004, this proposed solution, which came to be known as the Annan Plan, was put to parallel referenda to Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. Sixty-five percent (65%) of Turkish-Cypriots voted in favour on the proposal, while 76% of Greek-Cypriots voted against. As a result, Cyprus joined the EU a few days later, still divided, with the aquis communautaire consequently applied only in the south.

The years after the referenda were marked by relative stagnation in developments regarding the Cyprus Problem. Post-accession elections on either side of the divide have resulted in new leaders for both communities, and sparked renewed interest in, and activity towards, finding a final settlement to the Cyprus Problem.

## A Snapshot of Cypriot Youth

Today's Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth face deep and rapid global and local changes. As is the case with many young people living in the modern world, young Cypriots are confronted with the many challenges of the passage into adulthood while trying to find themselves and their voice in society. Cyprus has experienced significant social change in recent decades as the country navigates, what can often be, a tense transition from a highly traditional society to a modern one. These changes have impacted both the personal and professional lives of Cypriots, shifting

and altering traditional practices and beliefs related to the world of family and work. While these transformations affect the way in which all age groups live, one could propose that young people are impacted the most by them.[29] Young Cypriots, from both communities, also face the challenge of trying to participate politically in a climate of division and separation.

Today, in the southern part of the island, there are 263,300 households with an average size of 2.94; approximately three quarters of the population (69.7%) reside in urban areas.[30] In the north, there are around 72,600 households with an average size of 2.86.[31] Life expectancy in the Greek-Cypriot community is 77.0 years for men and 81.7 years for women;[32] in the Turkish-Cypriot community these are 71.0 and 75.6 years, respectively.[33] In 2006, the total fertility rate in the southern part of the island was estimated to be 1.44, while in the northern part it was slightly higher at 1.9. Fertility rates have been on the decline since the mid-1980s; by the mid-1990s they had dropped to below the replacement level. Nevertheless, Cyprus experiences one of the highest rates in population growth among the EU25 countries – partially explained by positive net migration rates. In fact, Cyprus enjoys a younger age structure than the rest of the EU, as the proportion of people below the age of 15 is among the highest in Europe and the proportion of those above 65 is among the lowest.

The *de facto* division of the island makes it difficult to present a clear picture of the demographic data pertaining to youth in Cyprus. The population of young Cypriots between the ages of 15 and 24 is estimated to range from 134,900 to 147,900, consisting of 121,200 Greek-Cypriot youth and between 13,700 to 26,700 Turkish-Cypriot youth.[34] This age group makes up approximately 15.5% of the total population.[35]

## Youth Development through Empowerment and Responsibility

In the case of this Report, human development can be seen to focus specifically on the development of Cypriot youth. Youth development, simply put, is the growing capacity of a young person to understand and act on the social environment. According to Hamilton et al., "optimal development in youth enables individuals to lead a healthy, satisfying, and productive life, as youth and later as adults, because they gain the competence to earn a living and to engage in civic activities".[36] The ultimate outcome of youth development is enabling all young people to thrive in the communities and countries in which they live.

As noted earlier, human development, and thus youth development in Cyprus is complicated by the political conflict facing the island. Nevertheless, youth development may be used as a tool to build skills among the youth, in turn, contributing to youth empowerment and the development of a greater sense of personal and social responsibility. One of the paths to youth development is youth participation; by encouraging and fostering socio-political participation, young people find themselves learning and growing from experiences and activities that allow them to build up, or improve on, certain skills or capacities. In gaining these competencies, young people become empowered in all the important areas of their lives, such as their education, employment and socio-political participation. Empowerment cannot exist without responsibility; young people must learn to feel a sense of individual and social responsibility. Feelings of responsibility and empowerment may allow young Cypriots to begin to take part in decision making processes that affect their lives. Additionally, they will be able to take action on the issues which are important to them.

Cargo et al. describe youth empowerment as a "transactional partnering process between adults and youth" consisting of two sub processes.[37] The first, the adult sub process, involves *creating an empowering environment* for young people by fostering a welcoming social atmosphere and enabling youth to become empowered. The second, the youth sub process, is driven by youth *becoming empowered* through stimulating their participation, realising their potential and undertaking constructive change. Accordingly, the process of youth empowerment is driven

by the enhancement of youth capacity; youth capacity building is cultivated through "enabling and welcoming transactions that provide youth with repeated opportunities for rising to and overcoming challenges".[38] Hence, youth empowerment, rather than left to adults to manage, should be shared by adults and young people in a form of a partnership approach. In this way, youth are considered as "collaborators in society" rather than simply victims or problems.[39] While it is the responsibility of parents, educators, civil society, the media and the leaders of both communities to empower Cypriot youth, young Cypriots themselves must be active in seeking out and making full use of the available opportunities for empowerment. In this way, Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth can progress towards harnessing their full potential.

This Report will strive to outline the current level of wellbeing of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth in connection to the areas of family, education, employment, leisure time, health-related activities, socio-political participation, EU membership, inter-communal interactions and the future of their country, to name a few.

Moreover, this Report will address certain implications on human development and Cypriot youth that have been brought to light by the current research findings. It is hoped that the findings of this Report, and the ensuing recommendations put forth, will encourage relevant stakeholders (including young Cypriots themselves), to take the necessary measures needed in order to widen the choices available through the extension of the capabilities of Cypriot youth.

## CHAPTER TWO

## IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY

### Young Cypriots and the Family

Traditionally, the family has been the primary social, economic and moral unit in both the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities; even though Cypriot society has seen dramatic changes, the family remains the central social institution. In traditional Cypriot society, there existed a strict separation of the sexes, visible through the division of labour and the roles played by each gender within the family, the work force and society. In both communities, men represented the family to the outside world and were responsible for making important decisions and providing financially for their family. Women took on the combined (three) roles of wife, mother and housekeeper and were expected to fulfil these dutifully and respectfully. Gender segregation extended to all aspects of society since women were not allowed to frequent public spaces inhabited by men such as local coffee shops and cultural or athletic clubs.

Over the last few decades, Cypriot society has undergone, and continues to go through a series of rapid changes as it evolves from a traditional society to a modern one. The origins of this transition may be traced back to the British colonial period but gained new impetus after Independence, and especially after 1974. As everywhere else, urbanisation was a two-way process, involving on the one

hand the concentration of population and non-agricultural activities in towns and on the other hand the diffusion of urban values, behaviours and institutions to rural areas. However, unlike in other developing countries, urbanisation did not appear to affect the strength and closeness of familial ties; instead, it served to expand the family unit by including kin members – for example young relatives searching for work in town. Attalides outlines how young, single (Greek) Cypriot men and women, who were unemployed and did not possess land of their own, moved to urban areas in search of work or in order to pursue a high school education.[40]

Traditionally, Greek-Cypriot males were not considered grown up 'men' until they married; only then were they seen to be full and mature members of society. Likewise, the ultimate goal for Greek-Cypriot females was to marry and have children. The institution of marriage was of paramount importance in traditional Greek-Cypriot society. Marriages were arranged by parents with young Greek-Cypriots having little or no say in the choice of marriage partner. Typically, the union of a couple was motivated by economic considerations, as well as by issues of social status and the standing of the families in society (usually the two were correlated). Parents from each side contributed a dowry (known as *proika*) which would enable the young couple to begin their life together in society. The bride's parents would usually

provide the couple with a fully-furnished house while the groom's family offered land and animals.[41]

Similarly, Turkish-Cypriots have placed great importance on the institution of marriage, regarding it as a mechanism for promoting family honour and improving the economic prosperity of families. In traditional Turkish-Cypriot families, the bride moved into the groom's family household after the bride's father received a dowry (known as *baslik parasi*) from the groom. Typically, this money was not enjoyed by the young couple but was kept by the bride's father and, as such, was regarded as the price at which a bride was 'sold' into the groom's family.[42] Following in the vein of the Greek-Cypriot dowry tradition, Turkish-Cypriots moved away from the traditional Turkish form of dowry and adopted the practices of the former; thus, *baslik parasi* evolved into what is today known as *drahoma*, whereby the bride's family provides the young couple with a house and some of its furnishings, while the groom's family supplements the rest. In this way the dowry has been used to assist the young newlyweds to comfortably begin their life together.[43]

Over time, gender roles displayed by young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots began to change, as did the practice of arranged marriages. To a large extent, this was a consequence of education and employment. Young people became better educated and could thus find gainful employment in the fast developing urban centres; consequently, they were not totally dependent on their parents' agricultural work. This contributed to the gradual erosion of the authority and control that older generations had on them. Additionally, young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, exposed to new forms of written communication (newspapers, magazines and books), became more autonomous in their views and thus more assertive. By the 1960's, young Greek-Cypriots acquired "the power to veto their parents' choice of marriage partner" and, as a result, the concept of romantic love and dating began to grow.[44] This was similarly the case among young Turkish-Cypriots. Whereas traditionally the father had the final say in the selection of a spouse, as society increasingly adopted western trends, young Turkish-Cypriots were able to decide who they wished to marry, after which the respective parents met formally and proceeded to arrange for an engagement.

Despite the modernisation of marriage, the practice of dowry giving remains a strong feature of Cypriot society and has contributed to the setting of a 'new equilibrium' between young Cypriots and their parents. No longer asserting total control, parents still yield considerable, albeit indirect control over their children, through the provision of dowry, but more particularly by supporting their education (up to the tertiary level, which is one of the highest in the world) and by helping them secure employment. Such support mechanisms may be regarded as a form of 'unseen' parental control, which in effect leads to the "binding *[of Cypriot youth]* in golden chains".[45]

The family unit continues to play a strong role in modern Cypriot society and features heavily in the lives of Cypriot youth.[46] According to the $YAS_1$, 89% of Greek-Cypriots live with their parents; 79% of which are in two-parent families and 10% in single-parent families. Similarly, 83% of Turkish-Cypriots live in either two-parent families (73%) or in single-parent families (10%). Approximately 2% of Greek-Cypriots and 2% of Turkish-Cypriots live together with their partner and their parents or parents-in-law, while a further 5% of Greek-Cypriots and 7% of Turkish-Cypriots live with their partner. Only 3% of young Greek-Cypriots and 3% of Turkish-Cypriots surveyed live alone.

If given a choice as to where they would rather live (if they had a choice), 38% of Greek-Cypriots and 60% of Turkish-Cypriots indicated that they would continue to live with their parents; interestingly, a greater proportion of Greek-Cypriots (25%) stated that they would opt to live alone if they had the choice, compared to Turkish-Cypriots (8%): both sets of results indicate more traditional values held by Turkish-Cypriots – perhaps a result of the slower pace of social change in the north. Finally, a comparable 10% of Greek-Cypriots and 11% of Turkish-Cypriots would live with friends, and 12% of Greek-Cypriots and 13% of Turkish-Cypriots would live with their partners if they had a choice.

**If you had a choice, who would you live with?**



| | Two-parents family | One-parent family | With my brothers / sisters | With my grand parents | With other relatives | With a / some friend(s) | With my partner and parents / parents in-law | With my partner | Alone |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | 35% | 3% | 10% | 2% | 1% | 10% | 1% | 12% | 25% |
| TC | 55% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 11% | 5% | 13% | 8% |
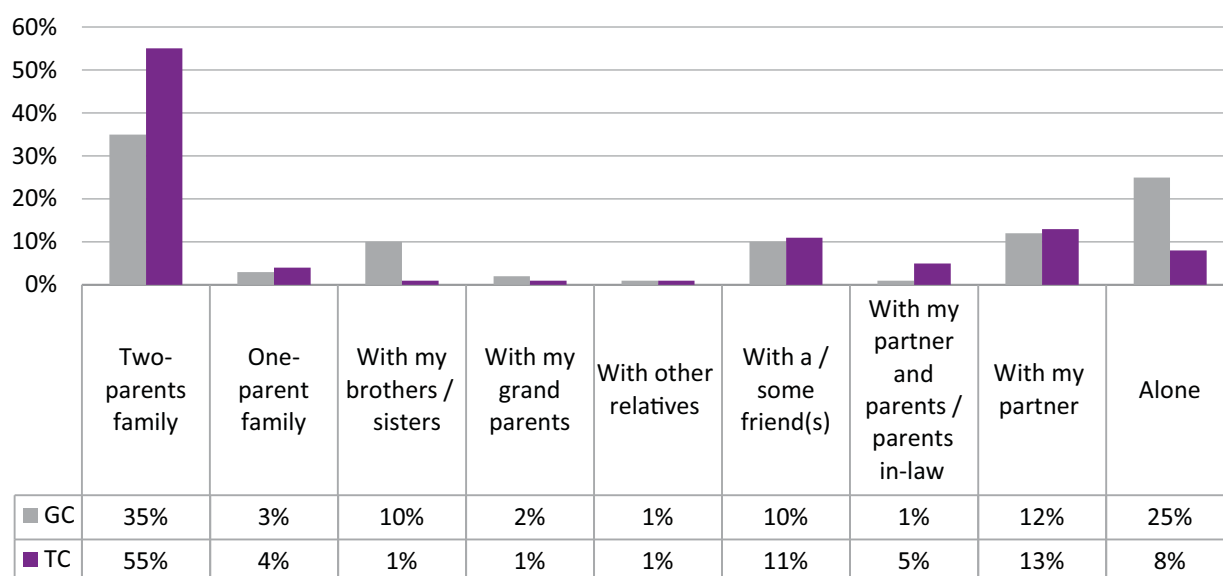
**Table 2.1: Cypriot Youth on Preferred Habitation**

The in-depth interviews offered additional insight into the relationships that young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots had with their parents. Additionally, they shed light on some of the issues that Cypriot youth tend to view differently from their parents. Religion and politics are two of the areas in which there are some disagreements – though perhaps, not as much as one could expect (usually these are not topics of primary interest to the young).

*We disagree with my mum because she thinks that if you don't go to church every Sunday you are an infidel. I don't consider her views to be correct.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate (pre-primary education), works at a cooperative bank, engaged, urban Paphos]**

*My parents have a very limited knowledge about what is happening in the world and Cyprus. They discuss only certain things, nothing else. But I, myself, am working and I do follow up on developments. As young persons we go everywhere, discuss issues…But they* [parents] *are only thinking about family issues…so it is impossible to agree with them…*

*We have different worldviews… They have limited knowledge about political matters… They are not open to new ideas…*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24, works in a computer store, rural Nicosia]**

The main issues of dispute usually revolve around more 'ordinary'/'mundane' issues – such as, personal style (e.g. of clothes, hair style), choice of friends, going out (and especially the time of returning home in the evening) and so on. Young Cypriots appear to be struggling with, or against, their parents' views and authority, to expand their space of freedom; parents, at the same time struggle to maintain as much control as may be possible – not an easy task in today's world, which questions all forms of traditional authority:

*My family grew up with many taboos; they are trying to impose all these taboos on me... I cannot give in to this... If I think about it, I feel as though I am living in a cage… But I will never accept this.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 21, university student, rural Nicosia]**

*Yes, it is a problem for me because I want to be free to do what I want. I am twenty years old and*

*I don't want to be governed by other people.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20,
university student (psychology), urban Morfou]**

Boys reaching adolescence and beyond, come into increasing conflict with their fathers: since males are expected to be assertive, to act as heads/leaders and as 'winners', this naturally leads to a conflict between two 'equal' males co-existing in the same territory. As a young Cypriot put it, there was not enough room in his house-hold for more than one opinion to be voiced:

*I believe there should be only one cock in each brood. When my father and I don't agree on an issue, there is disagreement; and this means that* [the disagreement] *will continue. One cannot solve such a problem… There should be only one cock.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24,
works in a computer store, rural Nicosia]**

Yet despite any tensions, most young Cypriots continue to live with their parents well after the age of 18, as indicated by the responses of those who participated in the *YAS$_1$*. According to the individuals surveyed, 55% of Cypriot youth, aged 18 and over, still lived at home with their parents and had not moved out on their own.

**Why do/did you continue to live with your parents?** (Percentages refer to *most important* option selected)
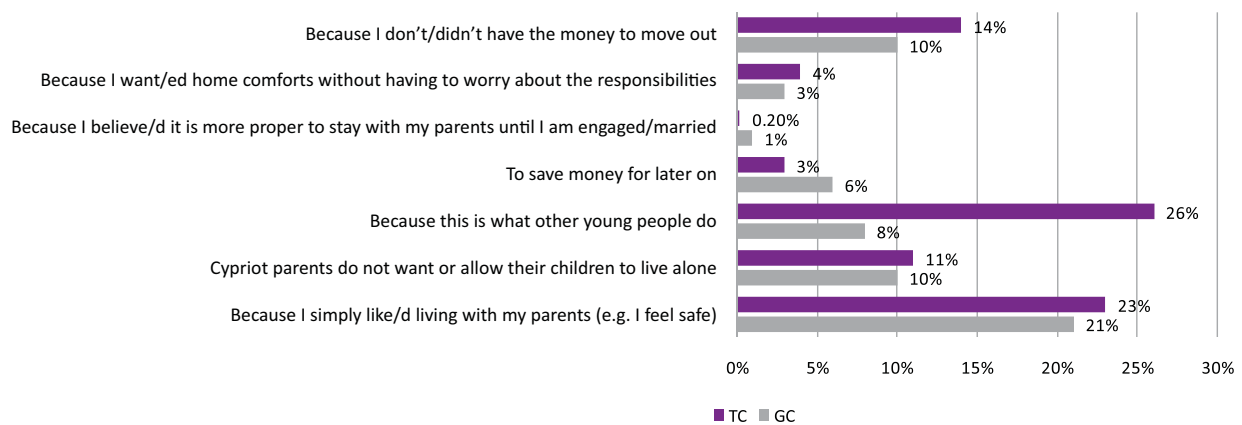


**Table 2.2: Reasons for Continuing to Live with Parents**

When asked to specify the most important reason why this was the case, 21% of Greek-Cypriots and 23% of Turkish-Cypriots stated that they did not have the financial means to move out of their parents' home. In-depth interviews provided more details on the rationales of young Cypriots as regards this financial dependence:

*Even though at eighteen years old I'm considered an adult, I'm not independent in certain things. I also want my parents' help with my finances and I'm provided with, let's say, protection from them, and I have a place to stay.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18,
single, college student (aesthetics),
part-time salesperson, urban Nicosia]**

*Since we have the option to live with her* [the respondent's fiancé's mother] *for another year or two, it is better than renting somewhere else as we are trying to save money to build our own house.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23,
university graduate (pre-primary education),
works at a cooperative bank,
engaged, urban Paphos]**

Often financial considerations combine with other important needs which young people may have, such as the need for security and support in their difficult transition:

*The primary reason which makes me stay with my parents is financial.* [Furthermore] *I feel safe*

*with them; when I need something they help me, whatever it may be; they sometimes advise me when I have any difficulty in my life.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

A considerable percentage (26%) of Turkish-Cypriots said that living with their parents until they were either engaged or married was "what other young people do", whereas only 8% of Greek-Cypriots felt this way – indicating the higher acceptance of traditionalist practices among Turkish-Cypriot youth. Slightly more than 10% of Greek-Cypriots and 14% of Turkish-Cypriots said they enjoyed living with their parents, and a further 10% of Greek-Cypriots and 11% of Turkish-Cypriots admitted to wanting to benefit from the typical comforts, and lack of responsibilities, typically associated with living with their parents.

When presented with a series of statements regarding issues of parental support, 92% of Greek-Cypriots and 77% of Turkish-Cypriots either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their parents should financially support their children's studies. Additionally, 62% of Greek-Cypriots and almost 52% of Turkish-Cypriots "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that parents should help their children find good jobs through their connections. Expectation of parental support extends to engagement and marriage as well; 34% of Greek-Cypriots and 58% of Turkish-Cypriots "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that parents should provide their children with material support after they have gotten engaged or married. Examples of such assistance include contributing, either partially or fully, to the purchase of a house or a car.

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

| | Parents have to financially support their children's studies | | Parents have to support their children materially after they get engaged/married | | Parents have to help their children find a good job through their connections | | You should always turn to your family before asking the state for help | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC |
| Strongly Disagree | 4% | 0.3% | 4% | 5% | 5% | 4% | 6% | 3% |
| Disagree | 7% | 1% | 11% | 23% | 15% | 10% | 7% | 10% |
| Neither, Nor | 12% | 7% | 28% | 38% | 29% | 24% | 22% | 26% |
| Agree | 40% | 49% | 36% | 25% | 34% | 46% | 44% | 50% |
| Strongly Agree | 37% | 43% | 22% | 9% | 19% | 16% | 21% | 12% |

**Table 2.3: Attitudes towards Parental Support**

These findings confirm the results of previous surveys which have demonstrated that despite often condemning or rejecting the idea of a 'dowry' as outdated, in practice most Cypriots seem to expect continuous support by their parents in all fields of life, further evidenced in the in-depth interviews[47]:

*This is what a parent should do for their children as support, to help them with the house, but generally, when they need some help, they must support them in these issues – basically economic. In our case, neither the one nor the other* [set of parents] *could, because they had their own debts, and we came into some conflict because they would not assist us with the house, which we needed some help with.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, technical school graduate, salesperson, divorced with two children, rural Nicosia]**

*When the time is right, families can help buy a house for their children, but I think that a car is a luxury that children can buy in the future, when they start earning their own money.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student (psychology), urban Morfou]**

Some youth seem to be gradually changing traditionally espoused views concerning the dowry or *'help'* from parents, stressing the need to be detached and autonomous in their lives:

*Look, if one of the two is unemployed, yes. But, from the time that both are employed, I believe that no financial offering is necessary from parents, because we must learn to be independent.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

Overall, these attitudes highlight the continued importance of the family unit in modern Cypriot society. The long practiced institution of 'dowry', and assistance from parents even after the age at which children are expected to be independent, may explain why young Cypriots, more than other young western Europeans, continue to expect financial support from their parents well after completing their education. Turning to one's family for support is so ingrained in Cypriot culture that 62% of Greek-Cypriots and 65% of Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that individuals should *always* turn to their family for help before seeking it from the state.

Among the Cypriot youth, aged 19 and over, who were surveyed, 28% of Greek-Cypriots and 32% of Turkish-Cypriots were completely dependent on their parents financially. An important reason which explains this dependence is the typically low salaries earned by young Cypriots when they are first employed. Turkish-Cypriots felt, more strongly than Greek-Cypriots did, that parents should support them financially even after getting engaged or married (58% compared to 34%); to a large extent the different responses must relate to the economic disadvantages faced by Turkish-Cypriot youth in their community, as compared to Greek-Cypriot youth.

The values embedded over the *long durée*,

as a result of the social realities on the island – namely a system of agricultural production (dominant until Independence) based on small family cultivations – cemented the family as the primary social, economic and moral unit in both the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities. All the members of the family worked on their small holdings, having to struggle against several odds (such as droughts and diseases which threatened both vegetation and livestock) and fight for access to scarce resources (mainly water). Family members came to rely on each other's support, in order to survive this tough physical and social environment; resulting in the development of high levels of solidarity among members.

Cypriot children and youth were dependent on their parents for their daily provisions. This reliance continued as, later in life, young Cypriots had to depend on their parents for employment in the family cultivations. In some cases, families would inherit some land, which they would cultivate and then pass on to their children, while in other cases, once married, parents acquired land for their children to cultivate. Thus, Cypriot youth came to count on their parents to provide them with gainful employment and a suitable marriage partner. This dependence ran two ways; once old, parents had to depend on their offspring to care for them in their old age.

## Trends in Marriage, Fertility and Divorce

In 2007, the mean age that Greek-Cypriots got married at was 28.2 for women and 30.6 for men; this has increased from 22.5 for women and 25.5 for men in 1975.[48] Among Turkish-Cypriots the average marriage age increased from 24.3 for women and 28.0 for men in 2000, to 26.1 and 29.2, respectively, in 2005.[49] Young people from both communities are choosing to delay marriage, but in comparison, Greek-Cypriots tend to marry later than Turkish-Cypriots.

Women in Cyprus are also choosing to have their first child at a later age than women thirty years ago did. In 2006, the mean age in which a Greek-Cypriot woman had her first child was

27.7 years, compared to approximately 24 in 1975. Turkish-Cypriot women are also having their first child later on in life, as the greatest proportion of childbirths registered were by women between the ages of 25 to 29.[50] The rise in the average age for young men and women to wed and start a family is due to the fact that, increasingly, young Cypriots are choosing to spend more time starting off their academic and professional careers and progressing ahead enough before starting a family. This trend is an indication of, firstly, the primary importance that the quality of life has acquired over time and, secondly, the desire of young Cypriots to be more independent from their parents before they marry.

Both communities have also experienced a sharp growth in divorce rates since the 1970s and onwards. In 1974 there were less than 200 divorces recorded in the Greek-Cypriot community, while in 2006 the total number of divorces recorded was 1,753.[51] Recent years have also seen a steady increase in the

number of divorce applications registered in the Turkish-Cypriot community. In 2000, there were 507 applications for divorce; by 2005 this figure had risen to 721.[52]

## Young Cypriots' Views on Marriage and Cohabitation

Despite the growing divorce trend, the majority of young Cypriots who participated in the $YAS_1$ still believe strongly in marriage; 69% of Greek-Cypriots and 67% of Turkish-Cypriots surveyed either "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" with the statement that "marriage is an outdated institution". At the same time, the data provide an indication of a change in norms as, until recently, faith in marriage was near universal. An even stronger indicator of changing norms was a question relating to bearing children. For many young Cypriots, marriage was a necessary prerequisite to having children as 49% of Greek-Cypriots and 60% of Turkish-Cypriots "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that people should have children only after getting married.

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**
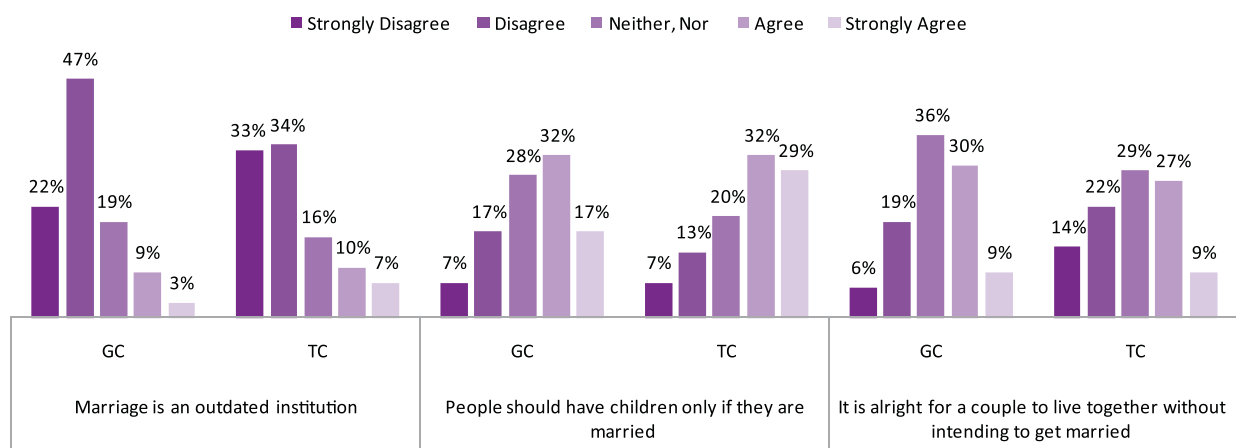


Table 2.4: Attitudes towards Marriage and Cohabitation

Despite such changes in values, it seems that young Cypriots still overwhelmingly consider marriage as a natural step in the life of an individual, accepting the deeply entrenched traditional faith in the institution of marriage. At the same time, their views on marriage combine romantic notions with more

realistic and practical considerations. The following quotes depict the 'thinking aloud' of young Cypriots, rationalising the logic of a 'traditional' choice (i.e. marriage) in a world increasingly exposed to more 'modern' choices and questioning the wisdom of the old. The authors present the traditional values ("the

destiny of each person is to create a family"…) as a consequence of modern choices or ways of living ("to become whole as a person"):

*Yes,* [I believe] *in marriage in general. The destiny of each person is to create a family, have children, grandchildren – to become whole as a person.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, works for a private company, single, urban Nicosia]**

Other young people seem to be gradually shifting away from the more traditional values, yet they still seem to emphasise the need for marriage as a social convention, expected by others and an outward symbol of a permanent relationship. But their emphasis is mostly on the quality of the relationship between the couple:

*Whether you get married or not, I don't think there is a difference in your relationship before or after… [Marriage] is just a ritual which takes place, as a result of custom.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 16, student, single, urban Limassol]**

*Marriage is not necessary for you to be well and happy; it's just that with marriage…it's like you're making it permanent… It's more for the papers: marriage is for third parties, not for you.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, university graduate, chemist, single, rural Limassol]**

Some go even further to stress that the convention per se is not always a plus, but can sometimes become a liability:

*It is an outdated institution, definitely, it's just an idea that must stop because whether you're with someone on paper or not, it's the same thing, the paper just brings stress […]; that is to say, you're married, it's over, "I'm married" you say, "there is a line which I cannot in any way cross", and then, let's say, it creates stress within you.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, student, single, urban Nicosia]**

Another question, asking respondents to state what they felt contributed to a long-lasting and successful marriage, elicited responses which reinforce the importance of elements such as love, respect, cooperation and honesty:

[What contribute to a successful marriage] *are the love, understanding and respect between the couple.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, works for a private company, single, urban Nicosia]**

*People have to be in love with each other and should be honest with each other. Nothing based on lies can go on.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student (civil engineering), rural Famagusta]**

*Compromise, appreciation, understanding, sex, parents…*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, works as a cashier, single, urban Nicosia]**

*Respect for each other's ideas; but of course respect is not enough, besides this, they should cooperate in the various things they have to do – but being respectful is the most important element, and understanding each other.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 18, high school graduate, unemployed, urban Famagusta]**

Economic stability and comfort was a recurring response among some respondents, especially Turkish-Cypriots, who seemed to believe that money was possibly the most important factor contributing to a productive partnership:

*I think it sounds odd, but in my opinion money is the most important element. Money gives us peace. I believe that without money people always get in trouble and love is not everything. According to our experience, without money, love is finished – because of economic problems. Besides money, people should have tolerance. But as I said money is the most important thing; this does not mean you have to be rich – [rather] you should have some income in order to have a stable and happy marriage.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24, works in a computer store, rural Nicosia]**

*Nowadays,* [what contributes to a successful

marriage] *is common sense and money.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 17,
student, computer operator, rural Nicosia]**

*I think that the preliminary condition for a marriage is money…because money makes life easier and peaceful. I think that being without money can cause problems and can put an end to the love between people. Also, tolerance between the two people who are preparing themselves for marriage is important. But I insist that money is vitally important for a successful and long-lasting marriage.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 21,
unemployed, single, rural Trikomo]**

This emphasis on financial well-being may relate to the almost perennial difficulties of the Turkish-Cypriot economy and the high unemployment experienced among Turkish-Cypriot youth. A bad financial state may lead to difficulties and discomfort, and may hence put stress on the relationship – which explains the parallel emphasis on the need for tolerance among married couples. Such an emphasis was not universal and other young Turkish-Cypriots supported that a successful marriage was influenced by other factors, such as a solid upbringing, filled with love and respect from parents and family:

*If you are successful in your life and you are happy with the love and respect gained from your parents and family, then a person can be ready for a successful and long-lasting marriage as well.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20,
university student, rural Nicosia]**

Greek-Cypriots, who are generally better off financially than Turkish-Cypriots (so not as burdened with financial pressures), more commonly stressed that wealth did not necessarily guarantee a happy union:

*Well, it depends. There are people who are poor but happy. Then again, there are people who are rich and are miserable. In a marriage, I believe it is not the money which makes either the people, or the marriage.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18,
college student (aesthetics), single, part-time salesperson, urban Nicosia]**

A somewhat comparable 39% of Greek-Cypriot youth and 34% of Turkish-Cypriot youth "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that it is alright for a couple to live together before marriage. The in-depth interviews yielded insight into the reasons behind such views:

*Because they get to know the other, sort of, they learn how to cope with problems alone, to rely on themselves,* [and] *various other things, which will help them confront the various problems in life.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24,
high school graduate, shop owner,
married, 1 child]**

*My mother told me that in the past it was impossible to even imagine a girl inviting her boyfriend over to her home to have dinner with her family. But now many young women do this regularly. Some young people even live together without being engaged to one another.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 23,
secretary, rural Nicosia]**

*Yes, because one will get to know the other better* […] *I mean not to go get married and stay together without knowing anything and later complain that "my husband doesn't do anything in the home", "my husband doesn't do this", "my wife doesn't do that", and then to get divorced for silly reasons – you understand? Better to live together and, if they're not suited to each other, at least to separate at this point and not after they've gotten married and had babies.*

**[Greek-Cypriot male, 23,
early school leaver, warehouseman,
engaged, urban Nicosia]**

*It's really up to each individual… What can we say to young people who choose not to get married? The number of young people who make this choice is increasing each day among the Turkish-Cypriot community.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 19,
university student, urban Kyrenia]**

[Living together] *is a good thing because you get to know the other person, their character, how they think, and I believe that if it's for a serious reason* [matrimony] *it is worth staying with someone, I mean, to get to*

*know that person better and to know their faults and qualities, and* [only] *then, let's say, to enter this marriage process; because if you get married without living with them, you cannot understand what kind of person they are.*

**[Greek-Cypriot female, 23, technical school, salesperson, divorced, 2 children, rural Nicosia]**

In many ways the reasons justifying 'living together' cited by interviewees are similar to those which legitimated being 'engaged' in the past. In earlier days engagements had the function of allowing two youngsters a preliminary period of becoming familiar with each other before marriage. But sexual relations were not supposed to be a part of the arrangement and parents were vigilant to make sure the daughter remained a virgin, especially in case the engagement did not lead to marriage. Of course, often such parental vigilance was not effective in preventing sexual encounters.[53] Among Greek-Cypriots, since the main intention was for engagement to be the first step towards marriage, the Church silently accepted the practice and even blessed it. Yet as this social institution started changing meaning, becoming more of an experiment, which gave licence for legitimate sexual relationships before marriage, the Church grew increasingly uneasy, and about a decade ago withdrew its sanction. As a consequence, engagements have decreased in importance, and many youth nowadays do not formally enter into the practice. Instead, cohabitation has been on the increase, with many young people using it as a substitute to being engaged – and thus the similarity of functions.

*Yes, I believe this is ok because before... let's say, if they get engaged before getting married, they will see if they fit... this is a good thing...*

**[Greek-Cypriot female, 18 years old, college student (aesthetics), part-time salesperson, single, urban Nicosia]**

*If I could have* [lived with my fiancé] *during the period I was engaged, perhaps it wouldn't have been a failed engagement. I believe that this should be done so that one gets to know the other, and without parents* [around]*, that goes without saying.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, cashier, single, urban Nicosia]**

Still, our times are transitory and the older, more conservative values do not easily wither away; hence other respondents presented arguments against young couples cohabiting together before marriage:

*From what I see from friends of mine, most don't do so well* […] *If you live together it's like you get bored of the other person...it's like you get to know them too well – but you shouldn't, you have to leave something 'unexplored', that you don't know about the other person, so they still 'attract' you.*

**[Greek-Cypriot male, 23, student, single, urban Nicosia]**

*I am against people living together before marriage. Nowadays, some young people try to be modern by engaging in such types of behaviour before marriage. Why are they afraid of marriage though? I think it's because they don't want to assume any responsibility. But if you really love your partner then why say 'no' to marriage? I may be wrong but I think that young people today have become very irresponsible.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 24, housewife]**

*I don't find it right because somewhere along the line we, youth in general, have gone overboard...getting engaged too soon, getting married and having a baby too quickly, and in the end divorce comes and you're left with the child, which in most cases is the one to have most problems in a divorce, and not the parents.*

**[Greek-Cypriot female, 24, college graduate, employed in private company, single, urban Nicosia]**

As noted earlier, Turkish-Cypriots tend to marry at an earlier age than Greek-Cypriots. Yet many expressed strong reservations concerning the readiness of those too young to commit themselves to such a responsibility, at too early an age (e.g. late teens). Neither engagement, nor cohabitation can help in such cases:

*I don't think such an arrangement* [cohabitation] *will move things forward. For example, my*

*boyfriend and I got engaged and after a while we started to change. Our feelings and thoughts started changing. Decisions taken during childhood can change later on; nothing is guaranteed.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student (psychology), urban Morfou]**

*I think it is nonsense; I don't think that a person who is twenty years old is mature enough for marriage.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student (civil engineering), rural Famagusta]**

*I think that it is very wrong because they are still children. And in this period marriage is childish.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student, urban Nicosia]**

*If they haven't got a job, they cannot afford their life…and if they are not mature enough, they should not get married. It is possible for girls after eighteen; but especially for boys, it should be after the age of twenty. I don't believe that, at the age of twenty, people are mature enough for marriage.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 22, public servant, urban Nicosia]**

Overall respondents felt that, in their early twenties, young people have still got a long way to go before maturing, either personally or professionally; thus, marriage, at such an early stage of their development and growth, is not favoured. Other respondents, however, stressed that people were free to choose their own life course:

*People should feel comfortable with their decisions. If they find someone, even before the age of twenty, and they want to get married, then they should.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 18, high school graduate, unemployed, urban Famagusta]**

## Strong Families: The Dependence of Cypriot Youth on Their Families

In tracing the place of youth in Cypriot society, this Chapter has brought attention to some of the diachronic 'constants' – primarily the

strength and cohesiveness of Cypriot families and the high inter-dependence of its members. Over time, the extent and nature of this inter-dependence has evolved. Nowadays, Cypriot youth are freer than in past times in areas such as their choice of life partner, field of studies, and type of employment. Yet most young Cypriots continue to be largely dependent on their parents in various other ways, such as in financing their studies, finding employment, the provision of a house at marriage, or taking care of their children when they are at work.[54]

These features serve to maintain the co-hesiveness of the family, while simultaneously giving birth to a number of tensions. For instance, since parents provide so much in terms of material needs, they often expect their children to accept their views on issues they consider vital. These may range from minor matters (what clothes to wear, or which friends to associate with) to major ones (which studies to pursue, what employment to enter, or their political views), which leave Cypriot youth feeling restrained and dependent on parents rather than independent and empowered. Many young Cypriots reject such parent-invoked limitations – even though they seem to easily accept (and even demand) material inputs from their parents.

Tensions also relate to today's increasingly competitive world, which leads many parents to focus primarily on satisfying their children's material needs – often at the expense of spending quality time with them, trying to understand them and their problems. In fact, often parents may 'over-provide' their children with whatever material goods they will ask for in order to compensate for the inability to provide other non-material elements. This behaviour may lead to a number of detrimental consequences. Firstly, some young Cypriots grow up 'overprotected' or 'spoilt' by their parents and may not be ready to face life's difficulties. Secondly, the lack of discussion concerning significant life problems often leads to a lack of communication between parents and their children; the resulting alienation experienced by some young Cypriots encourages them to seek out alternative means of coping with the problems and stress experienced

in their lives (evident in the growing use of drugs among Cypriot youth today). Thirdly, the emphasis placed on material well-being, especially in *nouveau rich* families, means that little attention is given to the development of 'character', critical/self reflection skills, the pursuit of self-actualisation, and the fulfilment of other deeper needs that young people may have.

An important corollary to the continuing 'strength' of the Cypriot family is the perpetuation of a weak welfare state. The fact that the family makes significant service provisions to its members (both the young and the old) means that the state can get away with fewer state welfare provisions. The result is a feeble welfare state (the so-called *Mediterranean model*), in which the weight of responsibility falls on the family: this means the state does not have to try harder, thus perpetuating a vicious circle that continues to exist today.[55]

The relationship between Cypriot youth and their families, and the impact that this may have on the development of young Cypriots, can be further explicated by utilizing Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*.[56] This concept, simply defined, posits that an individual acquires a system of 'dispositions', affecting their patterns of perception, thought and action, as a result of internalizing external influences such as class, education and family. These dispositions allow the individual to navigate through life; acting as loose guides to various facets of life (rather than as strictly enforced rules). Given the loose, unspoken method in which external stimuli are absorbed, the dispositions develop in a manner that is neither completely deliberate nor entirely involuntary.

An example of the importance of *habitus* among Cypriot youth is their predisposition to support the same political party or (politically affiliated) football team as their parents (mostly the father). Longitudinal studies conducted among Greek-Cypriot youth in 1995, 2001 and 2006 presented a positive correlation between the political parties supported by Cypriot youth and their parents.[57] The most recent of these surveys, for example, showed that 22% of young Greek-Cypriot respondents supported the leftist party; when asked which political party their fathers and mothers supported, the responses provided demonstrated similar percentages of parents that supported the leftist party (24% of fathers and 24% of mothers); this pattern applied to the other political parties as well.[58] Obviously, young Cypriots are neither required nor coerced to support the same political party or sports team as their parents, and yet the research findings cited, provide evidence that this is in fact the case. It is apparent that young Cypriots are open to the substantial influence of their *habitus*, which shapes their attitudes and actions towards various aspects of their life (from which football team to support, to feelings of collective identity – that is, identification with nation or state).

Overall, young Cypriots tend to receive a great deal of support from their families and, as a result, are raised in what can be described as a secure or (over)protective environment. The flipside to this 'safety' is a number of problems that can potentially spill over into other domains of the lives of Cypriot youth, such as education, lifestyle and socio-political participation, to name a few. Subsequent Chapters of this Report will address some of the disadvantageous consequences that may be the result of young Cypriots' dependence on their parents.

# CYPRIOT YOUTH AND EDUCATION

## The Fundamental Right to Education

Education is among the main factors that play a significant role in the lives of young people around the world. According to a recent report published by the Council of Europe[59]:

*Despite considerable differences with regard to the socio-economic situation of young people in the world, they need access to fundamental rights, to education, the labour market, health care, culture, technological innovations and the possibility to enjoy decent living conditions as a prerequisite for their active participation in society.*

The ability of young people to have access to the fundamental rights and opportunities listed above is conducive to their development as active citizens in their society. The following sections examine the current situation facing Cypriot youth from both communities as regards education. By no means exhaustive, this Chapter attempts to offer a window into the opportunities available to young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, as well as certain limitations faced – either collectively or within their specific communities.

## Education in the 21st Century

In current times, education is considered one of the fundamental rights of individuals; young people around the world, regardless of socio-economic background, must be able to access education.[60] Inability to freely pursue education can detrimentally affect multiple facets of their life – including civil and political participation, economic well-being and social welfare.

Education is a significant and defining part of young people's lives as they transition from childhood into adulthood. Given all the physical and psychological changes that young people go through during puberty, and the new rights and responsibilities which they begin to take on, the pursuit of education is possibly one of the few constants carried over from childhood into youth. On the other end of the spectrum, education can also play a part in the lives of adults: in recent years, greater emphasis is being placed on lifelong learning – the need, but also the privilege, of pursuing knowledge throughout life, and acquiring skills and qualifications as necessary at any life stage.

In modern day societies, young people face new challenges and risks related to education, which they are required to deal with individually rather than as members of a collectivity.[61] Education is not an undifferentiated product, equal to and for all, but rather a consumption good of diverse variety, and parents and children are called upon to select the best possible 'product' which will provide them with the qualifications necessary for a subsequent career. Employers tend to place greater stock

and importance in the type of qualifications their employees possess, demanding a skilled work force equipped with specialised knowledge. Finally, globalisation has caused the world of work to become increasingly more competitive and fast paced.

The new prerequisites of the work market call for educated and skilled individuals. As a result, young people experience a heightened sense of pressure and confront increased risks of potential failure. Even children from wealthy, privileged families, possessing excellent academic qualifications often worry about uncertainty and the possibility of failure as regards the future.[62] These trends in education have led the lives of youth to become more burdened as they need to acquire as many qualifications and other credentials as they possibly can, so that they may more easily enter the labour market and enhance prospects for success.

## Education in Cyprus: Indicators and Trends

Young Cypriots are not excluded from the educational challenges faced by today's youth all over the world.[63] In general, young Cypriots across the island are extremely well educated.[64] In fact, one of the problems is that many often find themselves in the position of being over-qualified and end up in employment that does not reflect their qualifications, knowledge and skills.

In 2006, there were 682 pre-primary schools, 365 primary, 158 secondary and 36 tertiary educational institutions registered in the Republic of Cyprus controlled areas of the island. Gross enrolment ratios were 100% at the pre-primary and primary level, 98% at the secondary level, and 65% at the tertiary level.[65]

During the 2005/2006 academic year there were 65,660 students enrolled in secondary level educational institutions; 86.2% were enrolled in public schools and the remaining 13.8% in private schools. During the same academic year, 20,587 students (14,957 Cypriots and 5,630 foreigners) were enrolled in tertiary level educational institutions in the Republic; among these, 33.4% and 66.6% were enrolled in public and private institutions respectively.

In comparison, during the 2006/2007 academic school year, there was a total of 168 pre-primary, 94 primary, 53 secondary, and 8 tertiary educational institutions operating in the north. The gross enrolment ratios were 100% at the primary level, 100% at the lower secondary level, 84% at the higher secondary level and 74% at the tertiary level. In 2007 there were 18,352 students enrolled in secondary level educational institutions and 38,779 enrolled in tertiary level institutions; the latter consisting of 9,239 Turkish-Cypriot students, 26,873 students from mainland Turkey and 2,667 students from other countries.[66]

The majority of Cypriots attend public school, where the language of instruction is either Greek (in the Greek-Cypriot community) or Turkish (in the Turkish-Cypriot community); a smaller proportion of Cypriots study at private schools, where the medium of instruction is English.[67] Private school students typically follow a British or American educational system, and prepare to sit international university placement exams, such as the GCSE examinations.

Early school leavers, defined as individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 who have, at most, completed lower secondary education and are not pursuing any form of education or vocational training, make up 16% of the total Greek-Cypriot population and approximately 17% of the total Turkish-Cypriot population. In 2005, public expenditure on education in the south constituted 7% of the GDP, while a double amount, 14.1% of the total budget in the north, was spent on education during the following year.

One of the trends which seem to be common on both sides is the increasing attendance of private lessons: over 40% of Turkish-Cypriots and nearly 90% of Greek-Cypriots surveyed were taking, or had taken, private lessons. This is connected with the almost universal demand for tertiary education in the last few decades, as well as the desire to supplement school education with subjects not taught at school but considered important for rounded education/knowledge and self-development. Young Cypriots attend private lessons, over and above their school lessons. As a result, part of their free time, either after school hours or

on weekends, is spent taking private lessons. These lessons constitute an important role in the lives of young Cypriots (especially Greek-Cypriot youth who are more than twice as likely to attend private lessons).

Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots alike primarily attended private lessons in subjects taken at school (e.g. mathematics and physics). According to responses, the driving force that leads young Cypriots from both communities to take private lessons is so that they may improve their school grades.

Moreover, Cypriot youth utilize these private lessons in order to better prepare for the university entrance exams, which many of them take during their last year of secondary school in order to attain a place in the public universities in the "mother countries" or in Cyprus.

**Why do/did you take private lessons?**



| Reason | TC | GC |
|---|---|---|
| To improve my grades | 4% | 4% |
| To prepare for university entrance exams | 2% | 13% |
| I feel more self-confident about succeeding in my school exams | 5% | 14% |
| I am/was dissatisfied with the way school teachers teach | 6% | 18% |
| I am/was dissatisfied with the quality of the education offered in my school | 6% | 19% |
| These subjects are/were not offered in my school | 15% | 53% |
| It was a decision taken by my parents | 26% | 56% |

**Table 3.1: Reasons for Attending Private Lessons**

To a lesser extent, young Cypriots attend private lessons in subjects not taught in school such as foreign languages, often because they wish to prepare themselves for higher studies in countries other than Cyprus and Greece or Turkey. An even smaller proportion of respondents indicated that they pursued extra-curricular lessons of a creative nature such as painting, music, or more physically demanding lessons, such as dance, swimming or football.

## The Evolution and Structure of Higher Education in Cyprus

Up to the first half of the 20th century, education was enjoyed by a select group of individuals in Cyprus – typically, male children from wealthy families. Nowadays, opportunities for education are almost universal at the primary and secondary stage and are among the highest in the world at the tertiary level for both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. Since the second half of the 20th century, Cypriot parents have placed increasing importance on providing their children with higher education as it was widely believed that it would considerably assist in securing decent employment and in acquiring the values and skills necessary for becoming 'good persons' (Greeks or Turks respectively). Nowadays, more than 81% of Greek-Cypriot and 75% of Turkish-Cypriot secondary school graduates go on to pursue their higher education either in Cyprus or abroad.

The number of Greek-Cypriot students studying abroad more than doubled between 1985 and 2005. In 1985 there were 10,312 registered students studying abroad whereas, 20 years later, this figure was 20,969.[68] During the 2005/2006 academic year, 58.4% of Greek-

Cypriots travelled abroad for their tertiary education; the remaining 41.6% were enrolled in tertiary education institutions in Cyprus. The number of Turkish-Cypriots studying abroad has fluctuated over the years from 1,996 in 1989 up to 3,557 in 1997 and down to 1,737 in 2006. Today, a significant proportion of Turkish-Cypriot students pursue their tertiary education in Cyprus. During the 2006/2007 academic year 84.5% (9,239) of Turkish-Cypriots were enrolled in local universities in the north, while the remaining 15.5% (1,737) travelled abroad for their tertiary education.[69]

In the past, due to a lack of tertiary level educational institutions, Cypriots from both communities travelled abroad for their studies. Greece, the UK and the USA have always been popular study destinations among Greek-Cypriots while Turkish-Cypriots travelled to Turkey for further studies.[70] The 'motherlands' have always been the primary study destinations for Cypriots; Greece for the Greek-Cypriots and Turkey for the Turkish-Cypriots. The UK and USA (and to a lesser extent France and Germany) have been other important destinations, mainly for children from upper and middle classes; countries of the former communist block have been the choices of children from left-wing families.

Today, there are a total of 6 universities in the south of Cyprus. The University of Cyprus was established in July 1989 and admitted its first students in September 1992. Since then, two other public universities have been established; the Technological University of Cyprus/TEPAK (which commenced classes in 2007) and the Open University of Cyprus (established in 2001 being the only university dedicated entirely to open/distance learning). In October 2007, three private institutions, which had operated as private colleges for more than a few decades, received university status after an arduous process of accreditation, giving rise to the University of Nicosia, Frederick University and the European University Cyprus.[71]

Currently, there are another 6 universities operating in the north of Cyprus. Interestingly, the north moved faster in this domain: while these institutions came to exist at a relatively later stage, they immediately began functioning as universities and had the full-support of their "state".

The Eastern Mediterranean University was established in 1979, and, since 1986, functions as a state-trust-run institution, receiving funding from the Turkish-Cypriot administration and additional direct aid from Turkey. The European University of Lefke (established in 1990) has a similar status; while the recently established Middle East Technical University (2005) is a branch campus of a leading university in Turkey. The other three universities, which sprung up between the mid-1980s and the early 2000s, operate as private institutions.[72]

Although the three public universities in the south operate in Greek, the medium of instruction for most private universities in both communities is primarily English. This allows them to attract large numbers of international students from over 80 countries around the world. In the Greek-Cypriot community, there are over 5,000 international students, mainly from Asia (such as India and China). Many more international students are enrolled in universities in the north, including over 26,000 students from Turkey alone (constituting between 70 to 75% of the total student enrolment); a further 2,600 international students hail from countries other than Turkey. These international students contribute to the multicultural fabric of Cypriot society.

In total, universities in the Turkish-Cypriot community cater to approximately 39,000 students, rendering education one of the major economic drivers of the Turkish-Cypriot economy.[73] Turkish-Cypriots invested heavily in tertiary education as a way to support their struggling economy, since, after 1974, tourism and other industries in the north suffered as a consequence of the international community's non-recognition of the authority in the north. Universities have not gone unaffected by this since they experience a lack of recognition across most academic bodies and countries (they are not listed in reference publications such as the International Handbook of Universities, or the World List of Universities, published as part of a joint endeavour by UNESCO and the International Association of

Universities (IAU)). Universities in the north are excluded from the Bologna Process, a major higher education reform in Europe which attempts to integrate the practices of higher educational institutions, thereby making it easier for student and faculty to transfer between universities; the ultimate aim of the Bologna Process will be the creation of a unified European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010.

It is often pointed out that as a result of this exclusion Turkish-Cypriot students suffer from restricted mobility and diploma recognition, while faculty experience limited access to research funding. Addressing the question of human rights in Cyprus, the UN Report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights states:

*Turkish-Cypriot students continue to be confronted with lack of access to the Erasmus, Socrates and Bologna processes or other European scholarship programmes. The issue has been linked to the non-recognition of Turkish-Cypriot universities. The right to education is a fundamental human right, and the current situation prevents the free movement of students and staff and constrains academic freedom, the exchange of ideas and international competition.*

**[A/HRC/4/59, Article 18, 9 March 2007]**

The difficulties faced by universities operating in the north of Cyprus may explain why 38% of the Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed felt that graduates of public or private universities in Cyprus did not have the same opportunities of finding employment in the EU as Cypriots who graduated from universities in other EU countries; in comparison, only 19% of Greek-Cypriots felt the same.

## Comparing Higher Education in Cyprus and Abroad

One of the important characteristics of tertiary education witnessed in Cyprus is the very large number of Cypriots studying abroad and the relatively recent development of local tertiary education institutions. As a result, Cypriots tend to view studying outside of

Cyprus with high esteem. Actually, education abroad is still a mechanism whereby dominant classes reproduce themselves: despite local universities, 'distinction' is still cultivated through one's ability to study aboard. To what extent is this true today?

During the in-depth interviews, young Cypriot respondents compared the quality of education received in Cyprus to that of other European countries. A portion of respondents believed that graduates that acquire degrees from foreign universities are perceived (*by employers*) to possess a better qualification than individuals who complete their tertiary education in Cyprus.

*I believe that someone who, for example, will return with a degree from England will be regarded as much better than someone with a degree from Cyprus.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

Some associated studying abroad with the opportunity of gaining specific skills, such as learning another language – and primarily English, the international *lingua franca*, important for a successful career in post-colonial Cyprus.

*I believe that we have the prejudice in Cyprus that* [graduates of British or American universities] *are better; perhaps finding work faster* [than others]. *I believe that they are right, because you learn how to speak another language well* [English].
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18, student, single, rural Limassol]**

Other respondents equated studying abroad with working abroad; young Cypriots studying overseas pursue employment abroad in order to gain relevant experience in their field and a superior salary. Turkish-Cypriot respondents, in particular, believed that employment prospects outside of Cyprus were more suitable and afforded young graduates the opportunity to advance in their careers.

*I don't know what European universities are like and how the education is but as we hear from our friends who are studying abroad, you can easily find a job which you deserve. In my opinion, the*

*situation is the same in Turkey; if you study a lot you can reach the position that you want. But on the other hand, in our country everything is illegal so it is impossible to reach your goal.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24, employed in computer store, urban Nicosia]**

*If you look at it there are a lot of Cypriots living in England and France which means that Europe is much better.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 17, student, works in computer store, rural Nicosia]**

Still, another group of respondents thought that the level of tertiary education available in Cyprus was tantamount to that of other European countries and that local education was better geared to the job opportunities available in their community.

*From the beginning, I did not want to go abroad because basically everyone underestimates Cyprus and says "I will go to the UK", that you can earn a better degree, but I believe that Cypriot degrees are as good or of equal standing to international ones.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 19, student, single, urban Limassol]**

*I think that* [as far as tertiary education is concerned] *our country is in a better position than other countries.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student (psychology), rural Trikomo]**

## Higher Education: A Tool for Professional or Personal Development?

Since the early days of modern mass education (under British Colonialism), education was seen as a tool of developing a young person's cultural identity and his/her sense of (national) self. During the British period, the attempts of the rulers to push for a more utilitarian approach to education was viewed with suspicion, especially by Greek-Cypriots who saw in this an effort to de-Hellenize them. Instead the emphasis on a classical education, stressing personal development received collective agreement – the corollary being a de-emphasis on the need of education to serve practical purposes. This is especially evident in the very low esteem that technical or vocational education enjoys among Greek-Cypriots. From the side of the Turkish-Cypriots, the fear of de-Turkification was not so strong, and a more 'balanced' view on the two goals of education has prevailed. The above is the context through which the next issue needs to be comprehended.

In an attempt to quantify the importance attached to education, respondents were presented with two statements (on whether education is important in itself, or as a means for findings a job) and asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement.

**How strongly do you agree with the following statements:**
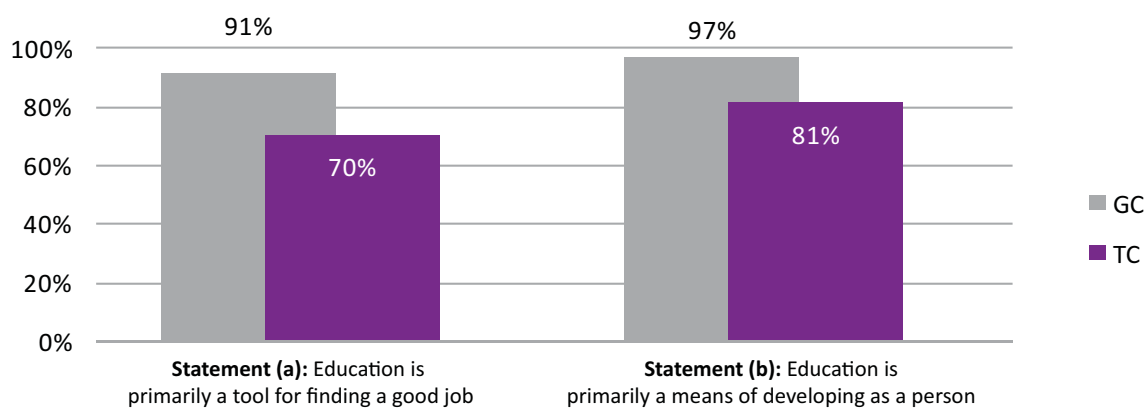


**Table 3.2: Education: A Tool for Professional and Personal Growth**

Interestingly, youth from both communities were in agreement that education contributed, above all, to the personal development of an individual (an overwhelming 97% of Greek-Cypriots and 81% of Turkish-Cypriots); even higher was agreement (91% of Greek-Cypriots and 70% of Turkish-Cypriots agreed or strongly agreed) that education is mainly a tool for securing a good job. When asked to rank the two statements in order of importance, the attitudes of Greek-Cypriot youth contrasted with those of young Turkish-Cypriots.

**Between Statements (a) and (b) below, which do you consider as the *most* important?**

| | Statement (a): Education is primarily a tool for finding a good job | Statement (b): Education is primarily a means of developing as a person |
|---|---|---|
| TC | 59% | 41% |
| GC | 35% | 65% |
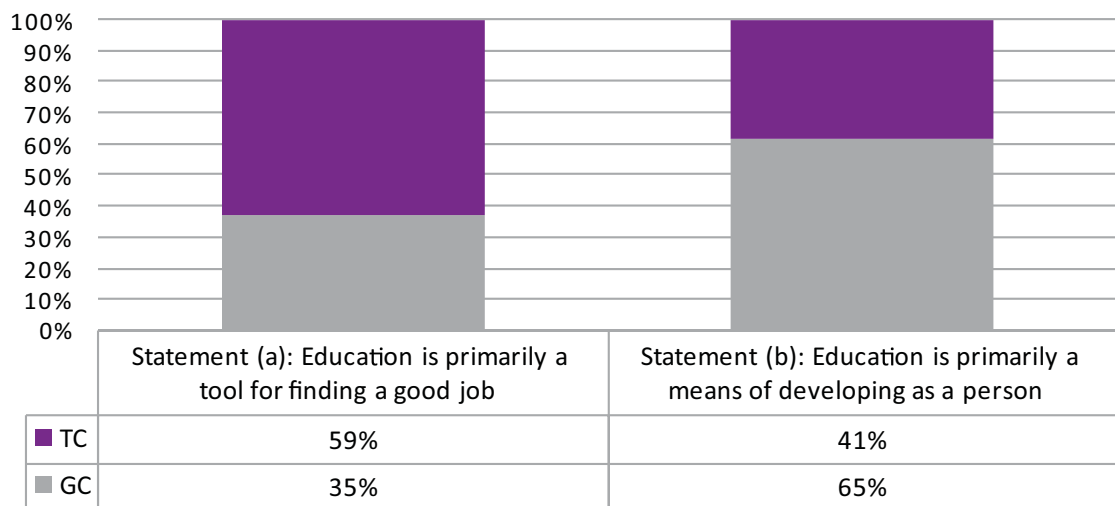
**Table 3.3: Education: A Tool for Professional or Personal Growth?**

While 65% of Greek-Cypriots felt that education was more importantly a means to the development of one's self, a fewer 41% of Turkish-Cypriots concurred. Moreover, whereas 35% of Greek-Cypriots felt that education contributed more vitally to providing better employment prospects, a larger 59% of Turkish-Cypriots felt this way. One of the factors explaining these differences is the varying historical emphasis as to the preferred type of education (classical versus practical), indicated above. Another factor may relate to the fact that economic development in the north is still slow and, as a result, respective standards of living continue to suffer. Given this, young Turkish-Cypriots place more emphasis on securing the basics – the material aspects of life – than Greek-Cypriots. In the south, standards of living have risen considerably in recent years, leading to a gradual shift from material to post-material goals. As Inglerhart's work has demonstrated, this is a trend characterising countries with advanced economies.[74] Turkish-Cypriots view education as a necessary stepping stone that can assist in the attainment of material goals – an attitude more characteristic of countries with developing economies.

According to responses to the $YAS_1$, the importance of education is not lost on young Cypriots from either community. Approximately 95% of Greek-Cypriots and 81% of Turkish-Cypriots surveyed "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that education is very important nowadays. Young Cypriots from both communities weighed the pros and cons of education, addressing tertiary education in particular. Almost all agreed that education plays an important role in the life of an individual; most stressed its importance in getting a good job and reaching professional goals, while a smaller number recognised its importance for personal growth.

*It is very important to me because I want to pursue a profession. I am not studying just for the sake of studying.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 19, university student, urban Morfou]**

*I don't think that the education I receive has*

*led to my personal development, but I need an education in order to have a career and to help my children in the future.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20,
university student (civil engineering),
rural Famagusta]**

*To me, it is very important because, thanks to the education that I have, I was able to find a very good job, with good working hours, a very good salary…which, ok, you can have when you have a good job, and which allows you to have a better life.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23,
university graduate, nurse,
cohabiting with her boyfriend, rural Limassol]**

*It is very important in terms of preparing a person for real life and allowing them to stand on their own feet financially.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 22,
civil servant, urban Nicosia]**

*Very important, it is a necessary tool for progressing in your life […] it is important for career prospects but education also completes you as a person […] You broaden your horizons, you aren't narrow-minded, you get to know new ways of thinking, new things and, somewhere along the way, you become more open-minded.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24,
university graduate, chemist,
single, rural Limassol]**

Even respondents, who did not feel that education furthered their development as persons, recognised that it was a stepping stone, a "necessary tool", for acquiring a good job and attaining financial success and security. A few respondents reversed the order, pointing to the primary importance of self-development; for these the lessons learnt through life experiences – in the "school of life" – were equally, if not more, significant than those learnt at school or university.

*It depends, for example, university education is important, but you can also be educated through life's experiences, therefore education in general is very important in order for a person to be whole or complete and, as a 'proper' person…*[you] *must have an all-encompassing education, either through life or through college and, if its through a combination of both, then*

*so much the better […] I study more for myself, for knowledge, and later on, in the future, I don't know if I will engage with my field of study…*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23,
university student, single, urban Nicosia]**

*I think the education which we get at school is not important because it is a general education; it is not a real education. In my opinion real education takes place outside school.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 18,
high school graduate, unemployed,
urban Famagusta]**

Still fewer respondents did not feel that a university education was essential in life; this stance was most notable among Turkish-Cypriot youth, who felt that the only benefits resulting from tertiary education was delayed, or reduced, military service and securing government employment.

*I think that education does not have any benefit on our work life…I have experienced it. The only benefit is that it postpones our military service. In my opinion, 70% of university students enroll because they want to postpone their military service. Also, if they complete a university degree, they know that they can decrease their service time, as sergeants, to 12 months. Because of this, the quality of our universities is very low.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24,
employed in computer store, urban Nicosia]**

*I think that, in general, there are no benefits. The only benefit it that if you are educated you have the right to complete only 12 months of military duty. Nobody should deceive himself that education is necessary in all cases. Education is mainly for the civil servant positions where university degrees are required; the private sector does not care about university degrees.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 21,
university student (communications),
urban Morfou]**

Many young Cypriots expressed their frustrations over the lack of opportunities to be employed in the area of their choice; and at the fact that many use connections to secure jobs. These feelings were often generalized as non-appreciation by older individuals of one's education.

*As an individual* [I believe that the] *lyceum is enough* […] *because the young remain unemployed now* […] *Look, I wanted to pursue my preferred field of study, and I did study what I wanted to, but in the end I will never use it for work.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate (pre-primary education), employed at cooperative bank, engaged, urban Paphos]**

*I live in Cyprus and here we have no chance to develop ourselves so it is not important to me in terms of my development. Some people who study, and graduate with degrees, end up as policemen, while others who have not got degrees use connections (politicians) to help them find jobs.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student (psychology), rural Trikomo]**

*Personally I believe in the value of education but, in practice, education is not valued in the north.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student (counselling), rural Nicosia]**

## Selecting Educational Pathways

As indicated by the survey responses, Business Administration is a popular field of study among young Cypriots; 22% of Greek-Cypriots and 14% of Turkish-Cypriots had or were pursuing business-related degrees – such as Accounting and Finance. Additionally, Social Sciences and Communication programmes attracted 30% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents, while 12% of Greek-Cypriots were majoring, or had majored, in Science Studies, such as Medicine, Biology and Mathematics.

| What is/was your chosen field of study at college/university? | Greek-Cypriots % | Turkish-Cypriots % |
|---|---|---|
| Agriculture and related subjects (e.g. veterinary, food sciences) | 1 | n/a |
| Architecture | 2 | 6 |
| Business Administration (e.g. accounting, management) | 22 | 14 |
| Computer Science | 7 | 8 |
| Creative and Visual Arts (e.g. art, design, music) | 7 | 4 |
| Education | 9 | 10 |
| Engineering (e.g. civil and electronic engineering) | 3 | 7 |
| Humanities (e.g. history, languages) | 8 | 10 |
| Law and Legal Studies | n/a | 7 |
| Sciences (e.g. medicine, biology, mathematics) | 12 | 3 |
| Secretarial Studies | 5 | n/a |
| Social Sciences and Communication (e.g. sociology, psychology) | 8 | 30 |
| Vocational | 6 | n/a |
| Other | 11 | n/a |

**Table 3.4: Field of Study at College/University**

In the south, the economy evolved from agriculture (primary education) to a service economy (tertiary education), with little development of industry (secondary education). The little, mostly light industry (e.g. clothes and shoe manufacturing), which took some root after 1974, proved too weak to survive growing international competition.

Nowadays, Cyprus relies mostly on the service economy, led by tourism and financial services (e.g. banking and accounting); hence the strong preference for Business Administration studies among Greek-Cypriots.

In the north, tourism and other services are not as developed, and with the public sector serving as the best and largest employer, Social Sciences and Communication studies have proven popular among Turkish-Cypriots.

Such social constraints, or parameters, on peoples' choices are highly invisible to youth – who mostly stress the voluntarism of their choices. When asked to specify the main reason(s) which led to the selection of their chosen field of study, both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots indicated that, primarily, it was because they "liked it" or were inclined towards it. Secondly, they felt that their choice of academic path would provide them with good prospects for employment. Pursuing an academic path because they are drawn to it is a post-materialist choice; however, Cyprus is rather in a transitory stage: modern attitudes and values co-exist along with more traditional ones.

**Why did you choose that field of study for your higher education?**
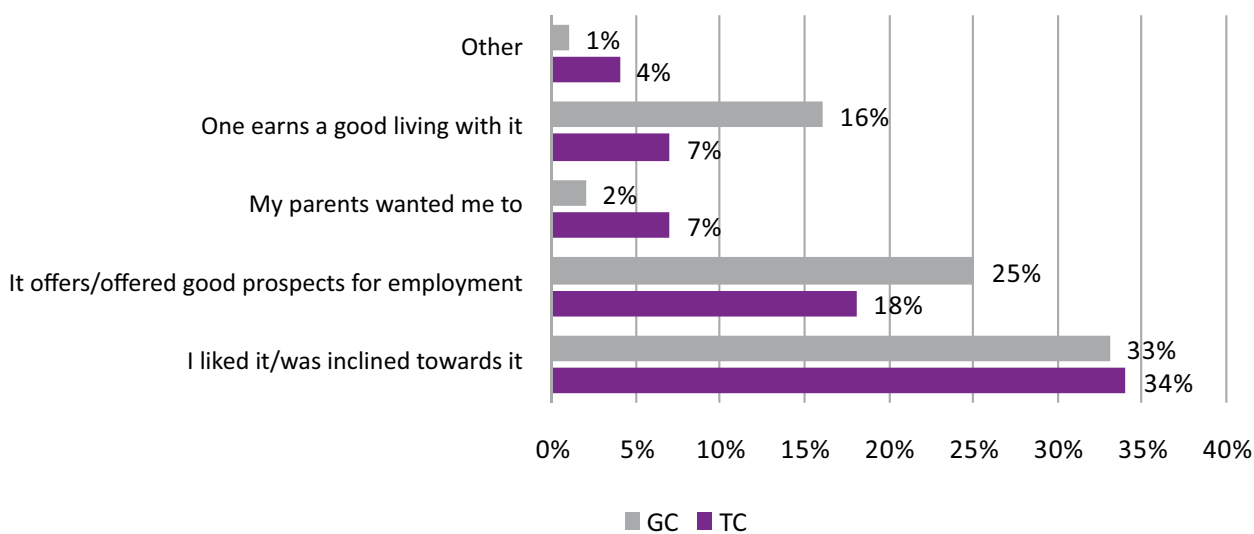


**Table 3.5: Choice of Field of Study**

For the most part, young Cypriots made the decision about what to study on their own; however, to a lesser extent, some arrived at the decision at their parents' prompting (a reflection of traditional Cypriot practices); the latter being slightly more popular among Turkish-Cypriots than Greek-Cypriots. Interestingly, more than three times as many Turkish-Cypriot respondents (compared to Greek-Cypriot respondents) noted that the decision was taken exclusively by their parents. The practice of seeking parental advice is not specific to Cyprus: for instance, a recent research study among youth in Finland highlighted that "the family continues to have a significant role in young people's life"; young people recognise that good family relationships are a "prerequisite for well-being".[75] The same study notes that the family plays a more important role in the educational choices of young people today. Again, this indicates that it is not so much individuals who freely choose – but that the parameters of their choice are set by social constraints, family preferences and so on.

Secondary school counsellors also played a role in assisting young Cypriots, advising them on their future academic course.[76] Expectedly, given the above, these counsellors appeared to be four times more popular among Greek-Cypriots than Turkish-Cypriots.

## The Content of Education: Learning about 'Us' and the 'Others'

It is often noted that education has played a divisive role in Cypriot society, and has served to alienate each community from the other, rather than bringing them closer together. Historically, the roots of separation can be traced back to Ottoman times, when education was the responsibility of each millet, or religious community, and not a common system for all. The British institutionalised this separation by setting up two Boards of Education (one for each community) and allowing the development of different, and actually antagonistic, curricula. Teachers and textbooks were imported from Greece and Turkey and young Cypriots continued their university education in the respective 'motherlands'. This separation was further consolidated in 1960 when the new Constitution placed education under the Communal Chambers rather than the common state. As a result, each educational system cultivates an attachment towards the 'motherlands' and the respective nation of origin.

Along with separate educational systems, the taught history of the island also grew separately, resulting in the absence of a common, shared Cypriot history. Instead, within the school curriculum of each community, the history of Cyprus was presented as an extension of the history of either Greece or Turkey. This became all the more pronounced after the violence of 1963 and 1974 and the resulting division of the island. As is the case in other societies divided by ethno-national conflict, history developed into a tool used to fuel the 'suffering of the nation and to legitimate its political goals'.[77]

Educational textbooks in each community depicted the roots of division and conflict between the two communities from two varying perspectives. Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots were educated to see members of each community as part of the 'enemy' nations, that is, Turkey and Greece respectively, instead of as compatriots. Greek-Cypriot history textbooks, for example, often fail to make a clear delineation between Turks and Turkish-Cypriots; in fact, Turkish-Cypriots are only mentioned briefly and superficially at the end of such textbooks. Turks, in general, are characterised as a 'bloodthirsty, hostile and barbaric people'.[78] But whereas Greek-Cypriot textbooks say little about the 1963 inter-communal conflict, and refer to the events of 1974 as the tragic 'barbaric Turkish invasion', Turkish-Cypriot textbooks, written after the events, placed a heavy emphasis on Greek-Cypriot atrocities in 1963 and referred to 1974 as the 'Happy Peace Operation' when the 'heroic Turkish army' arrived on the island to protect the Turkish-Cypriots. The common suffering of all communities is hardly mentioned by any of the textbooks.

In 2003, a newly elected left-wing Turkish-Cypriot leadership began implementing an educational reform by changing the history books. The new textbooks, published in 2004 and revised in 2005, purposely presented Turkish-Cypriots as a distinct people, auto-nomous from Turkey and open to reconciliation with the Greek-Cypriots; the covers show an image of Cyprus with no dividing line.[79] As yet, similar changes have not been implemented in the Greek-Cypriot community; a 2004 Report of the Committee for Educational Reform described the Greek-Cypriot educational system as largely 'Helleno-ethnocentric' and lacking a multicultural perspective. Sub-sequently, the Greek-Cypriot authorities put together a committee for advising as to how history textbooks could be revised. The new government of the Republic (2008) seems intent to implement changes in this domain, noting that there is "very little awareness of the island's recent history among the young generations".[80]

Although the dominant nationalist historical narrative considered the nation as a homo-genous entity of ancient origins, the new Turkish-Cypriot approach proposes that national identity emerged in Cyprus during the 19th and 20th centuries following a

social constructivist paradigm. According to Papadakis, the latter historical model, yields interesting implications on individuals' perceptions of memory, pain, blame and justice, thereby allowing them the opportunity to make decisions concerning political loyalty in the present.[81] On the other hand, the dominant model of education utilised in both communities has obsessively pursued "stories of national origins and historic turning points [that] can create a sense of group membership and allegiance [...] to justify contemporary social arrangements or political actions".[82] Other aspects of this model include the use of the narrative form whereby the nation, presented as a single actor, is the story's protagonist, which readers are called to identify with, in all its glory or suffering. History is presented as a grand narrative of national achievements and struggles, with the homogenous national community emerging as the only possible choice of political allegiance – silencing heterogeneity, differences in interests and ideologies between different classes, age groups, genders, etc.

In an attempt to examine the level of knowledge that Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth had about the island's political history, especially as regards the conflict on the island, respondents were presented with a series of statements about major historical events followed by a list of multiple choice answers from which they were asked to select from. Overall, Greek-Cypriot youth displayed better historical knowledge than their Turkish-Cypriot counterparts. For example, when asked to indicate what percentage of the island's territory is controlled by the Greek-Cypriot community, 62% of Greek-Cypriot youth, compared to 37% of Turkish-Cypriots, chose the correct option (option b: approximately 60%). Greek-Cypriot respondents tended to falter when it came to questions that referred to the Turkish-Cypriot community, such as the percentage of Turkish-Cypriots that accepted the Annan Plan or the percentage of the island's territory under the control of the Turkish-Cypriot community between 1963 and 1974. The response rates of Turkish-Cypriot youth presented a different picture. For the most part, Turkish-Cypriot youth were unable to respond correctly to the questions posed, with approximately one third of respondents opting for the "I do not know" option. This response pattern is even witnessed in questions referring directly to the Turkish-Cypriot community!

| Please select the answer you consider closest to the truth/facts: | Greek-Cypriots % | Turkish-Cypriots % |
|---|---|---|
| **1. The Anan Plan was accepted by** | | |
| a. 75% of the GCs | 5.6 | 7.5 |
| b. 65% of the GCs | 5.0 | 13.1 |
| c. 25% of the GCs (*) | 66.2 | 45.0 |
| d. I do not know | 23.2 | 34.4 |
| **2. The Annan Plan was accepted by** | | |
| a. the 75% of the TCs | 27.8 | 34.3 |
| b. the 65% of the TCs (*) | 31.8 | 23.3 |
| c. the 25% of the TCs | 5.9 | 10.7 |
| d. I do not know | 34.5 | 31.7 |
| **3. Cyprus gained its independence in** | | |
| a. 1955 | 5.9 | 5.7 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| b. 1960 (*) | 80.3 | 38.7 |
| c. 1965 | 4.4 | 20.0 |
| d. I do not know | 9.4 | 35.6 |
| **4. The two communities were divided/separated in** | | |
| a. 1960 | 1.8 | 4.9 |
| b. 1963 | 26.6 | 13.9 |
| c. 1974 (*) | 60.4 | 51.4 |
| d. I do not know | 11.2 | 29.7 |
| **5. Between 1963-1974 the Turkish-Cypriot community lived/controlled ........ of the island's territory** | | |
| a. 4% (*) | 14.0 | 11.0 |
| b.14% | 30.4 | 24.2 |
| c. 24% | 13.9 | 20.1 |
| d. I do not know | 41.7 | 44.8 |
| **6. After 1974 the Greek-Cypriot community controls/lives ........ of/to the island's territory** | | |
| a. 80% | 9.9 | 15.5 |
| b. 60% (*) | 62.4 | 36.5 |
| c. 40% | 9.9 | 9.2 |
| d. I do not know | 17.8 | 38.7 |
| **7. The liberation struggle of 1955 aimed to remove** | | |
| a. Greeks/Turks | 3.1 | 31.6 |
| b. British (*) | 91.7 | 33.3 |
| c. I do not know | 5.1 | 35.1 |
| **8. The 1974 coup against Makarios III was staged by the Turks** | | |
| a. True | 16.6 | 39.5 |
| b. False  (*) | 74.0 | 39.7 |
| c. I do not know | 9.4 | 20.8 |

(*) Correct answer

**Table 3.6: Cypriot Youth's Knowledge of Historical Events**

The Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot response rates to the historical statements clearly illustrate the existing disparity between the historical truths taught to each community (each is mostly aware of its own history, with little or no knowledge of events or facts relevant to the other). What is equally interesting, however, is the issue of why Turkish-Cypriots do not seem to have such a good knowledge of recent political history as Greek-Cypriots appear to. The results may hint at the great significance which Greek-Cypriots place in historical facts and the knowledge of history (believing themselves to be descendents of ancient Greeks, thus having a glorious history). Respectively, rather than interpreting the Turkish-Cypriot response rates to mean that Turkish-Cypriots lack a general aptitude/interest in Cypriot history, one could propose that they simply do not seem to place as much stock in history as Greek-Cypriots do. This line of interpretation

may better explain other phenomena of different collective choices or actions of the two communities. For instance, this might shed more light into the reasons why the Turkish-Cypriot community, in 2004, implemented (with little opposition) the educational reform that involved the revision and re-writing of history textbooks used in schools: a main reason may relate to the lesser importance given to history, as compared to the Greek-Cypriots. In the latter's case, the educational system has yet to introduce any changes and, while currently under examination, the issue remains strongly contested. In fact, a fierce public debate erupted in reaction to the new government's push to revise the history textbooks used in the Greek-Cypriot community, with various political parties and the Church making their opinions loudly heard.

Young Cypriots shared their thoughts on the existing school curricula and the history taught in secondary schools. Greek-Cypriots were mostly critical of the school curriculum's emphasis on past eras, rather than on more contemporary history which may shed light on today's problems; criticism was also levelled at the way textbooks portray the other ethnic community:

*We are in the second grade of lyceum* [upper secondary] *and our history has still not reached the 20th Century or the 19th Century. We are always* [studying history] *up to the year 1500. We've never done modern history. The relationship between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, which is a current event, is not allowed to be discussed in class.* [Teachers] *say it is not part of the curriculum; they do not promote it. This is basically why we do not know a lot about the problem.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 16, student, single, urban Limassol]**

*I finished secondary school a while ago. But I believe that if revising textbooks is for the purpose of writing history more correctly, in a more modern way, so that nationalism, or racism, or the problem we have today with the Turkish-Cypriots is not perpetuated… Perhaps a new edition of history will bring Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots closer… Perhaps a new section can be added so that Greek-Cypriots know that Turkish-Cypriots exist and that there are not only*

*bad Turkish-Cypriot people but good ones too, just as there are* [good and bad] *Greek-Cypriots.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, works as a secretary, engaged, rural Nicosia]**

Turkish-Cypriot youth noted that the previous history textbooks did not portray members of the Greek-Cypriot community in the most favourable light. Instead, the taught history reinforced negative stereotypes and failed to bring the two communities closer together. The revisions to the history textbooks used in the Turkish-Cypriot community are seen as a positive step in the right direction:

*During our lyceum school years, we were taught about how the Greek-Cypriots killed us, how they had bad intentions towards us and how they continue to exclude Turkish-Cypriots from the government: the history text books began with enosis and ended with enosis. They wanted us to believe that Greek-Cypriots are evil… Things are better now that they have changed our history textbooks… I haven't seen the new ones, but from what other people say, it seems that some of the bad things about Greek-Cypriots have been removed.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 21, unemployed, rural Nicosia]**

*I find all of this amusing… I mean, imagine! On the one hand, we visit the south everyday – shopping and talking to Greek-Cypriot friends… On the other hand, they still teach us that the Greek-Cypriots killed us and, as a result, some people still believe that the real intention of Greek-Cypriots is to kill us! I don't like history lessons – that's why I got the lowest score in that lesson!*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 17, high school student, urban Mourfou]**

Some Turkish-Cypriot respondents commented on the fact that the Greek-Cypriot community has yet to follow suit; drawing parallels to the 2004 referendum period:

*Our Ministry of Education decided to change the history textbooks because the old ones created hostility and hatred towards the Greek-Cypriot community. I think that this was a good idea… But the Greek-Cypriots refuse to do the same… This is always the case: we said*

*'yes' to the Annan Plan in order to bring peace to Cyprus, but they said 'no'… We must work together in unison.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 18, university student, urban Kyrenia]**

One participant called for a more honest and inclusive depiction of history, which presented the 'good' and 'bad' side of both camps:

*History, today, does not have to be changed. We simply have to choose what we put in it, and instead of choosing to put in only what suits us*

*and makes us look good and the others bad, we must put in our good and their good, our bad and their bad.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 19, student, single, rural Nicosia]**

The same respondent admitted that this was easier said than done, concluding that:

*Nobody is going to do this. A nation will not come out and say "you know, I did these bad things and this and that". It is a very difficult thing.*

---

| **BOX 3.1** | **Association for Historical Dialogue and Research of Cyprus** |
|---|---|

The *Association for Historical Dialogue and Research of Cyprus* (AHDR) recognises the values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, the covenants of Human Rights issued by the United Nations, and the UNESCO recommendations relevant to history teaching.  The Association's mission is to defend and promote productive dialogue and research in issues regarding history and history teaching to strengthen peace, stability, democracy and critical thinking.

It was on April 21, 2003, that a number of educators and researchers, with an active interest in the teaching and learning of history, decided to establish a non-governmental, non-profitable, multi-communal organisation called The Association for Historical Dialogue and Research.  The birth of the Association almost coincided with a historic change that took place on the island when on April 23, 2003 travel restrictions between the two sides of the Green Line in Cyprus were eased and several thousand Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots had their first chance since 1974 to cross the divide.  For an Association which recognises the values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the UNESCO recommendations relevant to history teaching, and which seeks to defend and promote productive dialogue and research on issues regarding history and history teaching, the time was right.  It was evident that, more than ever before, the ADHR had to actively begin to realise its shared aims, and in doing so the AHDR established cooperation with Teacher Trade Unions across the divide and organisation at a local, European and international level.

In line with the UNESCO and the Council of Europe recommendations, the ADHR, since its foundation, has enlisted members from various ethnic, linguistic, and professional backgrounds working at various educational levels in Cyprus, making the first steps of a greater effort: an effort to maintain a continuous, productive dialogue about enhanced pedagogic practices that would encourage the values of the discipline of history.  Its Board, comprising Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot educators and historians, is a brilliant example of how productive collaboration; creative ideas and respect can blossom across the divide. ADHR has held a number of events, beginning with a two-day educational seminar in February 2004 entitled 'What does it mean to think historically? Approaches to teaching and learning history'. The event received very positive written and oral feedback from the 250 academics, researchers and educators who came together from all over Cyprus, across disciplinary and linguistic boundaries to discuss ways in which historical thinking could be advanced. Many other educational events followed after this first opening to the public. ADHR has set as one of its priorities the teacher training on the epistemology and methodology of history teaching and learning.

Many inter-communal educational discussions, seminars, workshops and projects have been organised in collaboration with civil society and teacher trade unions across the divide in Cyprus and organisations abroad, such as EUROCLIO, CDRSEE, University of Oxford and the Council of Europe. The greatest, current project-vision of the ADHR is the Home for Cooperation: the establishment of a Research and Educational Centre (Centre for young people and educators, multi-functional conference room, centre for exhibitions and archives, library and work place for non-governmental organisations) in the UN Buffer Zone which will revitalise the 'dead zone' and create prospects for peace and stability in Cyprus.

**For more information: http://www.hisdialresearch.org/activities.htm**

---

The history taught to young Cypriots plays a vital role in shaping their attitudes and perceptions, and may perpetuate feelings of hostility and fear towards members of the other community. Young Cypriots who took part in the survey recognise that through revising the history books, the educational systems of both communities can begin to educate the island's youth on the possibility of living in an open, European country where people are tolerant of different ethnicities and nationalities, interacting with one another on a basis of openness and trust. The challenge is accomplishing this without discarding the past and the unique identity of each community.

## Learning Each Other's Language and Sharing School Experiences

Before the division of 1974 the number of Turkish-Cypriots who spoke Greek was significantly greater than that of Greek-Cypriots who spoke Turkish; at the time, Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots made up 80% and 18% of the population, respectively. Young Cypriots born after 1974 had little to no opportunity, or need, to learn the native language of the other community.

According to the $YAS_1$, only 5% of Greek-Cypriot and 6% of Turkish-Cypriot youth questioned have spent time learning the language of the other community.

Furthermore, 19% of Greek-Cypriot youth admitted that they had considered or could consider learning the Turkish language. Turkish-Cypriot youth seem to be more inclined to learn Greek since a larger percentage of 31% (as compared to the Greek-Cypriot percentage) indicated that they have considered, or would consider taking a Greek language course.



**Turkish-Cypriots:**
Have you ever taken Greek language lessons? — 94%

**Greek-Cypriots:**
Have you ever taken Turkish language lessons? — 95%

Yes / No

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
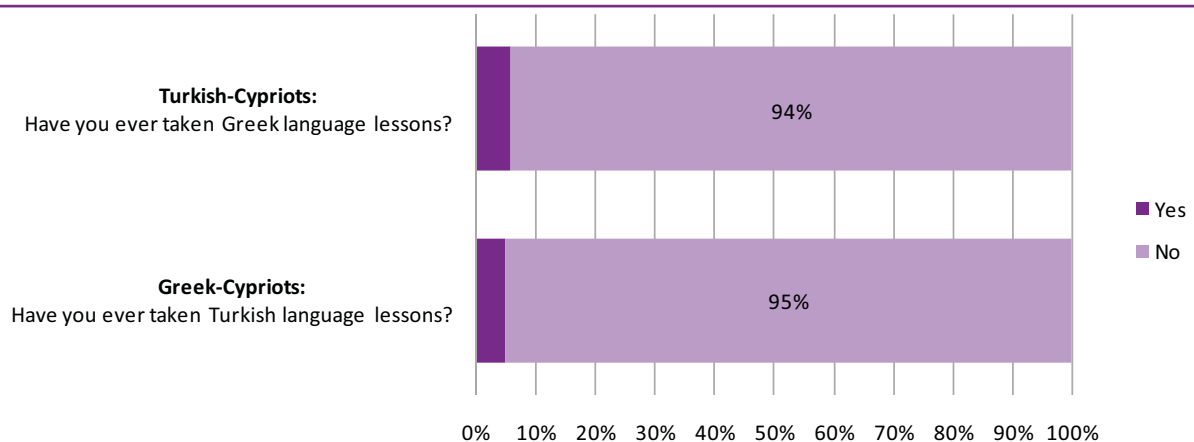
**Table 3.7: Turkish/Greek Language Lessons (a)**



**Turkish-Cypriots:**
Did/would you consider taking Greek language lessons? — 31% / 69%

**Greek-Cypriots:**
Did/would you consider taking Turkish language lessons? — 19% / 81%

Yes / No

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
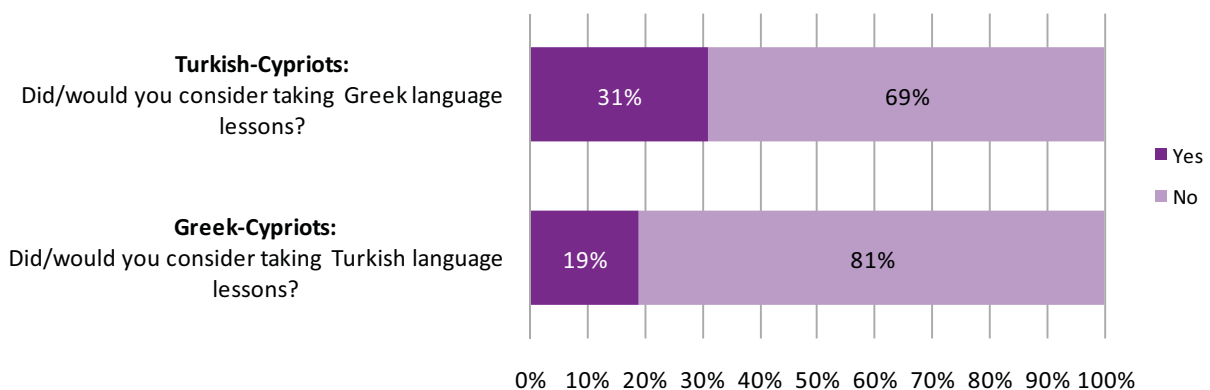
**Table 3.8: Turkish/Greek Language Lessons (b)**

A number wish to learn the language of the other, since the two communities are seen as bound together, and as inevitably having to share a common future. Some wish to learn the language in an effort to understand the other better; or show intention to communicate. Others, on the other hand, are motivated by the opposite rationale: wanting to know the enemy better. Among the Turkish-Cypriots an additional motivation may be their readiness to find better employment in the south. Since the partial opening of the Green Line in April 2003, more than 4,000 Turkish-Cypriots have found jobs in the Greek-Cypriot community, commuting daily from the north: by learning Greek, Turkish-Cypriots make themselves more marketable to employers in the south.[83]

The opening of the crossing points along the Green Line has attracted a number of Turkish-Cypriot students who have enrolled in schools and universities in the south. Whereas in 2003, only a few dozen Turkish-Cypriots began studying in the south, by 2006 the number had grown to 335, attending pre-primary, primary and secondary level schools, and another 73 were enrolled in tertiary level educational institutions in the south.[84] The increase seems to be in large part a result of a new policy of the Republic of Cyprus, which introduced measures to cover the full tuition fees of Turkish-Cypriot students attending private schools in the Greek-Cypriot community.

Still, the majority of all young Cypriots surveyed (93%) had never had a classmate who was a member of the other community. Among those respondents who had interacted with classmates from the other community (9% of Greek-Cypriots and 5% of Turkish-Cypriots), 25% had done so in primary school, 26% in secondary school and 49% at college or university, both locally and abroad. In general, the presence of young Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots in secondary school and universities is seen as a positive measure which can work towards bringing the two communities closer together.

**Greek-Cypriots:** Do you think the presence of young Turkish-Cypriots in secondary schools/universities in Cyprus can:
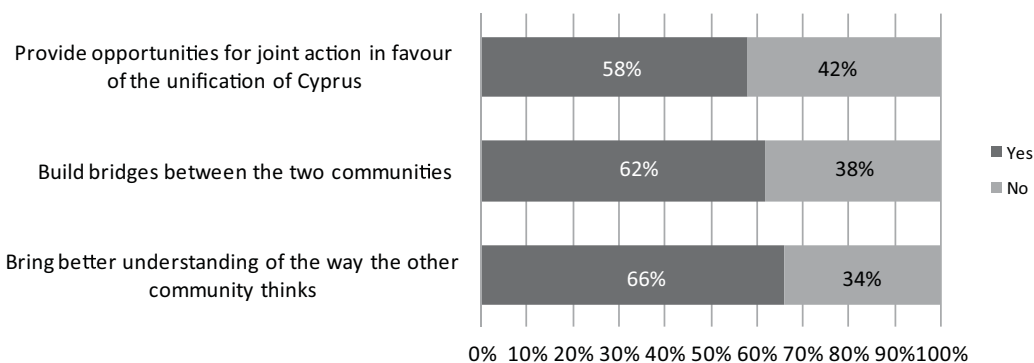


**Turkish-Cypriots:** Do you think the presence of young Greek-Cypriots in secondary schools/universities in Cyprus can:
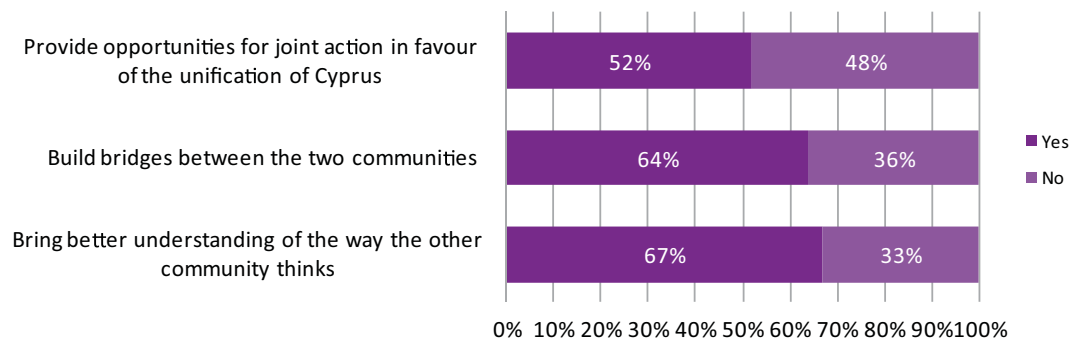


**Table 3.9: The Value of Shared Educational Environments**

Approximately 66% of all young Cypriots surveyed agreed that sharing an educational environment could contribute to a better understanding of the way in which the other community thinks. Moreover, 62% of Greek-Cypriots and 64% of Turkish-Cypriots felt that this could help to build bridges between the two communities. To a lesser extent, 58% of Greek-Cypriots and 52% of Turkish-Cypriots thought that classroom sharing could provide opportunities for joint action in favour of the unification of Cyprus.

## Education and Human Development: Empowering Cypriot Youth to Become 'Better Citizens'

Young Cypriots, as well as their parents, place a great deal of importance on education. Nowadays, the young spend more years pursuing their higher education, consequently delaying their entry into the workforce; this is a common phenomenon the world over, particularly in Western countries. Since many young people postpone employment, or find it difficult to find a job given reduced youth employment opportunities, they continue to remain financially dependent on their parents, either fully or partially. It has been suggested that this increased, or prolonged financial dependency has placed additional financial strain on parents, often resulting in emotional strain and conflict between young individuals and their parents.[85] More importantly, the increased financial dependence of youth on their families tends to lead to the disempowerment of youth, since they find themselves relying on their parents for their allowance and accommodation, among other things.

In the case of Cyprus, many young people residing on the island depend on their parents to financially support all, or a substantial part, of their tertiary education. Parents typically contribute towards tuition fees, while also covering living expenses such as the cost of accommodation, meals, clothing and books. Given such economic assistance, oftentimes, parents assume that they can direct or heavily influence the educational choices of their children. Subsequently, Cypriot youth may find themselves selecting academic careers based on a sense of obligation or gratitude towards their parents instead of pursuing other degrees which they might prefer.

It is interesting that the pursuit of education can be associated with disempowering youth, either directly or indirectly as the case may be. On the contrary, education or learning, should serve as a source of empowerment for young people at each stage of their academic career. After the family, educational institutions play a leading role in shaping the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of young persons. School, college and university experiences all contribute towards educating and preparing young people to handle future challenges which they may face, both personally and professionally.

Besides equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and qualifications that will allow them to better cope in today's competitive, global labour market, education providers are in the privileged position to equip youth with the necessary understanding and tools required to develop into active and responsible members of society. It has been argued that schools provide youth with the best opportunity for "building an informed, balanced sense of democratic worth, political knowledge and democratic values and skills".[86] This function takes on greater importance in the face of the falling youth participation rates in politics, experienced in several Western countries. Young Cypriots surveyed seemingly recognise the importance of education as 97% of Greek-Cypriots and 81% of Turkish-Cypriots stated that education served as a means for personal development.

As things stand, the educational system in Cyprus has often been accused of rote teaching, whereby students learn in a mechanical manner without comprehending or questioning the meaning behind what they are learning. The overdependence of young (primarily Greek) Cypriots on private tuition can be taken as a signal of the weakness in the educational system as regards equipping Cypriot youth with the proper analytical and critical tools that will aid them, not only with their academic work, but with every other facet of their lives.

Another element of education in Cyprus, which begs further examination, is the content of the educational curricula across the island. Currently a contentious issue, the educational curricula has been accused of causing young Cypriots to develop a sense of dependence on the views, myths and stereotypes perpetuated by the older generations over the years. This problem is recognised across the academic curricula but is perhaps more notable when it comes to the teaching of the island's history. Rather than encouraging students to seek out alternative perspectives and interpretations of history in order to construct their own understanding of events, students are offered a monolithic, officially sanctioned view of their island's history (that of their own side). This contributes to the disempowerment of Cypriot youth; instead of seeking their own truth, youth are burdened with the history of the past, which still weighs heavily on the present.

Hart points out that rather than being a "venue for fostering young people's understanding and experience of democratic participation" schools often function as "primary socialising instrument[s] of the state" which guarantee stability and preserve authority.[87] Given this, there is a strong need for educational providers and policy makers to re-evaluate existing curricula so as to ensure that young individuals are given the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills, as well as a sense of awareness and responsibility that will allow them to become engaged citizens.

As outlined earlier in this Chapter, the separate development of the educational systems in the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities has served to play a divisive role among Cypriots. Young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots have a right, and in turn, a responsibility to critically engage with the academic material presented to them in order that they develop their own understanding of their shared history, the world they live in, and the joint future they are called upon to build. Taking this a step further, Cypriot youth must be empowered to become educated citizens, capable of developing their own views, while simultaneously respecting the views of others.

Schools, colleges and universities offer young Cypriots a safe setting in which to begin to gain a stronger sense of their own abilities, achieved through formal and informal curricula. Formal education, in the form of civic courses, and informal activities, such as participation in student politics, can equip youth with a better understanding and appreciation for democratic participation and a respect for other viewpoints. This becomes all the more important in the face of the current peace process, whereby Cypriot youth may be called upon to make informed decisions about the future of their island and that of subsequent generations.

In order for this to occur, students must enter into a two-way partnership with their teachers. Within this partnership, teachers must provide young people with experiences that allow them to feel as though they can make a positive difference. In this way, young people begin to feel as though they can indeed contribute to society. On their side, students are responsible for seeking out and taking advantage of the opportunities for participation offered to them. By developing a sense of responsibility and a critical approach to their education, young Cypriots gain invaluable skills that can be utilised in their professional careers as well.

# CYPRIOT YOUTH AND EMPLOYMENT

## Challenges of Youth Employment

The 21st century labour market is an unforgiving one, especially for young people attempting to make the transition from education to employment. Today's employers have higher expectations of their employees, expecting them to be both educated and skilled workers. Paired with the heightened competitiveness resulting from globalisation, it is not surprising that young people often represent the largest group of unemployed individuals.

Nowadays young people, in general, are spending more time pursuing tertiary education; to a great extent this delays their entry into the workforce. This trend has resulted in a number of effects on the relationship between youth and their families, as well as the labour market. For one, as mentioned earlier, given that young people are entering the work force at a later stage than in the past, they continue to be dependent on their parents' support and, as a result, they experience financial independence at a later age. Given that young people go on to pursue their higher education, they are entering the work force at a later age. However, many young people opt to combine their studies with part-time employment, resulting in an increase in the number of young people, and especially young women, taking up part-time jobs.

Changes in employment trends, such as the increasing focus on services, has given birth to more part-time and/or flexible employment opportunities. Research has shown that young people, below the age of 25, prefer part-time work, given that quite a lot of their time is spent studying. Between attending classes and preparing for assignments or examinations, part-time positions can fill up the remaining time at the disposal of young people. Given these realities, there has been a recent rise in student employment, as young people attempt to combine education and employment.[88] Working while studying offers young people a valuable experience as it allows them to develop generic and/or specialised skills that they can benefit from as they transition from school to work. Interestingly, by studying and working at the same time, young people are blurring the boundaries between education and employment.

The same applies in the case of young women though for different reasons: despite the increasing number of women pursuing higher education, and the progress made in the area of equal work opportunities, women continue to face the burden of juggling dual careers – in the work place and at home – as the bulk of household chores and child rearing activities continue to be undertaken by women. Consequently, more women are attracted to, and are employed in, part-time work.

## The Cyprus Labour Market and Youth Employment Trends

The economy of the Republic of Cyprus has grown rapidly over the past three to four decades. The economic boom experienced in the late 1970s and early 1980s, termed the "economic miracle", has been attributed to several internal and external factors; these included expansionary government policies that provided incentives to industries and hotels, and the restraint shown by trade unions, which accepted cuts in salaries. Greek-Cypriots also benefited from the opportunities provided to them as a result of the rapid development of the Middle East (which followed the increase in oil prices in the early 1970s). The Greek-Cypriot economy was also strengthened by money spent by foreign nationals fleeing to Cyprus after crises in their home countries – such as the war in Lebanon and, subsequently, the collapse of the Soviet system and Yugoslavia.

The primary sector, consisting mainly of agriculture and mining, and the secondary sector, characterised by light manufacturing, began to experience a steady decline from the mid 1980s onwards. This was more than compensated for by an increase in the services sector, particularly tourism. Today, the services sector contributes 70% of the GDP and employs approximately two thirds of the labour force. Given this fast growth, the Republic has not experienced high levels of unemployment (except for the period immediately after the events of 1974) - which has remained very low (4.5% in 2006) and is among the lowest in the EU. The Republic is thus ranked among prosperous countries, with a standard of living that is among the best in the region. On 1 January 2008, the Republic adopted the Euro currency, thereby joining the Eurozone, an indicator of financial power; this is also a factor aiding to the greater robustness of the economy.

In 2007, the total labour force in the south stood at 393,377 and the employment rate for individuals between the ages of 15 and 64 was 71% (80% for males and 62.4% for females).[89] The services sector attracted the greatest amount of employed individuals (73.1%), followed by the industrial sector (22.5%) and the agricultural sector (4.4%). As is typically the case for young people around the world, young Greek-Cypriots experience a lower employment rate within the labour force. Young Greek-Cypriots made up 9.9% of the total labour force and the employment rate for those aged 15 to 24 was 37.4% (39.1% for males and 36% for females). The overall unemployment rate was 3.9% (3.4% for males and 4.6% for females) with individuals between the ages of 15 to 24 experiencing the highest unemployment rate at 10.2% (11% for males and 9.4% for females).[90] Once again, this is a trend experienced in other countries as well. Interestingly, Greek-Cypriot youth seem to experience one of the lowest unemployment rates when compared to other countries in the European Union. However, this may conceal '"hidden unemployment", such as youth working in a family business without there being a real vacancy or need, or others who may not register themselves as unemployed because of the associated social stigma.

The economic situation differs considerably in the north where, since 1963, Turkish-Cypriots have had to increasingly rely on Turkey's assistance. Although the events of 1974 resulted in the acquisition of an abundance of land, factories, hotels and other wealth-generating resources, the Turkish-Cypriot economy failed to take off. This has been attributed, in part, to historical patterns of division of labour, along broadly ethnic lines: Turkish-Cypriots tended to be concentrated in public administrative posts and land ownership, while Greek-Cypriots were typically engaged in trade and commerce, which under a free-enterprise economy, were to become the more dynamic and lucrative economic domain.[91]

The Turkish-Cypriot economy also struggled in the face of the international embargo against it and the lack of international recognition – successfully enforced by the Republic of Cyprus – both of which hindered any prospects for the advancement of its trade and tourism; these have done better in the post-accession period, as a result of pressure exerted by the EU for the improvement of the lot of Turkish-Cypriots and the relations between

the two communities. Higher education has been a particularly successful domain, with students coming mostly from Turkey. Recent years witnessed the proliferation of money laundering, night clubs and casinos, all of which have added their contribution to the Turkish-Cypriot economy.[92]

In 2007, there were a total of 89,787 individuals, aged 15 and over, employed in the north (the labour force totalled 91,815).[93] Among those employed, 67.9% were male and only 32.1% were female. As in the south, the economy in the north is primarily driven by the service sector, in which more than 75% of the labour force is employed. In 2006, the economic sectors that employed the highest number of Turkish-Cypriots include wholesale and retail trade (18.3%), public administration (16.3%), education (10.6%) and construction and public works (10.4%).[94]

The total unemployment rate currently experienced in the north is 9.4% (6.7% for males and 14.7% for females) – more than double the unemployment rate witnessed in the south.[95] Young Turkish-Cypriots are especially vulnerable to unemployment and make up almost a quarter (23.8%) of those unemployed. Once again, the latter figure is more than twice as high as that experienced by the same age group in the Greek-Cypriot community.

Overall, the smaller than average employment rate among young Cypriots is explained in part by the fact that many carry on to pursue their higher education, thereby entering the work-force at a later age; women enter the labour market at around the age of 23 and men at 24 or 25 (given the compulsory military service

for young men). As regards Turkish-Cypriot youth the lower employment rate is further attributed to the weaker economy in the north.

## Motivation for Employment

Approximately 30% of respondents of the $YAS_1$ were employed (27% of Greek-Cypriots and 31% of Turkish-Cypriots). Among those, two thirds were employed full-time (71% Greek-Cypriots; 64% Turkish-Cypriots). Part-time work and summer jobs were undertaken by 27% (28% Greek-Cypriots; 27% Turkish-Cypriots) and 5% (1% Greek-Cypriots; 9% Turkish-Cypriots) of the young Cypriots surveyed, respectively. The vast majority of those employed, either full-time or part time, worked for the private sector (89% total sample; 86% Greek-Cypriots; 91% Turkish-Cypriots). Both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth were predominantly employed in non-manual specialised occupations (such as clerks or accountants) (39% Greek-Cypriots; 49% Turkish-Cypriots) or in manual specialised and semi-specialised occupations (26% Greek-Cypriots; 25% Turkish-Cypriots). A smaller percentage of those surveyed stated that they were employed in manual occupations (such as cleaners, agricultural workers, loaders); while 8% of Greek-Cypriots held such jobs, twice as many Turkish-Cypriots (17%) found work as manual labourers.

Employed respondents were asked to give the reasons for choosing the job in which they were presently employed. While the reason cited most by Greek-Cypriots was "good pay and benefits", the most prevalent reason among Turkish-Cypriots was that working in their current job was "better than being unemployed".

| Why did you choose the job you presently have? | Greek-Cypriots |
|---|---|
| Good pay and benefits | 1st place |
| Good working environment | 2nd place |
| Good working hours | 3rd/4th place |
| The job is what I studied for | 3rd/4th place |
| There is demand for this work and I could easily find employment | 5th place |

**Table 4.1: Choice of Current Job – Greek-Cypriot Respondents**

| Why did you choose the job you presently have? | Turkish-Cypriots |
|---|---|
| It is better than being unemployed | 1st place |
| The job is what I studied for | 2nd place |
| Good pay and benefits | 3rd place |
| There is demand for this work and I could easily find employment | 4th place |
| Good working environment | 5th place |

**Table 4.2: Choice of Current Job – Turkish-Cypriot Respondents**

Secondly, Turkish-Cypriot respondents indicated that they were employed in their current jobs because the education they had received was in a similar field and thirdly, because the job provided good pay and benefits. In contrast, the second reason most cited by Greek-Cypriots was the good working environment that their job afforded them; good working hours being the third (tied with "better than being unemployed'). The difference in responses hints at the economic disparity which exists between the north and south of the island: Greek-Cypriots appear to be driven by good pay, working environment and hours, whereas Turkish-Cypriots are primarily focused on avoiding unemployment, regardless of the type of employment.

From a socio-cultural perspective, the career path chosen by young Cypriots is often considered to be a reflection of the status of their parents. As pointed out earlier, white collar professions are considered to be by far more attractive in Cypriot society; parents encourage their children to pursue careers in professions such as accounting, medicine and law. Given this, technical and vocational education is not popular in Cypriot society and has acquired the stigma of 'second class schooling'; vocational professions are typically avoided in favour of other, white collar professions. Nevertheless, demand for the former type of labour is very high and is increasingly filled by cheap and willing immigrants. Middle class parents pressure their children to pursue careers that will maintain their class position – or even elevate them to a higher status – given the fear of falling to a lower social or economic status. Similarly, working class parents encourage

their children to work hard to rise above their lower class and status; children's upward social mobility lends the entire family an improved reputation.

## Employment Challenges Faced by Young Cypriots

Young Cypriots face a myriad of challenges as they attempt to enter the labour market and establish their careers. One of the main such challenges is the limited number of positions available for qualified young professionals. This is mainly due to the nature of the majority of Cypriot firms, which are characterised as small or medium family-run businesses. Given the small size of these enterprises and the managerial structure (typically managerial positions are held by the owner of the business or another family member) there are limited positions that match the qualifications of young graduates.

Since many young Cypriots acquire a good higher education, but only a limited number of job vacancies are available, many take the conscious decision of waiting until they find a good job opportunity, rather than settling for a position that does not reflect their credentials. The extended financial support typically provided by Cypriot parents provides them the opportunity to do so. Most young people cannot afford this option, so many have to compromise and accept employment in positions that do not allow them the opportunity to employ the knowledge and skills that they have gained throughout their education. Given the nature of Cypriot businesses, managers have traditionally given

minimal attention to the human development of their personnel. Given this, and the decreased prospects of promotion, young Cypriots suffer from a lack of opportunities for professional and personal growth.

There is also a great difference between the private and public sectors in Cyprus. The latter offers higher pay, better working hours, benefits and pension plans, as well as, what is widely considered to be less stressful working conditions. Consequently, it is often the 'dream' of many young Cypriots to find employment in the public sector and parents are strong advocators of such an option (often this is the parents' dream, which they try to instil in their children). Another area of contention among young Cypriots is the

widespread belief that when employing new personnel, both private organisations and the public sector, tend to select candidates on the basis of their social and political 'connections' (known as *mesa* by Greek-Cypriots and *torpil* by Turkish-Cypriots) rather than their qualifications and/or professional experience. As a result, young Cypriots often feel frustration and disappointment when it appears as though candidates, who possess fewer or inferior qualifications and skills than they do, are appointed to coveted positions. These conditions and challenges are documented by the $YAS_1$. Participants were asked to rate what, in their opinion, was the biggest problem faced by young Cypriots when seeking gainful employment.

| What do you think are the biggest problems that young people face when trying to find a job? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Greek-Cypriots** | **1st choice (%)** | **2nd choice (%)** | **3rd choice (%)** |
| 1. There are not **enough** job opportunities/openings for young people | 39 | 12 | 11 |
| 2. There are no job opportunities/openings **at all** for young people | 9 | 10 | 8 |
| 3. One can find jobs but: | | | |
| a. they are badly paid | 21 | 17 | 16 |
| b. some young people don't have the connections needed to get the job | 15 | 18 | 13 |
| c. some young people don't have the necessary qualifications | 7 | 13 | 11 |
| d. some young people don't have the experience needed | 10 | 14 | 18 |
| e. they do not correspond to young people's skills | 3 | 6 | 8 |

**Table 4.3: Biggest Problems to Finding Employment: Greek-Cypriot Respondents**

| What do you think are the biggest problems that young people face when trying to find a job? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Turkish-Cypriots** | **1st choice (%)** | **2nd choice (%)** | **3rd choice (%)** |
| 1. There are not **enough** job opportunities/openings for young people | 54 | 7 | 4 |
| 2. There are no job opportunities/openings **at all** for young people | 17 | 19 | 2 |
| 3. One can find jobs but: | | | |
| a. they are badly paid | 12 | 22 | 7 |
| b. some young people don't have the connections needed to get the job | 7 | 11 | 7 |
| c. some young people don't have the necessary qualifications | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| d. some young people don't have the experience needed | 6 | 8 | 12 |
| e. they do not correspond to young people's skills | 1 | 4 | 5 |

**Table 4.4: Biggest Problems to Finding Employment: Turkish-Cypriot Respondents**

The greatest difficulty highlighted by both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot respondents was the shortage of employment opportunities for young people. The second highest rated problem experienced by young Greek-Cypriots was that, while job vacancies exist, the remuneration offered is too low (mainly a condition within the private sector). This issue was the third most cited by Turkish-Cypriots respondents, for whom the second biggest problem in terms of finding employment in their community is that there are *no* job opportunities available to young people. According to the Greek-Cypriot respondents, the third factor which hinders young people when searching for employment is that some young people, or rather their families, simply do not have the necessary 'connections' that are needed to secure a job. This was rated as the fourth problem amongst Turkish-Cypriots surveyed. The importance attributed to education by young people across the island was highlighted when survey participants were asked to rate, in order of most important, the qualities that they thought were the most 'useful' when searching for employment in Cyprus.

| Which do you think are the 3 most useful qualities required in order to find a good job in Cyprus? | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Greek-Cypriots** | **1st choice (%)** | **2nd choice (%)** | **3rd choice (%)** |
| 1. A good first degree | 31 | 17 | 8 |
| 2. Connections | 29 | 13 | 15 |
| 3. A good post-graduate degree | 24 | 20 | 10 |
| 4. Good information technology skills | 6 | 15 | 16 |
| 5. A good personality | 5 | 10 | 14 |
| 6. A high *emotional* intelligence (E.Q) (e.g. soft skills in communication, teamwork etc.) | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| 7. A good appearance | 4 | 8 | 9 |
| 8. A high intelligence (I.Q.) | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| 9. Luck | 3 | 5 | 6 |

**Table 4.5: Useful Qualities when Seeking Employment: Greek-Cypriot Respondents**

| Which do you think are the 3 most useful qualities required in order to find a good job in Cyprus? | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Turkish-Cypriots** | **1st choice (%)** | **2nd choice (%)** | **3rd choice (%)** |
| 1. A good first degree | 47 | 12 | 9 |
| 2. Connections | 16 | 24 | 4 |
| 3. A good post-graduate degree | 9 | 14 | 9 |
| 4. Good information technology skills | 7 | 4 | 19 |
| 5. A good personality | 6 | 10 | 5 |
| 6. A high *emotional* intelligence (E.Q) (e.g. soft skills in communication, teamwork etc.) | 6 | 7 | 13 |
| 7. A good appearance | 4 | 7 | 13 |
| 8. A high intelligence (I.Q.) | 4 | 8 | 4 |
| 9. Luck | 3 | 8 | 6 |

**Table 4.6: Useful Qualities when Seeking Employment: Turkish-Cypriot Respondents**

Both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth agreed that a 'good' undergraduate degree was the most useful quality which better enabled them to be employed. For Turkish-Cypriots, the next useful quality was a 'good' postgraduate degree. Interestingly, for Greek-Cypriots, it was appropriate political or social connections (demonstrating how important *mesa* are – or, at least how important Greek-Cypriots believe them to be). A 'good' postgraduate degree is considered the third most useful quality; the least useful qualities were a high intelligence (I.Q.) and luck. For young Turkish-Cypriots emotional intelligence and good experience were the least useful qualities in securing a job.

Despite the various challenges and problems, both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot respondents indicated considerable levels of satisfaction related to their jobs. Only 8% of Greek-Cypriots and 10% of Turkish-Cypriots were either "a little" or "not at all" satisfied with their jobs; whereas 25% of Greek-Cypriots and 28% of Turkish-Cypriots were "somewhat" satisfied; finally, 67% of Greek-Cypriots and 62% of Turkish-Cypriots indicated that they were "rather" or "very" satisfied with their work.

## The Gender Debate: Women in the Workplace

The participation of women in the Greek-Cypriot labour force has increased steadily since the early 1980s. In 1999 the labour force participation rates were 54.7% for women and 81.8% for men; by 2006 the gap had narrowed as the labour force participation rate for women rose to 63.8% while the rate for men increased marginally to 82.7%.[96] Participation rates of women in the Turkish-Cypriot labour force are considerably lower than that of their Greek-Cypriot counterparts. Turkish-Cypriot women make up 36.1% of the labour force (compared to 62.8% of Turkish-Cypriot men).

The economic boom of the 1980s created several job positions within the tourism industry and the wider services sector in general, which were available to Greek-Cypriot women. These jobs were considered to be especially suited to women as they resembled the traditional service roles ascribed to Cypriot women in

society – such as those of homemakers and care givers. Initially, women's careers were seen to play a supporting role, contributing to the family's earnings but not as the primary bread winners; their main duties consisted of raising and nurturing their families – as such, the majority of household activities were undertaken by women. Men's contribution in the home was often in the area of home repair work, construction, or taking care of the garden.

Although the 1960 Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus prohibited any "direct or indirect discrimination against any person on the ground of his [sic] community, race, religion, language, sex, political or other convictions, national or social decent, birth, colour, wealth, social class or any ground whatsoever" (Article 28), women in the labour force suffered various forms of discrimination in terms of type of employment, work conditions, inequality in pay and opportunities for advancement. A number of actions have been taken in order to narrow the gender gap existing within the Cyprus labour market. In 1985 the Republic of Cyprus ratified the UN convention (34/180) on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Law 78/85) which strives to remove all forms of discrimination against women in all spheres of life, including education, politics, employment, family and public life. Under the law for the termination of employment (Law 24/87), gender, pregnancy or maternity leave, do not constitute grounds for termination of employment. Furthermore, the Equal Remuneration Law (158/89) was established in order to provide for equal pay for work of equal value. This law has been enforced by the government and large private companies.[97] As a result, the gender pay gap has been decreasing; from 33% in 1994 to 25% in 2005. These laws and the signing of international treaties, coupled with pressure employed from women's organisations, trade unions and political groups, led to considerable improvements in the working conditions of women in the Republic of Cyprus.[98]

Traditional gender-role stereotypes appear to be changing among young Cypriots as seen by their responses to a series of statements pertaining to the role of men and women in the workforce:

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

| | (a) Men should be the breadwinners and women should take care of the house and family | | (b) A man who does the same job as a woman, should be paid more | | (c) Men can be better managers than women | | (d) Some jobs can be done better by women and some other jobs better by men | | (e) When there is a job scarcity, employers should prefer men rather than women | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC |
| Strongly Agree | 4% | 7% | 2% | 6% | 3% | 9% | 28% | 24% | 2% | 11% |
| Agree | 10% | 20% | 4% | 15% | 13% | 19% | 59% | 46% | 5% | 21% |
| Neither, Nor | 21% | 15% | 10% | 17% | 15% | 23% | 9% | 18% | 20% | 21% |
| Disagree | 36% | 26% | 42% | 31% | 32% | 24% | 4% | 9% | 35% | 25% |
| Strongly Disagree | 29% | 32% | 42% | 31% | 37% | 24% | 1% | 4% | 38% | 23% |

**Table 4.7: Attitudes towards Traditional Gender Roles/Stereotypes**

Two thirds (66%) of Greek-Cypriots respondents either "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" with the statement that men should be the main breadwinners while women remained at home, taking care of the household and the family; interestingly only 14% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with this statement. Corresponding findings among Turkish-Cypriot respondents showed a somewhat similar attitude towards the traditional roles played by men and women, with 58% of respondents either "strongly disagreeing" or "disagreeing" with the statement; however, a higher proportion of Turkish-Cypriots "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement (21% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents, compared to 14% of Greek-Cypriot respondents), indicating the more traditional and conservative values of the Turkish-Cypriots, as compared to the Greek-Cypriots, impacted more by modernisation.

The attitudes of young Cypriots towards the principle of 'equal pay for equal work' also appear to portray a shift in perceptions and beliefs. Approximately 83% of Greek-Cypriots "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" with the statement that a man, who does the same job as a woman, should be better compensated; only 7% of Greek-Cypriot respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with

this statement. Once again, Turkish-Cypriot responses mirrored those of Greek-Cypriots – only on the more conservative side: a little under two thirds (62%) either "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" with the statement, with approximately one fifth (20%) either "agreeing" or "strongly agreeing" that a man should earn more than a woman for the same amount of work done. Similar results were presented for statement (e).

The only statement which produced a mildly different response pattern related to statement (d), *"some jobs can be done better by women and some other jobs better by men"*. This statement evoked contrary responses by both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth. In this case, 87% of Greek-Cypriots and 70% of Turkish-Cypriots indicated that they either "agree" or "strongly agree" with this statement, with only 5% and 13% either "strongly disagreeing" or "disagreeing" respectively. Thus, while Cypriot youth believe that the modern Cypriot woman has a role in the work force and is entitled to equal pay for equal work, there is still a gender divide as to the perceived ability of women to take on certain jobs.

In-depth interviews delved further into the

gender dispute with young Cypriots presenting varied views as to whether or not gender equality exists in Cyprus. Some respondents adamantly declared that equality between men and women did not exist:

*I think that there is no equality between men and women; there is no such concept.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student (counselling), rural Nicosia]**

Whether or not they believed in gender equality, some respondents held themselves, or pointed out that Cypriot society, and in particular, men, did not view or treat women in the same way as men:

*A lot of people claim that they* [the two sexes] *are equal, but I don't believe that they are. It is not valid in Cyprus. In general, even though men and women may do the same thing, they are treated differently; so, they are not equal.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 23, housewife, married, rural Nicosia]**

*A man can do more things than a woman.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 17, early school leaver, cashier, single, urban Nicosia]**

*No, until now, men in Cyprus look down on women; they see them as lesser human beings.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, works for a private company, single, urban Nicosia]**

Some respondents struggled with the issue, on the one hand recognising that a battle for equality was being fought, and on the other, pointing out the limitations on the roles that men and women might employ in society. Young Cypriots seem to recognise that modernity implies more equality for women, yet they still cling to conventional gender roles that have long been nurtured in traditional Cypriot society. However, precisely because they realise that such views may nowadays be considered conservative, or even reactionary, they resort to the "yes-but" arguments[99] ("Yes I believe in equality, but *x* reason justifies inequality"):

*Of course, I support gender equality in general. But I think that women should not be active*

*and given the chance to be equal everywhere. I think that, all in all, the dominance of men in society, to an extent, say of 60%, is better.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student (agricultural engineering)]**

[Gender equality] *exists, but not to the extent that it should. That is to say, women are now trying to prove their equality, but I am of the opinion that, in practice, we are not equal* […] *for the reason that men can do some things, while women can do other things.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, high school graduate, shop owner, married with one child]**

Some respondents felt that equality in many professions did exist, with women and men alike being judged on their experience and know-how, rather than their gender. However, many consider new attitudes to be more prominent among younger Cypriots:

*Yes, in several professions… I don't believe that our position is different from that of men. Whatever job or company you go to, they do not look to see if you are a woman or a man, they look at your knowledge.* [Inequality] *does exist for older people, they may still view a woman as an inferior being, but among the young, yes there is equality.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, university graduate, chemist, single, rural Limassol]**

Certain Cypriot male respondents were not only confident that equality between men and women is a reality, but that women were now one step ahead of men – given that they are not obliged to carry out any military duty, as is the case with young men; since women are thereby able to enter the workforce earlier than men they go on to conclude that, in this way, women are better off in their careers and can progress faster than men.

*I think that we are already equal with women in many respects, but in the work-life women are one step ahead of men. For example, if you think about it, when we graduate and a girl and a boy sit for a civil servant examination to get a desired position, what happens is that only the girl can apply; the boy is not able to go because*

*of his military duty. Additionally, if you have the certificate from this government examination then you can easily apply for a position as a teacher in the state schools. Military service is very problematic and hinders our future. I have to wait for two years to complete my military duty before I can enter work-life. I think that it would be better if girls were also required to do military duty.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 21, university student (communication), urban Morfou]**

*Yes, because women are everywhere the same as men, and this means equality – for example, in terms of job opportunities. But in terms of military service, women and men are not equal: they can find a job when they graduate, but males have to wait until they complete their military service. Employers do not accept you before military service; they prefer someone that has completed military service... I think women should join the military service.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24, employed in computer shop, urban Nicosia]**

Despite the improvements of working conditions for women and the attitudes towards the working woman, Cypriot women continue to maintain their traditional role of mother, home maker and care giver. As such it is not surprising that many Cypriot women are drawn to the education service, particularly in the public sector, and find employment within this field. The convenient hours of work (the working day ends shortly after midday) and considerable annual work-leave, allow them the time to devote to their families and home.

Remnants of the viewpoint that a woman's career is more of a 'supportive role' can be seen when examining the current situation of part-time employment: nearly 93% of people interested in finding part-time employment are women; as a result women make up the majority of such workers and account for 68.9% of those who are employed part-time. The main reasons cited for this are their inability to find a full-time job (33%), personal or family reasons (33%), and a conscious choice to work part-time in order to take care of children or the elderly (22%).

## Responsibility and Empowerment through Employment

The transition of youth from education to work, and the type and conditions of ensuing employment, can influence the feelings of self-worth, responsibility and citizenship characterising young people, and in this case, Cypriot youth. As we have seen, Greek-Cypriot youth experience one of the lowest unemployment rates in Europe (not accounting for hidden employment, mentioned earlier on). By comparison, Turkish-Cypriot youth experience higher levels of unemployment than Greek-Cypriots. Interestingly, the two divergent cases may lead to similar outcomes. In the Turkish-Cypriot community, long-lasting unemployment often leads to continued dependence on parents, problems connected to young people's personal perspective of life, lack of orientation, bitterness and opposition towards political authorities and hostility towards foreigners.[100] These, in turn can have a negative effect on society at large.

In the Greek-Cypriot community, the experience of relatively lower unemployment rates (than youth in the Turkish-Cypriot community and in other European countries) does not necessarily imply that Greek-Cypriot youth do not face challenges and difficulties. Many Greek-Cypriot youth fall prey to the same conditions which impede their development in the educational phase of their lives. Parents often influence their children's educational and then pro-fessional career choices given the significant financial contribution towards tuition fees. Many young Cypriots are encouraged by their parents to pursue studies which will lead them into specific traditional, white collar professions – often against their own preferences; the career aspirations are thereby shaped by a desire to secure steady, well-paid jobs. While risky, pursuing professionally, and *personally* rewarding careers, can lead to a greater sense of personal satisfaction, happiness and fulfilment. In general many young Greek-Cypriots do not seem empowered to follow personally fulfilling careers and life choices.

Parental dependence often continues once the young have completed their education and

are about to enter the world of employment. This dependence is secured in several ways. For instance, young Cypriots rely on their parents to 'pull strings', in order to provide them with good employment opportunities. This is especially the case among Greek-Cypriot youth who place a great deal of importance on having the right 'connections' when it comes to securing a job. Such tactics lead to a greater reliance on parents and consequently to the disempowerment of Cypriot youth. Furthermore, either by necessity or habit, Cypriot youth continue to depend on their parents' financial, or other, assistance. This support ranges from significant contributions (such as buying a car or putting down the deposit towards an apartment or a house), to smaller, domestic ones (such as the supply of home cooked meals, washing and ironing – while their children live at home and even after they have moved out on their own!). This support continues well into adulthood as many Cypriots depend on their parents to look after their children when they are at work (i.e. the grandchildren). Such habits stand out in stark contrast to other Western countries, where upon turning eighteen, young individuals are expected to assume a great proportion of such responsibilities themselves.[101] And while the behaviour of young Cypriot's parents may be classed as 'dedication', this prolonged

dependence – which can continue well into adulthood – only hinders the independence and empowerment of Cypriot youth.

Cypriot youth surveyed indicated that the main difficulty faced when trying to find a job is the limited number of employment opportunities available to young people. Another problem, according to the youth in both communities, is the low remuneration offered to young employees. These challenges impact Cypriot youth in a variety of ways, one of which is the continued monetary reliance on parents. However, more than that,  given the small number of job opportunities which exist for young people, and the high proportion of well-qualified individuals, young Cypriots often find themselves employed in positions that do not match their qualification levels or their field of study. Together with low salaries, this can leave young Cypriots feeling unsatisfied with their work. France warns that this type of employment (one which does not match qualifications, does not offer opportunities for training and professional development, and does not pay well) can lead to young individuals feeling despondent and less responsible towards their job.[102] In turn, these feelings can result in young people feeling less inclined to be active citizens and unwilling to take responsibility towards their community.

# LIFESTYLES OF CYPRIOT YOUTH: FROM LEISURE ACTIVITIES TO HEALTH HABITS

## Leisure and Recreation

In our modern, globalised world, youth the world over are developing tastes and pre-dispositions towards certain recreational activities and consumer products. Since the end of World War II manufacturers have begun to pay increasing attention to young people's distinct buying styles and consumption habits.[103] In a developed world, young people are primarily seen to be avid consumers, purchasing non-essential products such as CDs, DVDs and clothes. This places them as an attractive target group of both the entertainment, and information and communication technology industries.

Far from being a reflection of their social class, the products consumed by young people often tend to reflect their personal style, used as tools of communication with other members of their age group.[104] Whereas in the industrial era and the dominance of the work ethic, the self-actualisation and identity construction of the young revolved around their chosen vocation, nowadays this is mostly achieved through the use of leisure time and the consumption of the latest products and trends available in the market; young people's identity revolves around leisure time activities, entertainment and appearance, building on images projected by the mass media and consumption.[105]

The way in which young people engage in entertainment activities is characteristic of the youth culture which has developed in western societies. The extent to which young people enjoy their free time must be understood in the context of their experiences within their family, their gender, their education and, where applicable, through their (non) participation in the labour market.[106] During their leisure time, young people are able to act more independently and to express their own values, tastes and emotions as opposed to those of adults.[107]

One of the reasons attributed to the low levels of youth engagement in politics and active citizenship is the profusion of recreational activities available to young people today.[108] Young people, faced with an ever-growing range of appealing leisure options at their disposal, find themselves 'too busy' to participate in other forms of activity, such as political membership. Nevertheless, leisure and consumption activities can be important to the development of young people's sense of self, individualism and collective identity.[109] Young people, more than any other age group, find themselves with a substantial amount of free time to fill. Typically, this free time is spent away from school and parents and, as such, provides youth with their first taste of independence and responsibility. The time spent interacting among peers, either at one

another's homes, at shopping malls, or online, constitutes a "major source of learning" whereby peer interaction can foster the creation of new meanings, perceptions and solutions.[110] Thus, free time, and the ways in which youth choose to fill this free time, can be regarded as a space for experimentation that can contribute towards shaping young people's thoughts and behaviour.

Leisure activities are important as they also equip youth with valuable technical and/or generic skills that may be transferable to other areas of their lives, such as their school work or their jobs. Moreover, engaging in certain leisure activities allows young people to develop a sense of autonomy that, in turn, can lead to their engagement as independent, active citizens in society.

| | **BOX 5.1** | **What Do Young Cypriots Value?** | |

Young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots were asked to rate the level of importance that they assigned to various facets of their lives, ranging from "dressing in style" to "living in a country with a healthy environment", on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = not at all and 5 = very much). The mean scores for each statement, calculated for Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth, are listed below in order of *greatest* importance:

| | **Greek-Cypriots** | **Mean score** | **Turkish-Cypriots** | **Mean score** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | To have personal security (freedom from fear, violence, conflict, criminality) | 4.57 | To live in a country with a healthy environment | 4.21 |
| 2 | To influence decisions which affect your life | 4.48 | To have personal security (freedom from fear, violence, conflict, criminality) | 4.10 |
| 3 | To live in a country with a healthy environment | 4.42 | To influence decisions which affect your life | 3.91 |
| 4 | For the government to invest a lot in bringing about/establishing peace | 4.22 | To study in a college/university | 3.86 |
| 5 | To have a lot of free time | 4.12 | To have a chance to decide how your society is governed | 3.79 |
| 6 | To study in a college/university | 4.11 | For the government to invest a lot in bringing about/establishing peace | 3.78 |
| 7 | To have a chance to decide how your society is governed | 4.08 | For the government to invest a lot in the environment | 3.78 |
| 8 | To live in a financially prosperous country | 4.04 | To live in a financially prosperous country | 3.60 |
| 9 | For the government to invest a lot in the environment | 4.03 | For the government to invest a lot in our defence/army | 3.50 |
| 10 | To dress in style | 3.69 | To have a lot of money | 3.48 |
| 11 | To have a lot of money | 3.59 | To dress in style | 3.20 |
| 12 | For the government to invest a lot in our defence/army | 3.20 | To have a car that many people would be jealous of | 3.02 |
| 13 | To have a car that many people would be jealous of | 2.69 | To have a house that many people would be jealous of | 2.96 |
| 14 | To have a house that many people would be jealous of | 2.61 | To have a lot of free time | 2.93 |

**A Comparison of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot Youth's Priorities**

Interestingly, Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth place the greatest level of importance on the same three areas: namely, personal security, the ability to influence decisions which affect their lives, and living in a country with a healthy environment. These results indicate that young Cypriots tend to value mostly those conditions on which their lives primarily depend upon (security from fear, violence, a healthy environment), plus the chance to have an input on decisions affecting their lives – before caring for more mundane things, such as leisure or consumption goods/ activities.

However, there are also differences between the two communities: Greek-Cypriot youth, faced with the much stronger Turkish army, place primary emphasis on security, whereas young Turkish-Cypriots, feeling *secure* because of the presence of the Turkish army, underplay security and stress the importance of the environment. Similarly, while "investing in peace" ranked 4th among Greek-Cypriots, this was slightly less important among Turkish-Cypriots who ranked it as 6th. Among Greek-Cypriots is the belief that peace was destroyed, and remains threatened, by the events of 1974. Turkish-Cypriots, on the other hand, believe that peace was accomplished as a result of 1974 – hence the smaller emphasis on investing in it now.

One area in which Greek-Cypriots placed strikingly greater levels of importance on was having "a lot of free time" which ranked 5th among Greek-Cypriots and 14th among Turkish-Cypriots. A possible explanation for this finding is that, on account of the better socio-economic conditions experienced in the south (as compared to the north), Greek-Cypriot youth find themselves with a greater range of available recreational activities and opportunities, as well as the financial means to enjoy these.

As a result, Greek-Cypriot youth, more than Turkish-Cypriot youth, may feel pressed for time as they attempt to juggle the various areas of their lives, from pursuing their education (at school or university) and other extracurricular activities (private tuition, sports, art lessons, etc.) to spending time with family and socialising with friends. Thus, Greek-Cypriots come to value "a lot of free time", whereas Turkish-Cypriot youth, with less opportunities competing for their time, assign the least level of importance to it.

## Young Cypriots and their Free Time

Young Cypriots surveyed were questioned about the average amount of free time they have available per day; free time referring to time spent outside of school or work and not on compulsory activities such as homework or household chores. On average, 37% of young Cypriots across the island have over five hours of free time per day, while the majority (50%) have between 2-4 hours of free time per day. A smaller percentage of respondents (13%) have less than one hour of free time per day.

**A. How often do you:**



Legend: Every day (%) ■ 2-3 times a week (%) ■ 2-3 times a month (%) ■ 5-6 times a year (%) ■ Never (%)

Categories (GC/TC): Listen to music, Watch TV, Read magazines/newspapers, Spend time with the family, Spend time with friends, Visit a café

**B. How Often Do You:**

Legend: ■ Every day (%)  ■ 2-3 times a week (%)  ■ 2-3 times a month (%)  ■ 5-6 times a year (%)  ■ Never (%)



Go to a club/disco — GC, TC

Participate in sport activities (e.g. football, swimming, gym) — GC, TC

Spend time in a social/political organisation you are affiliated with (e.g. NGOs, political parties, social movements) — GC, TC

Practice your hobby (e.g. hunting, fishing, painting) — GC, TC

Learn music or an art (e.g. dance, painting) — GC, TC

Do voluntary work — GC, TC

**Table 5.1: Leisure Activities: Type and Frequency**

The top two activities, which Cypriot youth engage in daily, are common to both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth: 85% of Cypriot youth listen to music on a daily basis, while 80% of Greek-Cypriots and 83% of Turkish-Cypriots watch television every day. Television and radio are popular entertainment mediums utilised by young Cypriots during their free time. For example, on average, Turkish-Cypriots between the ages of 18 and 24 are likely to spend 3.27 hours per day watching television; making them the third largest group (after those 45 to 54 year olds and those 55 and over) spending so much time watching television.[111]

There is a significant difference in the third activity which Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth choose to engage in on a daily basis. Among Greek-Cypriots this includes spending time with friends (60%) – a figure that is highly comparable among Turkish-Cypriot youth (58%). The third popular daily pastime for Turkish-Cypriots is spending time with their family (70%); comparatively, only 40% of Greek-Cypriots spend time with their family on

a daily basis. This difference may be explained by the much faster pace of modernisation taking place among Greek-Cypriot society and the increasing openness to the influences of modernity as a result of more opportunities to travel abroad, more inward tourism and the increasingly higher impact of globalisation experienced (becoming part of the EU). Consequently, this has contributed to the loosening of family ties among Greek-Cypriot youth. In comparison, Turkish-Cypriots remain a more traditional, close-knit society. The greater affluence experienced by the Greek-Cypriot community is associated with parents working longer hours, taking on dual careers, and employing domestic workers to assist with household chores. These trends have resulted in parents having, or spending, less time with their children – thereby providing young Greek-Cypriots with more money and time to spend engaging in leisure activities with friends.

Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed displayed a greater interest in keeping up with daily news compared to young Greek-Cypriots. Almost

48% of Turkish-Cypriots indicated that they read magazines and newspapers everyday compared to a significantly smaller proportion of Greek-Cypriots (approximately 18%). Similarly, Turkish-Cypriot youth seem to read books much more than young Greek-Cypriots; a greater proportion of the former (75%) spent time, either daily, weekly or monthly, reading books (compared to 41% of Greek-Cypriots). Once again, this is an indication of Greek-Cypriots being faster in abandoning habits of the print-age and shifting to the era of electronic communication and leisure activities.

Activities commonly engaged in two to three times a week, included visiting a café (48% Greek-Cypriots; 37% Turkish-Cypriots) and driving around (31% Greek-Cypriots; 36% Turkish-Cypriots). A significant proportion of Turkish-Cypriots (46%) go shopping two to three times a week, compared to a much lower figure (18%) of Greek-Cypriots. Pastimes which both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth are likely to engage in two to three times a month, include eating out at a restaurant or *taverna* (59% GC; 37% TC), going shopping (55% GC; 26% TC) and visiting a disco or club (42% GC; 27%). Going to a club or disco (25%) and visiting a restaurant or *taverna* (24%) are pastimes which certain Greek-Cypriots will participate in five to six times a year. In addition to going to a disco or club (22%), Turkish-Cypriot youth spend time on a hobby (e.g. fishing or painting) (18%) and on learning music or a new art such as dancing or painting (18%).

Turkish-Cypriot youth seem to be much more involved in social and/or political organisations and in voluntary work; approximately three times as many Turkish-Cypriots were regularly engaged in such activities compared to Greek-Cypriots. Specifically, 34% of Turkish-Cypriot (compared to 12% of Greek-Cypriot) respondents spent time daily, weekly or monthly involved with political organisations, and 36% and 11%, respectively, regularly performed volunteer work. These findings present a picture of Turkish-Cypriot youth remaining more closely attached to the community and collective concerns, activities and interests, as compared to the increasingly individualistic Greek-Cypriots.

Still, approximately 78% of Greek-Cypriots and 51% of Turkish-Cypriots stated that they never devoted their spare time participating in social or political organisations, and 73% of Greek-Cypriots and 49% of Turkish-Cypriots never participated in volunteer work. This indicates that Cypriot youth, especially those living within the Greek-Cypriot community are largely inactive when it comes to socio-political participation and volunteerism.

## The Use of Information and Communication Technology

As is the case in most countries, the use of various Information and Communication Technologies continues to grow in Cyprus. Among Greek-Cypriot households surveyed in 2007, 99.8% had access to TV; 91.3% to a fixed telephone line; 52.9% to a personal computer (up 5.7% since 2004); and 38.9% to Internet access (up 6.2% since 2005).[112] The same survey identified that 47% of individuals had used a computer during the first quarter of 2007, and a smaller 38.1% of individuals had used the Internet during the same period. Of these individuals, 71.8% used computers and 61.0% accessed the Internet on a daily basis. Popular Internet activities include sending and receiving emails (77.7% of individuals) and using chat services (33.9%).

A recent survey among Turkish-Cypriots showed that individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 were the heaviest users of personal computers at home and laptops. Younger Turkish-Cypriots, aged 15 to 17 years old, were the heaviest users of personal computers at home; compared to other age groups, 91.2% of Turkish-Cypriots within this age range used personal computers at home.[113] The same study illustrated that the use of laptops is most popular among 18 to 24 year old Turkish-Cypriots (i.e. college and university students) with 54.5% of individuals in this range indicating that they utilize laptops.

Young Cypriots who took part in the $YAS_1$ were asked how often they used certain information and communication technologies such as mobile phones, the Internet and iPods.

**Information Communication Technologies Used Daily**

| | Mobile phone | PC/ Laptop | Internet | E-mail | CD-ROM or DVD | DVD with TV | Game consoles (e.g. Xbox) | MP3 player/ iPod |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | 99% | 65% | 53% | 38% | 29% | 50% | 13% | 27% |
| TC | 96% | 55% | 47% | 36% | 28% | 41% | 13% | 36% |
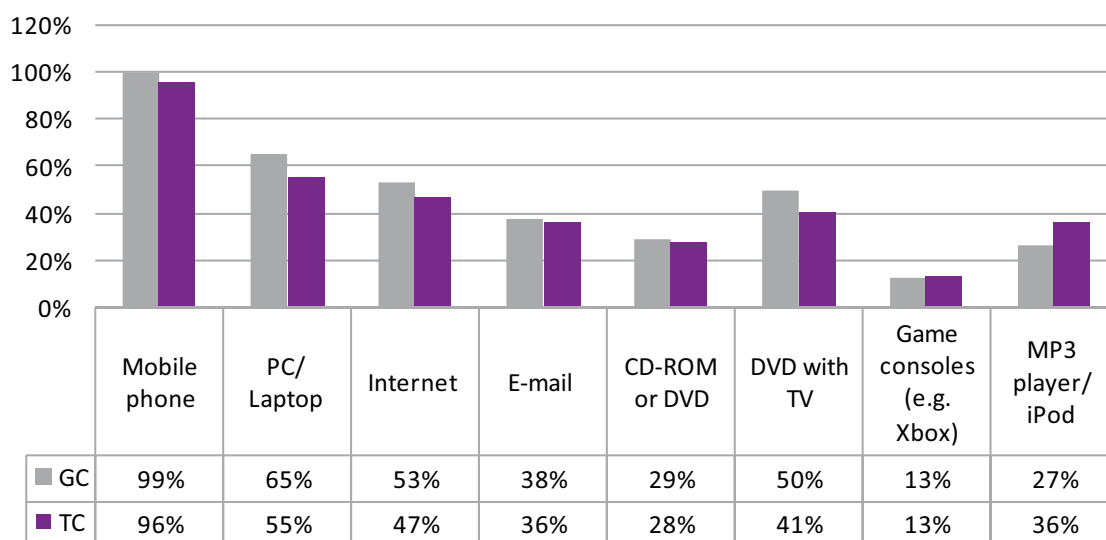
**Table 5.2: Use of Information and Communication Technologies**

Greek-Cypriot youth appear to have a slight lead in terms of the use of the latest Information and Communication Technologies – but this is only marginally so as, overall, there are no major differences between the two communities. Again, this small disparity is perhaps, in the case of the Greek-Cypriot community, an indication of a somewhat more 'developed' society with individuals spending more time on their own. At any rate, mobile phones are clearly a strong fixture in the daily lives of Cypriot youth as 99% of Greek-Cypriots and 96% of Turkish-Cypriots use them everyday. Personal computers (PCs) and laptops (65% of Greek-Cypriots; 55% of Turkish-Cypriots), and to a slightly lesser extent the Internet (53% of Greek-Cypriots; 47% of Turkish-Cypriots) are also used daily by a significant number of respondents.

Overall, Cypriot youth from both communities displayed very similar results as regards the usage frequency of various Information and Communication Technologies. This appears to be the case despite the existing gap in economic development between the two sides (one would expect Turkish-Cypriots to lag behind). Young people display a greater affinity towards the latest information and communication technologies and, as such, are among the heaviest users. Cypriot youth are no exception; 60% of young Cypriots surveyed used personal computers on a daily basis (the individual average being 47%) and nearly 50% used the Internet everyday (the individual average being 38%).

Since its introduction into Cypriot society in the mid-1990s, the Internet has served as a bridge between members of the two communities; Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots started using programmes such as electronic mail and chatting sites to communicate with one another. In fact, this was one of the only forms of communication available to individuals before the partial opening of the borders in 2003, which enabled young Cypriots to meet face to face. The Internet continues to serve as a way for individuals involved in bicommunal activities and initiatives, such as bicommunal youth camps, to keep in touch with each other after such activities have come to an end. For instance, young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots have made creative use of the Internet, and more specifically of the popular social networking website Facebook, by creating online groups that have attracted almost 4,000 members.[114]

| BOX 5.2 | **Cypriot Youth Use Online Tools for Peacebuilding Activities** |

The youth of Cyprus, since the advent of the Internet, and with the increased development and user friendliness of online tools such as email, Facebook and MSN, have been able, more than ever before, to interact and communicate with other fellow Cypriot youth, whether on the island, north or south of the divide, or even overseas in the diasporas. The Internet was primarily used as a form of communication amongst young Cypriots to communicate with their friends and family back home or overseas, without the cost of long distance phone calls. Slowly, this communication branched out across the Green Line, to include communication between the two communities. Today, thousands of Cypriot youth are communicating more efficiently, faster and more regularly than ever before amongst their own friends and community, and of course, across the divide.

There are more than 50,000 people registered on the Cyprus Network of Facebook. Considering the population of Cyprus, this is a significant proportion of individuals, consisting mainly of Cypriot youth. As a result, a form of youth activism has grown out of this online communication through the formation of online groups, predominantly on Facebook, that tackle various issues relating to the Cyprus Problem, as well as other common problems. Large and powerful peace activist groups on Facebook, that deal with the Cyprus Problem and reconciliation, include ones such as: Unified Cyprus Group, Peace in Cyprus Now, Let's Talk about Cyprus!, Reunification in Cyprus Starts with Truth and Reconciliation, and United Youth of Cyprus. Groups dealing with more than the Cyprus Problem, but with aspects of the local quality of life range from groups such as Minorities of Cyprus, to environmental ones such as the CMC Environmental Disaster in Cyprus, Green Shield and Support Ecotourism in Cyprus, as well as others which focus on saving specific species important to Cyprus including the Caretta Caretta turtles and the mouflons.

This growth and flow of communication has become so common, and taboos have come crashing down to such a point, that Cypriot youth have taken the opportunity to transfer this communication from the 'online' world to the 'real' world. As a result of this, youth in Cyprus have begun to meet up with friends made online on either side of the Green Line, in places that accommodate both communities such as Ledra Palace Hotel and a restaurant/bar in the United Nations Buffer Zone between the two checkpoints, as well as numerous other places in which youth gather, including cafés, homes, clubs, sporting fields, schools and universities.

This transition from the online world to the real one has been significant, and has aided in the reconciliation process on the island, by allowing the two communities to meet one another, get to know each other, build trust, form friendships and cooperate in creating a better environment for the reunification of the island, if at the very least to stabilize tensions and maintain peace. Examples of recent real world activities that have involved young Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot Facebook group members coming together include: cleaning the Ottoman Baths in Paphos, painting the breakwater at the Paphos Castle with a natural, non-visually polluting colour, cleaning up the Sourp Magar Armenian Monastery in Kyrenia, reciprocal language training between the youth of the Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot community, peace gatherings on important dates, and appearing together on bi-communal radio talk shows.

In conclusion, online communication, through new tools such as Facebook, serves as an incredibly powerful enabler for both the online, and real, integration of the two communities, as well as peace building, rapprochement and the betterment of the quality of life for Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots.

*Costa Constanti*
*European Programme and Project Manager*
*University of Nicosia*

As noted earlier, listening to music is a popular pastime among Cypriot youth surveyed; approximately 99% of Greek-Cypriot and 97% of Turkish-Cypriot youth listen to music at least two to three times a week, if not daily.

This medium represents an important, creative form of expression that young Cypriots may utilise in order to make their voice heard concerning certain matters or themes.

The key to understanding youth is providing the space and tools for creative expression: this has always been evident in the domain of music production. Many famous pop groups, The Squeeze and UB40 for example, began their life in local youth clubs. In Cyprus, such opportunities were rather limited at the turn of the new millennium. Local music overall lacks an industry. This may be due to the relatively small size of the island, the lack of effective legislation and action against different forms of piracy or the shortages in terms of infrastructure to support locally made music.

Taking these issues on board in 2003, a new company called Olive Tree Music attempted to address some of these imbalances. Initially through a series of production workshops, local musicians found a way to get their songs recorded and released through the label's mobile studio. These sessions deployed different methodologies. A joint song was recorded from scratch at the University of Nicosia (then Intercollege) in 2003, in a long one-day session. Involving about 20 Cypriots, the collaboration between youth and more established artists led to the song 'Freedom'. A second session was held at The Fulbright Center a few months later, where about 15 different artists brought their ideas to a mobile studio, where, in turn, vocals were recorded, and later, mixed in the studio.

Both these sessions contributed to a pioneering CD released by Olive Tree Music in 2004. 'Cyprus Thing Vol 1' was an initiative supported by The Bi-communal Development Programme. Bringing people together was by no means an easy task. Music collaboration is perhaps one of the most challenging forms of symbiosis between people who, in the main had never met before, let alone worked together in the studio. The project continued, with production collaborations with Stand Out Selector from San Francisco, and Mike Cherry from Limassol.

Three more songs have been recorded along similar lines, 'Music Is Joy', 'Safe Sex' and more recently 'Harmony For Humanity'. The songs are unique in that they are all tri-lingual, English, Greek and Turkish and have all been co-written by the artists involved. All of the tracks are promoted worldwide through Olive Tree Music's and various artists' web pages and music download sites such as Napster, I-Tunes and Rhapsody. It has been a complicated endeavour as a label working in so many languages with so many people. Additionally, it was difficult to get airplay on local radio stations, perhaps as a result of narrow-minded perceptions/reactions to tri-lingual/multicultural songs. At the same time, international airplay and coverage around the world has made it possible to continue working on the same lines, as it is believed that the label provides a positive image of Cyprus and Cypriots around the world.

A lot can be achieved by people simply working together creatively, below the radar of politics, through the universal language of music.

*Haji Mike*
*Director*
*Olive Tree Music*

**More information on Olive Tree Music is available at:**
**www.myspace.com/olivetreemusic**

Particular attention must be given to the types of leisure activities available to Cypriot youth across the island. It is the responsibility of parents, education providers and policy makers alike to provide young Cypriots with recreational opportunities that contribute to their well-being and, in some way or other, promote their development as young individuals. Specifically, young Cypriots in both communities require access to public spaces where they can safely meet, interact and socialise with their peers. The issue of safety is important considering the various health problems that young people may find themselves in, given that they are particularly vulnerable to certain high-risk behaviours, such as the consumption of cigarettes, alcohol or drugs, reckless driving, and engaging in under-age and unprotected sexual activities, all of which can prove harmful to their mental and physical well-being.

## How Healthy Are Cypriot Youth?

One of the components of the HDI is the measure of whether or not individuals are able to enjoy a long and healthy life. Indeed, one of the main aims of any youth development policy or programme is ensuring that young individuals are able to live a healthy life. By leading such a life, first as young people and later on as adults, individuals will not be hampered in their endeavour to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge required to lead a satisfying and productive life, to earn a living, engage in civic activities, and so on.

Young people are less likely than adults to suffer from severe health conditions that are life threatening. Nevertheless, the health issues which do affect the young can cause them harm and impair their ability to function properly.[115] Such issues fall under two categories: poor health maintenance and risk taking behaviour. Examples of the former include smoking and bad dietary habits resulting in obesity or, at the other extreme, eating disorders; while examples of the latter include driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol and unprotected sex resulting in the transfer of sexual diseases and/or unwanted pregnancies.

More often than not, youth engage in poor health practices or risky behaviour in order to cope with personal stress experienced in the home or at school; peer pressure and the desire to 'fit in' can also cause young people to engage in harmful activities. The majority of such detrimental health behaviours can be minimised by providing young people with the proper education, support and guidance. These fall under the responsibility of parents, educators, the media, and health service providers such as doctors, nurses and counsellors. Promoting a healthy lifestyle and equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to live a healthy life, young people are empowered to lead a fulfilling and productive life.

Health provision and promotion is a two-way street; collaboration between youth and adults is required if young people are to learn how to make decisions that will affect their health now and in the future. As such, health providers must attempt to give youth a voice in the process of health care, while ensuring the provision of accessible and effective health services.

Information relating to the health of young Turkish-Cypriots in the north is very scarce. According to a Council of Europe Report there are few prominent health concerns in the north of the island.[116] An expert group from Brussels posited that there were few sexually transmitted infections (STIs), low rates of teenage suicides and relatively few teenage pregnancies; obesity and eating disorders have yet to emerge. Nevertheless, the group detected significant levels of smoking and drinking and the absence of any mechanisms for health or sexual education for young Turkish-Cypriots. Drugs are also widely available, easily accessible and affordable, contributing to the rising incidence of drug-related crimes.

Research and statistics regarding the health of young Greek-Cypriots is slowly growing, although information remains limited. As a result of higher levels of affluence and consumption, Greek-Cypriot society has witnessed growing rates of obesity and drug use; similarly, as a consequence of more rapid modernisation and the change of traditional values, including those governing the relations between the sexes, there seems to be a growing trend in abortions. As in the north, cigarettes and alcohol are consumed by a significant proportion of young Cypriots in the south.

## Smoking, Alcohol Consumption and Drugs

**Smoking** is a serious problem that affects youth around the world; most smokers start smoking before the age of 18.[117] Smoking from an early age (over a quarter of experimental smokers are below the age of 10) can have severely detrimental effects on the health of individuals. Health problems commonly associated with tobacco consumption include cancer, heart disease and diabetes. In the Republic of Cyprus the prevalence of smoking is very high. According to a special Eurobarometer Report on the attitudes of Europeans towards tobacco,

31% of Greek-Cypriots and 39% of Turkish-Cypriots surveyed classified themselves as smokers; displaying a higher proportion of smokers in Cyprus, as compared to other European countries such as Belgium (26%), Portugal (24%) and Sweden (18%).[118]

More worrying is that Cyprus appears to beat the Mediterranean, Europe and the US for the number of 15 to 16 year old males who smoke.[119] According to recent research studies in the Greek-Cypriot community, 13% of boys and 7% of girls in lower secondary schools, and 36% of boys and 23% of girls in upper secondary schools, were smokers.[120] Despite the passing of a law in 2002, which prohibited the sale of tobacco products to minors under the age of 18, research findings prove that the law has not been properly enforced as 95% of secondary school smokers surveyed stated that they had recently purchased cigarettes in a store and had not been refused cigarettes because of their age.[121]

Since the accession of Cyprus into the EU in 2004, a number of laws have been passed which prohibit smoking in places such as governmental and semi-governmental institutions, and other public areas. Many private work places have also banned smoking indoors except for key designated areas. These steps can go a long way to dissuade young people from smoking, given that 91% of students surveyed indicated that they had been exposed to smoke in places outside of the home.[122] Despite the prominent smoking culture which exists across the island, Cypriots appear to be coming around as according to a recent 'Cyprobarometer' survey, almost 9 in 10 Cypriots supported a ban on smoking in public areas; 88% were in favour of prohibiting smoking in closed public areas; 85% were willing to ban smoking in the workplace; 80% in restaurants; and 75% in bars.[123]

Heavy **alcohol consumption** can cause severe problems to the physical, psychological and social well-being of young people.[124] The health risks associated with over-consumption of alcohol are both short- and long-term. On the one hand, the consumption of alcohol by youth represents their desire to be seen as adults. On the other hand, early, and in particular

excessive consumption of alcohol is also attributed to the need to rebel against parental and other controls; parents often note that reprimanding this behaviour results in more frequent and heavier alcohol use among young persons. Alcohol is considered to be a fixture in Mediterranean cultures, whereby a moderate amount of alcohol consumed regularly, typically along with lunch or dinner, is seen to contribute to good health and longevity. This belief seems to apply to Cyprus and especially the Greek-Cypriot community; although Islam prohibits alcohol, Turkish-Cypriots, being mostly secular, do consume some alcohol. According to a Special Eurobarometer on Attitudes towards Alcohol, Greek-Cypriots' consumption of alcoholic beverages appears to be in line with the European average, as 74% of those surveyed stated that they had consumed an alcoholic beverage in the past 12 months (the European average is 75%).[125] This percentage was lower among Turkish-Cypriots, 47% of which admitted to consuming alcohol in the past year.

In general, Cypriot culture does not encourage heavy drinking to the point of getting intoxicated. Rather, as mentioned, the consumption of alcohol is seen as an activity which contributes to a healthy lifestyle, as well as a form of socialising with friends and making merry. Nevertheless, the alcohol consumption of Cypriots does come with some risk when combined with driving under the influence of alcohol and the rate of road accidents, which is high among Cypriot youth (as discussed further below). Unfortunately, the existing cultural values do not encourage Cypriot youth to drink and drive responsibly. Rather, Cypriot youth (typically young men) drink and drive as a way of showcasing their bravery and daringness; exercising caution and care (the required behaviours) are still seen as feminine traits that should be avoided.

**Drug consumption** has been increasing in the south, evident from the increase in the number of deaths resulting from the use of illegal, addictive substances from 14 in 2005 to 21 in 2007.[126] Drug use is highest among Cypriot males, between the ages of 15 and 34, and is higher still among young soldiers. While a minor 1.2% of the Greek-Cypriot population have admitted to consuming cocaine at least

once in their life, a slightly higher 6.6% have tried cannabis (either in the form of marijuana or hash) at least once.[127] A 2008 Eurobarometer survey on young people (aged 15 to 24) and drugs showed that, compared to the European average, young Greek-Cypriots were more likely to turn to their parents or relatives to obtain information about illicit drugs and drug use; they were less likely to use the Internet as a source of information.[128] Cypriot youth were among the highest percentage of respondents who felt that it would be very difficult to obtain cannabis, ecstasy, heroin or cocaine. Finally, Cypriots, along with other southern Europeans such as Greeks, Italians and Spaniards were among youth who felt that tough measures against drug dealers were an effective response to drug problems.

The situation in the north of Cyprus is somewhat different from that in the south; drugs are cheap to purchase and very accessible. Given this, there is a high level of drug-related crime. Several of these crimes have involved young, educated Turkish-Cypriots from 'good families' and approximately 37% of prisoners in the central prison in northern Nicosia were serving time due to drug offences.[129] In the north there is only one treatment centre for individuals who suffer from the problems related to drug misuse. Additionally, sources of information concerning the dangers of drug use are extremely limited and as such young Turkish-Cypriots remain uninformed about the harmful effects and risks of drug use.

Young Cypriots interviewed for the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project* were asked who they held accountable for the increasing drug problem; responses ranged from parents to the police and from counsellors to drug dealers.

*We know many situations in which parents leave their kids uncontrolled, they do not check up on them and even from a young age they allow them* [the children] *to run around. Or they* [the parents] *have other concerns, and they do not protect their kids, they do not give them advice* [...] *There may be drugs in schools everyday, and this is because no one is there to counsel the students...*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18, single, college student (aesthetics), part-time salesperson, urban Nicosia]**

*I think that the government is responsible for the drug problem in the north. The authorities are not doing anything in order to improve public awareness of the problems related to drug consumption. We do not have any drug treatment centres here...The only thing they do is warn us not to use drugs but this is not enough.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 21, university student, Nicosia]**

*As regards drugs...many young people may feel disappointed by something which happened in their lives...and because they do not find support from anyone, or from society in general, they wind up doing drugs.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, university graduate, chemist, single, rural Limassol]**

*The police keep arresting people who possess small amounts of drugs; they never arrest the people responsible for organising the large trafficking of drugs.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 22, unemployed, Kyrenia]**

*Greedy people who are in search of money, they find any way* [such as selling drugs] *so that they can make money and become rich.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 16, student, single, rural Limassol]**

*I think that the demand for drugs in the north is limited but that the supply is high. The drugs are flown in from Turkey. We hear about them arresting someone at the port almost everyday and yet they still keep smuggling drugs in.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, employed as secretary, Famagusta]**

Others tend to 'psychologize' the problem, stressing personal weaknesses as the primary factor to 'blame' for why some turn to drugs.

*The dealers always hit upon the weak characters; neither the government is to blame, nor the parents, or the foreigners. I mean, if someone does not want to get mixed up with drugs, they will not.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, employed as a cashier, single, urban Nicosia]**

## Road Accidents

Road accidents are considered to be one of the major social problems in Cyprus today; the number of road accidents reported to the police in 2007 was 2,302, where 2,155 people incurred serious or minor injuries and 89 suffered fatal injuries.[130] Road safety is an issue currently targeted by the European Union which is trying to reduce the road death rate from the present average of 8.7 per 100,000 residents down to 5; in Cyprus this figure stands at a very high 11.2 per 100,000.[131] Certain population groups and categories face greater levels of risk on the road, such as pedestrians, motorcycle or moped drivers and cyclists. Particularly vulnerable are young people aged 15 to 24, as they represent 25% of the lives lost per year.[132]

In Cyprus, the majority of road accidents have been attributed to speeding, careless driving and alcohol consumption. As is the case in the wider EU, young Cypriots are especially susceptible. Approximately 30% of road accidents within the Greek-Cypriot community involved young people under the age of 25.[133] A survey carried out in the north measuring the incidence of traffic accidents among Turkish-Cypriots arrived at similar conclusions, as the frequency of traffic accidents was higher among younger drivers. According to the results, 13.8% of Turkish-Cypriots aged 31 and older had been involved in a traffic accident during the last two years.[134] This figure doubled among younger Turkish-Cypriots; comparatively, 28.6% of 18 to 23 year-olds and 27.4% of 24 to 30 year-olds had been involved in traffic accidents over the past two years.

## Eating Habits, Obesity and Eating Disorders

In its transition from a traditional society to a more modern one, the traditionally healthy Cypriot/Mediterranean diet has begun to erode as more and more fast food chains open on the island. These restaurant chains are popular among the youth worldwide, and in Cyprus they constitute popular meeting spots among Cypriot adolescents and youth. The prevalence of childhood and adolescent obesity in the Republic of Cyprus was observed in a 2002 cross-sectional study of 2,467 children between the ages of 6 and 17.[135] According to varying scientific definitions, the propensity for obesity was noted in approximately 6.9% to 10.3% of males and 5.7% to 9.1% of females surveyed. Moreover, between 16.9% and 18.8% of males were defined as being overweight; this ranged from 13.1% to 17.0% among females.

Most worrisome, the frequency of childhood and adolescent obesity in Cyprus was comparable to rates observed in North America. Survey results from the Turkish-Cypriot community demonstrated a similar pattern with an increase in obesity among young children.[136] Between 2005 and 2007, the prevalence of overweight individuals increased from 14.8% to 18.3% among children aged 12 to 15 years. Furthermore, the frequency of obesity among children within the same age range increased from 11.3% to 13.7%.

Globalisation and the advances in information and communication technologies have facilitated the spread of worldwide media cultures. As a result, young Cypriots are exposed to images and trends which impact their perceptions and attitudes towards their bodies and health. Anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorders often begin during adolescence and are increasingly affecting both young women and men. These eating disorders have been attributed to the pressure felt by the young to keep up modern standards of beauty that are difficult to attain. Furthermore, eating disorders often serve as a coping mechanism to challenge situations such as puberty, family death and other life stresses.

A 2004 study that examined the eating habits and disorders of 1,800 children and teenagers in the Republic of Cyprus, between the ages of 10 and 18, highlighted that half of the girls surveyed were not satisfied with their body weight and wanted to lose weight; furthermore, 38% were not happy with some part of their body. These figures were considerably lower among male respondents: only 9% were not satisfied with their body weight and 17% were unhappy with part of their body.

As elsewhere, these findings relate to different gender values, which are the result of a traditional, patriarchal society that has increasingly come under the spell of modernity. Despite recent strides in gender equality, social pressures and male-dominated social constructions continue to determine the role of women in Cypriot society, hence the importance of external appearance, which many young women come to associate with their own evaluations of self-worth.[137] Men, on the other hand, traditionally seen as the 'dominant' gender, are still judged on their 'power potential' (physical strength, socio-economic or other). Yet, given today's emphasis on healthy lifestyles and eternal youth, men are increasingly feeling the pressure to conform to public images of how they should 'appear' – possessing muscular and 'fit' physiques. It therefore does not come as a surprise that, according to the research, 26% of young women and 13% of young men displayed behaviour suggestive of eating disorders.[138]

Despite differences in gender values, the inability to live up to society's expected image, often results in a personal sense of failure for young women and men alike, leading to delinquent behaviour or psycho-social disorders (such as eating disorders).

## Sexuality and Sexual and Reproductive Health

In recent decades young Cypriots have increasingly begun to experiment with their sexuality, especially within their personal relationships. As a result, young Cypriots present what appear to be 'contemporary' or 'liberated' attitudes and behaviours concerning their sexuality. Seemingly these more 'liberated' attitudes are allowed by society, yet in many ways, relationships with parents and teachers do not appear to be liberated enough so as to allow young Cypriots to freely discuss such matters with their seniors; an obvious example of this contradiction concerns 'sexual education', or more generally, the relationships between the genders (including sexual roles and identities, stereotype formation, power relationships, but also open talk about sex and contraception).

The educational system in the south has been criticised for the absence of any formal gender relationships education programme. The same applies to the north, which has also been criticised for not making any provision for such education for young Turkish-Cypriots.[139]

Young Greek-Cypriots do not receive any type of gender relationships education beyond biology classes taught to students who are 15 years old and over. These classes typically cover the changes brought on by puberty, as well as reproduction, anatomy and physiology of the reproductive organs, fertilisation, genetics and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) but cover only superficially, if at all, the psycho-social aspects of gender relationships (thus encouraging the view that sexual education is about sex – and not relationships between the genders).

This lack or marginal role of 'sexual education' results in young Cypriots having limited and/or narrow knowledge when it comes to having close relationships with the opposite gender and to practicing safe sex (including a lack of awareness of the potential risks associated with different STIs).

This becomes even more evident when the knowledge of young Cypriots concerning ways of transmission, prevention and treatment of STIs, compared to their counterparts from North America and Canada.[140]

An earlier study among 3,176 Greek-Cypriot school children, aged 15 to 18 years old, shed insight into the sources that young Cypriots primarily turned to for sexual information – 24.1% turned to books and periodicals; 15.4% to newspapers and magazines; 12.3% to videos and 12.2% to television; and 12% to friends. Notably absent were parents and school teachers.[141]

According to the $YAS_1$, overall, young Cypriots surveyed felt that they had a good understanding of sexual and reproductive health. Approximately 83% of Greek-Cypriots rated their knowledge of sexual and reproductive health as "good" or "very good"; 61.2% of their Turkish-Cypriot counter-parts rated their knowledge as "good" or "very good".

**Overall, my knowledge about sexual and reproductive health is:**

| | Very poor | Poor | Fair | Good | Very good |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | 2% | 16% | 52% | | 31% |
| TC | 2% | 7% | 30% | 40% | 21% |
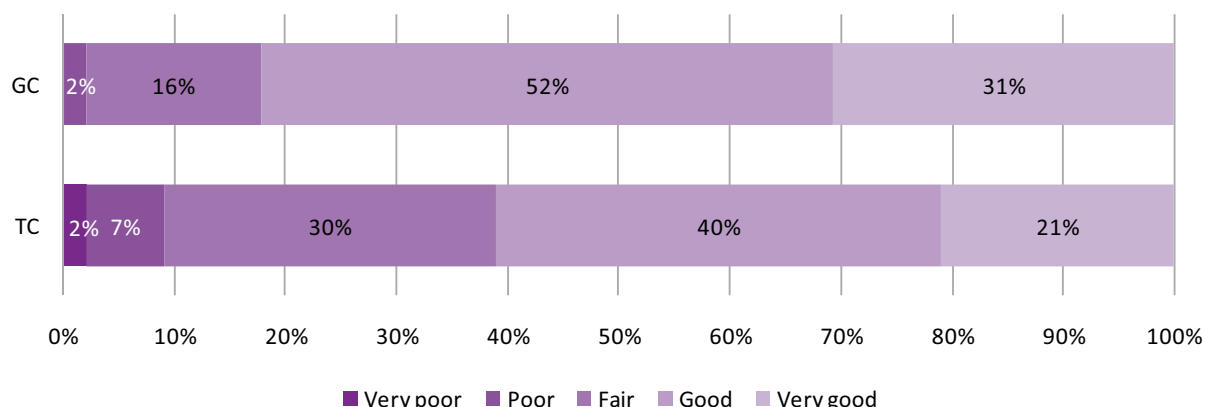
**Table 5.3: Rating Knowledge of Sexual and Reproductive Health**

Respondents in the $YAS_1$ were asked to select the most important and useful source of information regarding sexual matters. Friends (33%), family (23%) and doctors (16%) were cited by Greek-Cypriot respondents as the three most important and useful information sources. Similarly, friends (67%) were the top source of information among young Turkish-Cypriots who also turned to the Internet (46%) and books (32%) for insight. Surprisingly parents were hardly consulted; despite the close relationship noted earlier between Turkish-Cypriot youth and their parents. This implies a sense of deference and/or respect that does not encourage talk on more in-timate matters. Not surprisingly, teachers, and in effect schools, did not score a high rating among young Cypriots as go-to information sources; only 8% of Greek-Cypriots and 12% of Turkish-Cypriots cited teachers as important sources of information.

The above responses were confirmed through the in-depth interviews; young Cypriots tend to favour seeking out their friends for advice on sexual matters rather than their parents.

[I discuss such matters] *with my friends usually [...] because I feel closer to them; basically, I'm not embarrassed to speak to them.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 16, student, single, urban Limassol]**

*Few parents are ready to talk about sexual issues with their children. Young people prefer to read about these things in magazines or to discuss such issues with their friends.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 22, construction worker, Morfou]**

*I preferred to ask my friends and my teachers [...] I felt more comfortable with my teachers and my friends rather than with my parents.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, employed in private company, single, urban Nicosia]**

Many Cypriot youth felt that information related to sexual behaviour should be provided through their educational system. Nevertheless, this does not seem to be the case and, as a result, they find themselves turning to less reliable sources such as television, magazines and hearsay:

*I think the school must be the place where young people learn about topics relating to sexual matters...But most of us learn about things from cheap magazines or from the street.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 19, employed in bank, Nicosia]**

*Sexual issues are taboo in our educational system. Because of this, young people learn everything from watching television or videos.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 23, soldier, Famagusta]**

Nevertheless, in exceptional cases some young seem to have consulted their parents when they had to:

*Well, basically, I forced the situation to come to this point so that I could talk with my mum, because at the beginning of my sexual life no one knew anything, but I saw to it that my mum, as a woman, could tell me her opinion and advise me on some issues.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

While others were too shy to broach the topic with anyone:

*No, we never had this discussion.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, student, single, urban Nicosia]**

*No, it's just that I'm embarrassed to pose such questions. Personally, I do not like to discuss this topic with others. Ok, they came and spoke to us at school about these things but I wouldn't make the effort to ask such questions.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18, college student (aesthetics), part-time salesperson, single, urban Nicosia]**

When it comes to the topic of premarital sex, young Greek-Cypriots appear more 'liberated' than their Turkish-Cypriot counterparts as only 12% of Greek-Cypriots, compared to 39% of Turkish-Cypriots, "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that premarital sex is wrong. On the other hand, 69% of Greek-Cypriots felt that sex before marriage is not wrong.

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:**

Premarital sex [before marriage] is wrong
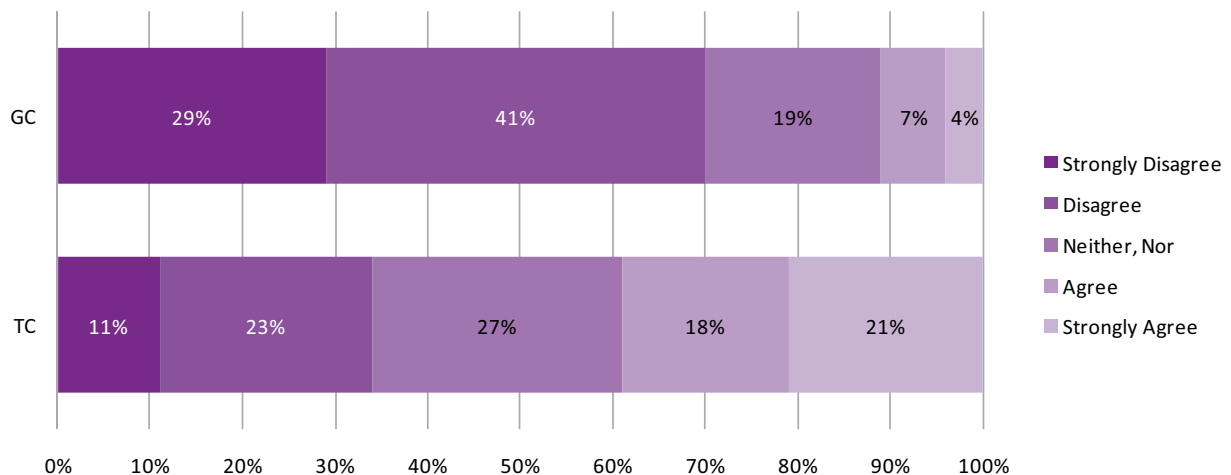


Table 5.4: Attitudes towards Premarital Sex

Adults often worry that providing children and adolescents with 'sexual education' is tantamount to encouraging them to become sexually active from a young age.[142]

Consequently, 'sexual education' does not make its way into the educational curriculum. Survey respondents were asked to state their level of agreement or disagreement with the

statement: *Giving teenagers lessons at school about sex and contraception encourages them to have sex too early.*

It would appear that both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth do not share adult views that providing 'sexual education' lessons at school would encourage young people to have sex too early.

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

A. Giving teenagers lessons as school about sex and contraception encourages them to have sex too early

| Group | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither, Nor | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------|-------------------|----------|--------------|-------|----------------|
| GC | 12% | 32% | 39% | 14% | 3% |
| TC | 19% | 19% | 25% | 27% | 10% |
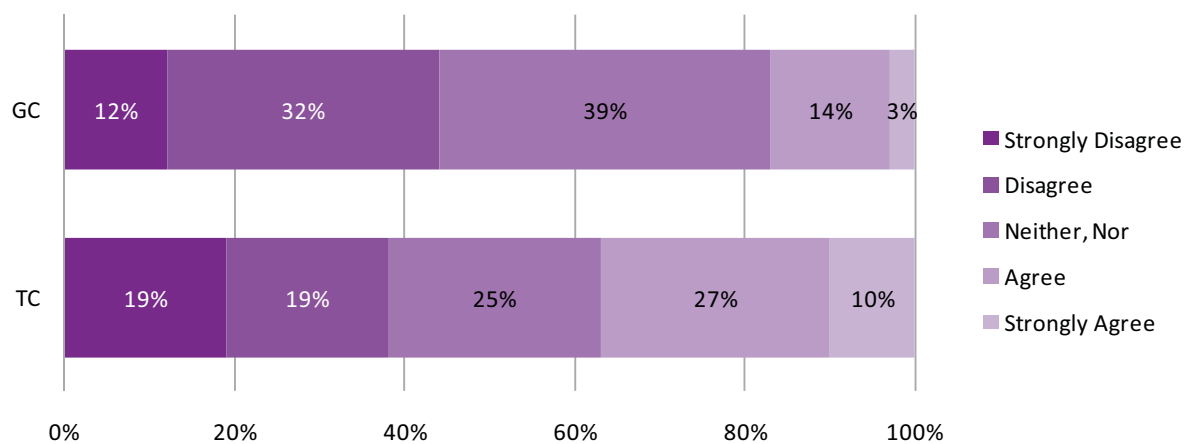
B. Contraception should be more easily available to teenagers, even if they are under 16

| Group | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither, Nor | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------|-------------------|----------|--------------|-------|----------------|
| GC | 3% | 10% | 17% | 46% | 23% |
| TC | 9% | 16% | 28% | 31% | 17% |
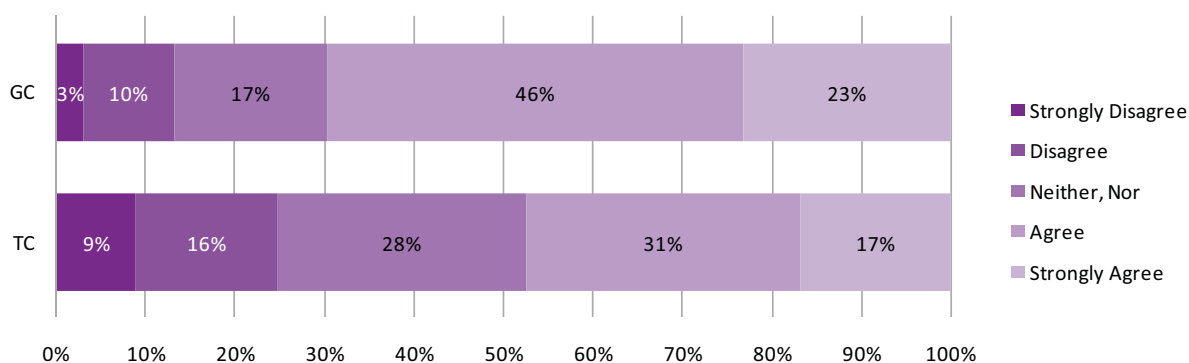
**Table 5.5: Attitudes towards the Promotion of 'Safe Sex'**

## Teenage Pregnancies

In the Republic of Cyprus the law on abortion is restrictive, allowing its practice only in exceptional cases; for instance when police and medical services confirm that a pregnancy is due to rape; or if, after consultation with two doctors, it is deemed that the physical, mental or psychological state of the mother is threatened; or if there is a danger of severe abnormality to the foetus. Considered a sin by the Church, abortions are performed in private clinics within the Greek-Cypriot community. In the last few decades, sexual norms have changed dramatically, thus unwanted pregnancies are quietly acknowledged as a necessary evil. Yet at the same time, traditional values of chastity still linger on, so illegitimate children/unwed mothers carry a strong social stigma. Thus, although abortions are officially frowned upon by Cypriot society, women often secretly choose this option instead of enduring the stigma typically associated with raising a child as an unwed mother. Indeed, Cyprus has one of the lowest proportions of extra-marital births in Europe: in 2006, 489 children were born out of wedlock, constituting a minor 5.6% of the total number of births that year.[143] This statistic indirectly hints at the situation of abortions in Cyprus.

Although there are no accurate figures on the number of abortions performed each year, various sources assume that this number is quite high and on the rise. According to the Cyprus Family Planning Association (CFPA):

*Abortion seems to be increasing among adolescents in contemporary Cypriot society, although there is lack of scholarly evidence to gauge the extent of the problem.*[144]

Views on abortion differed among young Cypriots from both communities, with some against, and others in favour of, the practice of abortion:

*I studied pre-primary education* [thus] *I consider it inconceivable for a woman to kill... It's a life, even if it isn't complete...it's a life that's going to come, and she* [the prospective mother] *has no right to put an end to the life of that baby.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate, employed at cooperative bank, engaged, urban Paphos]**

*It shouldn't be done. Why get pregnant if you don't want the child?*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student, urban Morfou]**

*It's the worst crime that a woman can commit*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, technical-vocational school, salesperson, divorced with 2 children, rural Nicosia]**

*Nowadays* [in the contemporary world] *it becomes necessary; but personally I think that it is wrong.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 22, civil servant, urban Nicosia]**

Those who supported abortions presented various scenarios which they believed might warrant the act; among these were health risks to the mother or unborn child, as well as the (young) age of the woman:

*As far as abortions are concerned, I find them reasonable or acceptable for medical reasons as regards the life of the mother, or when she cannot keep the child for certain reasons, or when there is a danger that the woman may die in some instances...*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 20, student, single, rural Limassol]**

*I do not think abortion is necessary but someone who is of a young age and cannot look after a child must be allowed to have an abortion.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, student, urban Nicosia]**

*Let's say that a twenty year-old becomes pregnant and she's about to start working, or she's at the beginning of her studies – a baby will make it difficult, it may also ruin her life and, as a result, that woman may ruin the life of the child.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, student, single, urban Nicosia]**

*From the moment that you're not ready to accept a child, rather than bringing it into the world at a stage when you did not really want it, and depriving yourself of opportunities which you may have had in the future – better not bring it into the world to begin with!*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, university graduate, chemist, single, rural Limassol]**

Recently the existing law on abortion has come under attack by several public actors, including the Cyprus Family Planning Association and the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies for being out-dated; leading young (and most worryingly, underage) women to resort to illegal abortions or the use of illegal drugs that induce miscarriages.[145] They argue that the law, which dates back more than twenty five years, is in violation of a woman's right to have access to a safe and legal end to her pregnancy should she choose so. Young women and migrant women are usually the greatest victims of strict anti-abortion laws; further affirming the need for the provision of proper sexual education that targets young women in particular on methods of contraception and the consequences of a pre-mature pregnancy.

## Homosexuality

Homosexuality was also touched upon during the in-depth interviews. Once again, young Cypriots displayed differing views on the issue of same-sex couples and relationships. Greek-Cypriots seem to be extremely intolerant of homosexuality – which they condemn vehemently (in recent surveys, it seems to

be one of the strongest negative values they hold). This intolerance relates to sexuality and the strong differentiation of roles between men and women. Masculinity is associated with toughness, aggression and assertiveness; since gender roles are seen to be part of the 'natural order of things', homosexuality 'goes against nature';[146] homosexuals undermine the clarity of roles and adopt feminine styles (seen as sinful or dirty).[147] Young people are gradually questioning and altering such values – but only gradually: what 'others say', and predominant values, are still very strong.

These ambivalent attitudes, wavering between the more traditional and conservative, and the more modern and liberal acceptance of choice and difference, were evident in respondents' comments:

*I have progressive ideas. However, despite my views, I do not accept nor respect homosexuality.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24,
employed in computer shop, urban Nicosia]**

*I cannot judge the other person. It depends on them as well, but if it chances that I have a friend who is like that, I won't tell him "leave" – I will accept him as he is, because I may also, to some extent, have certain vices; they will also accept me as I am.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18,
single, college student (aesthetics),
part-time salesperson, urban Nicosia]**

*I think that homosexuality is bad and shouldn't be prominent but we cannot interfere in people's affairs. Of course, each person is free to enter into whatever* [sexual] *relationship they like.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 18,
university student (electrical engineering),
urban Famagusta]**

Some respondents stressed the stigma associated with spending time with homosexuals, fearing the 'consequences' of being associated with this socially unaccepted group:

*It's a ridiculous thing…homosexuality is a ridiculous thing for me… I, for one, would not dare have a friendship with a homosexual* […]. *They are not bad people – it is their nature…*

*but I would not dare come into contact with such people. Ok, they are not bad,* [still, I would worry] *on account of gossip, on account of thousands of things, of which they may also condemn me – that 'you are hanging out with a homosexual* [or] *a lesbian'…*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23,
technical-school, salesperson,
divorced with 2 children, rural Nicosia]**

## HIV/AIDS

Although the Republic of Cyprus has faced the problem of HIV/AIDS since the mid 1980s, the rate of HIV/AIDS infection is measured at 0.1%; that is, one tenth of the world mean rate.[148] The number of recorded cases averaged twenty three per year from 1986 to 2000; made up of fourteen Cypriots and nine foreigners. This figure has actually dropped over time: in 2002 there were sixteen new cases reported, consisting of seven Cypriots and sixteen foreigners. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS remains low today with approximately 400 to 500 infected people among the adult population. The gender ratio of individuals with the disease is approximately six males to one female.

According to a 2006 Eurobarometer Report on AIDS, approximately two thirds (66%) of Greek-Cypriots and, a little more than half (55%) of Turkish-Cypriots take precautions against the possibility of contracting AIDS during sexual intercourse; both communities ranked higher than the EU25 average which stood at 48%.[149] Although Cypriots displayed a high level of awareness among Europeans as to how HIV/AIDS may be contracted, a number of misconceptions concerning the disease exist among members of both communities. While Cypriots were quite aware of the danger of "being injected with a used needle by someone who has AIDS or is HIV positive" (99% of Greek-Cypriots and 95% of Turkish-Cypriots), a considerable 80% of Greek-Cypriots thought that AIDS could "be caught" or "might be caught" from kissing an infected person. Only 20% of Cypriots answered correctly that AIDS could not be caught by kissing a person; the EU average for those who answered correctly was 40%. The Eurobarometer Report concluded that a

level of fear existed among Cypriots regarding HIV/AIDS.

Through the *YAS$_1$*, young Cypriots were asked whether they would befriend a person with HIV/AIDS. Forty one percent of Greek-Cypriots stated that they would be friends with a person with HIV/AIDS; 22% would not and 38% were not sure whether they would or not. Turkish-

Cypriot youth's responses varied, with nearly three-fifths (58%) indicating that they would not be friends with a person suffering from the disease, another fifth (22%) would and the remaining fifth were "not sure". Survey participants were asked to indicate whether or not they agreed with the statement: *Generally speaking, Cypriots do not care for people with HIV/IDS.*

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

A. Generally speaking Cypriots do not care for people with HIV/AIDS
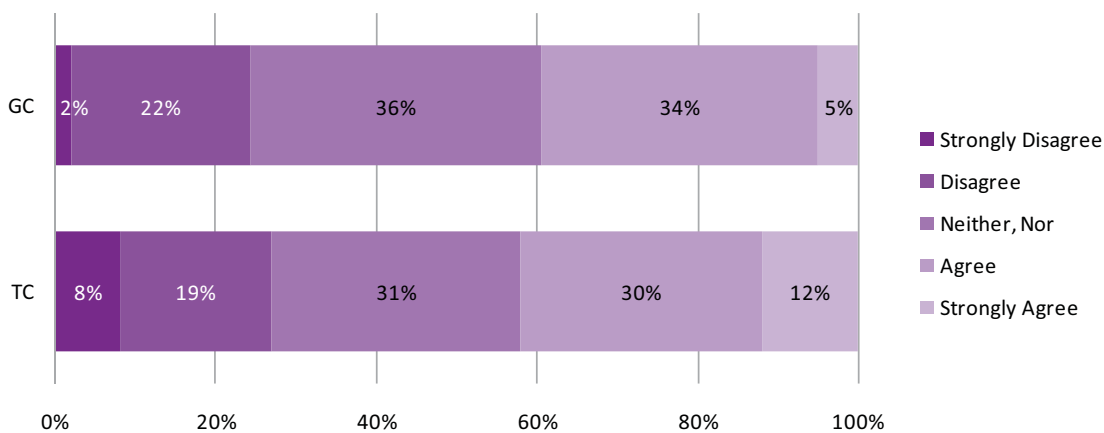


B. Generally speaking other European citizens care more than Cypriots about people with HIV/AIDS
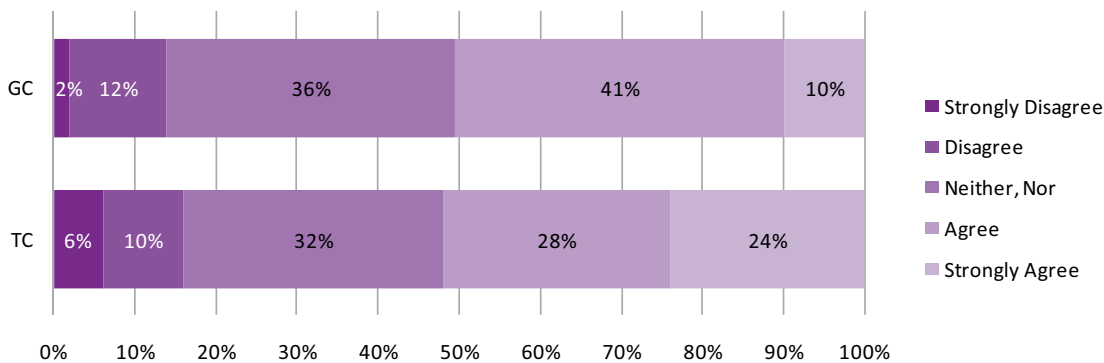


**Table 5.6: Cypriot vs European: Level of Care towards Individuals with HIV/AIDS**

About 40% of Greek-Cypriots and 42% of Turkish-Cypriots "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that Cypriots did not care about people suffering from the disease; furthermore, 50% of Greek-Cypriots and 52% of Turkish-Cypriots either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that European citizens cared more about carriers of HIV/AIDS than Cypriots did. There is quite

a candid agreement on the shortcomings of Cypriots (from both communities) as regards showing solidarity and care for people suffering from HIV/AIDS. What is more is the equally candid admission of the 'superiority' of Europeans when it comes to social concerns; other research has confirmed Cypriots' acknowledgment of European sensitivities on social issues.

## Attitudes towards Individuals with Disabilities and other Health Conditions

A large majority of Cypriots seem to be positively predisposed towards individuals with disabilities. For instance, a high 70% of Greek-Cypriot respondents and 71% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents replied that they would befriend a person with disabilities. Only a very small percentage (7% and 14%, respectively) stated that they would not be friends with a person who suffered from a disability, and a moderate number (23% of Greek-Cypriots and 15% of Turkish-Cypriots) were not sure whether or not they would befriend disabled persons.

Respondents were also asked whether or not they would be comfortable dating a person with a) disabilities, b) diabetes and c) thalassemia. In the first case, responses offered by Greek-Cypriots were much more positive than those of Turkish-Cypriots: 48% of Greek-Cypriots, compared to 20% of Turkish-Cypriots, would date a disabled person. Approximately a third of respondents in each

community experienced ambivalent feelings: 35% and 32%, respectively, did not know whether they would or not. A similar pattern of results emerged as regards dating persons with diabetes or thalassemia. Greek-Cypriots were more ready to date individuals with diabetes or thalassemia, whereas Turkish-Cypriots seemed to be much more sceptical.[150]

Survey participants were asked to indicate whether or not they agreed with the statement: *generally speaking, Cypriots do not care for people with disabilities.* Approximately 36% of young Greek-Cypriots and 42% of Turkish-Cypriots either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" to this statement, while 36% and 29%, respectively, neither agreed nor disagreed. The next statement presented to the young Cypriots aimed to gauge how Cypriots measured up against other European citizens. To the statement: *generally speaking, other European citizens care more than Cypriots about disabled people*, 51% of Greek-Cypriots and 55% of Turkish-Cypriots "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement. Approximately one third of all respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Both sets of replies confirm the above observations.

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

A. Generally speaking Cypriots do not care for people with disabilities
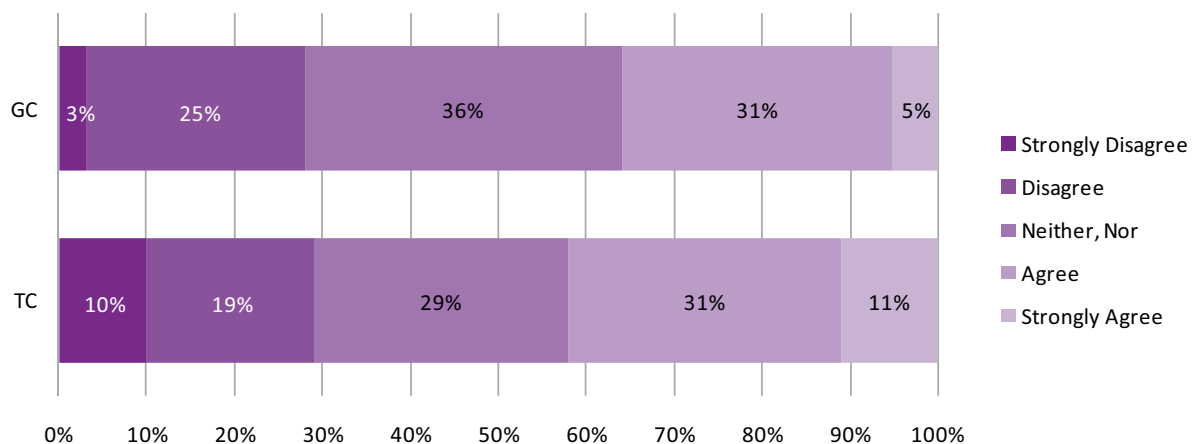
B. Generally speaking other European citizens care more than Cypriots about disabled people
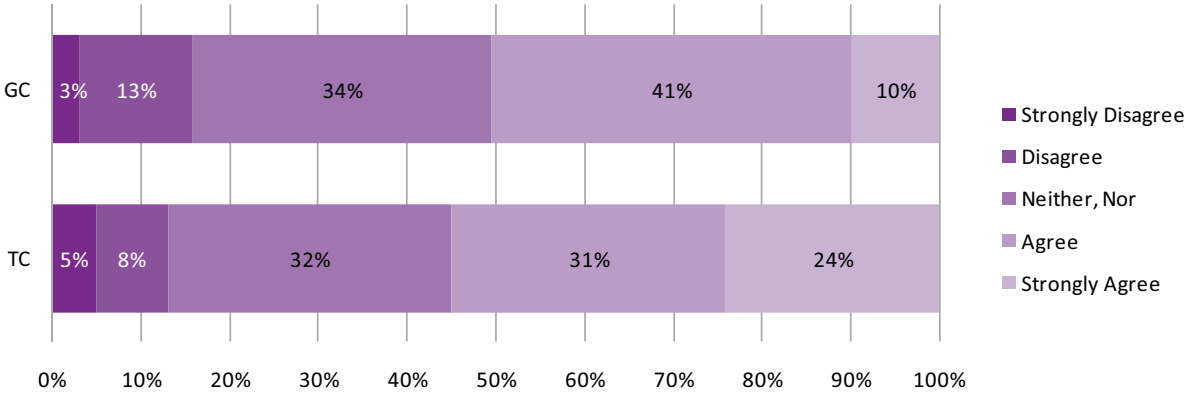


**Table 5.7: Cypriot vs European: Level of Care towards Individuals with Disabilities**

| BOX 5.4 | Promoting Special Education for Children with Learning Difficulties |
|---|---|

The Cyprus Dyslexia Association, facing the problem of school teachers who are not aware of the nature of learning difficulties and who cannot support children with learning difficulties properly, decided to cooperate with other non governmental organisations which are involved with learning difficulties in order to "educate the educators" of Cyprus. To this end, four organisations came together to establish a Network for promoting the rights of children with learning disabilities; the members of this Network were: the Cyprus Dyslexia Association, AD/HD Cyprus, KKDD Turkish-Cypriot Association for Dyslexia and KAYAD.

The project began in June 2006 and ended in June 2008. The target was for 20 teachers and 20 parents to receive training who in turn trained another 300 teachers and 300 parents, respectively, on Learning Difficulties. These targets proved to be too narrow as the need for training was so great. Eventually 115 teachers acquired the necessary skills to become trainers, and went on to train 924 teachers, as well as many parents. The training was effective enough, although a lot of work remains to be done so that the majority of teachers receive appropriate training, since most teachers in Cyprus do not have adequate knowledge on learning difficulties.

Although this initiative was helpful, the whole educational system of Cyprus would benefit from such training. This should be undertaken by the relevant authorities so that all children with learning difficulties will be able to benefit.

*Learning Difficulties Network of Cyprus*

## Promoting a Healthier Lifestyle among Cypriot Youth

The leisure activities which Cypriot youth engage in allow them the opportunity to develop their personalities and independence, away from the influence of families and schools, often through interaction with their peers. As such, they require access to various public spaces where they can meet, interact and socialise safely. Special attention must be made to ensure that the 'virtual' public spaces, which Cypriot youth increasingly have access to given the rapidly growing use of new ICTs, are safe places for them to spend time.

Drawing from data available from the third round of the *European Social Survey*, Cypriot youth, aged 15 to 24, expressed greater levels of satisfaction towards the state of health services in their country, compared to youth surveyed in other European countries.[151] On a scale of 0 to 10 (where 0 = extremely bad and 10 = extremely good), on average, young Cypriots rated the state of health services in their country as 6.23.

Mean scores presented by other European youth included 4.15 (Poland), 5.53 (UK) and 6.22 (Norway).

*The young generation can influence their elders and can make them understand the environmental problems that are faced by all today. The youth can make them see that our environment is deteriorating day by day.*

**~ Chief Oren Lyons**

The environment is one of the areas which young Cypriots view as important; according to the $YAS_1$, 91% of Greek-Cypriots and 77% of Turkish-Cypriots stated that it was important for them to live in a country with a healthy environment. Still, young Cypriots would benefit from a stronger sense of environmental awareness and improved habits relating to the practice of environmentally friendly actions. For example, although 84% of Greek-Cypriots usually, or always, collect their rubbish in a plastic bag and place it in a rubbish bin during excursions to the seaside or the mountains, only 46% of Turkish-Cypriot youth follow suit. And while 57% of Turkish-Cypriots never, or rarely, leave the water running while brushing their teeth, this figure stands at 32% among Greek-Cypriots.

Young people around the island need to cultivate a stronger sense of responsibility and caution when it comes to preserving and sustaining the island's environment and resources. According to a recent study on the perceptions of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots on sustainable development and climate change in Cyprus, 45% of Greek-Cypriot and 17% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents, aged 18 to 29, were aware of the term 'sustainable development'.[152] It is interesting to note that, among the Greek-Cypriot sample, awareness of the term 'sustainable development' decreased with age; an opposite pattern emerged among Turkish-Cypriot respondents, as those over the age of 50 displayed the highest level of awareness of the term.[153]

The same study showed that, according to young respondents, the top three aspects of the environment currently facing problems in Cyprus were the forests, the atmosphere and rivers and wetlands (among Greek-Cypriots) and the forests, the sea and the urban environment (among Turkish-Cypriots). In general, respondents from both communities displayed low levels of approval when it came to rating the overall development currently taking place in Cyprus on sustainability for future generations: on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 = very deficient and 10 = perfect), the mean score among young Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot respondents were 4.6 and 3.7, respectively. Moreover, young respondents did not feel as though the Cypriot citizen is usually consulted in the decision making processes concerning environmental issues; thus indicating another area in which Cypriot youth are undervalued or underutilised.

Approximately three quarters of Greek-Cypriot (75%) and three fifths (61%) of Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed in the $YAS_1$ believe that it is important for the government to invest in the environment. The slight disparity between both communities could be attributed to the fact that Turkish-Cypriot youth, faced with harsher economic difficulties, place greater emphasis on the creation of more and better job opportunities for them. Still, Turkish-Cypriots were more likely to agree that one of the benefits of a swift resolution to the Cyprus Problem would be the ability to better manage the island's environmental resources in a sustainable way; approximately 35% of Greek-Cypriots were of the same mind. The environment is of common concern to both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots and, as such, provides young and old Cypriots alike, a mutual cause to work together on, in order to ensure a sustainable island for future generations.

Though often carried out on a small scale or as part of pilot studies, the Ministry of Health in the Republic of Cyprus (often in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture) has implemented various health-related programmes or initiatives which directly, or indirectly, target Cypriot youth.[154] One example includes the creation of a Drug Prevention Centre for Adolescents (PERSEAS) that provides preventative and supportive structures via a network for adolescents and their environment (family and school). Activities included the provision of individual and group counselling, life skills therapy and the creation of a drug help-line. Other examples include programmes focusing on health promotion/education, dental hygiene skills, and the prevention of tobacco use and addiction.

Unfortunately, such programmes are few and far in between and target a small sample of the youth population rather than the majority.

In order to promote healthier lifestyles among Cypriot youth, special efforts must be made to further develop initiatives and programmes that will appeal to the interests of the young, while simultaneously providing them with useful and informative content. These programmes may focus on issues of healthy eating, anti-smoking, responsible drinking and on better understanding the relationships between the genders, to name a few. Above all, young Cypriots need to be made aware of the health services available to them, as well as how to easily access these. Cypriot youth across the island should be targeted through awareness-raising campaigns that promote healthy lifestyles so that they may enjoy long and healthy lives.

# SOCIETAL INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIO-POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

## Declining Levels of Socio-Political Participation among the Young

Young people have often been accused for their lack of political awareness, their political apathy and disinterest in politics, as well as their limited participation in the political process.[155] Indeed, research has shown that young people show little interest in politics, which they view as boring and as having little relevance to their lives. This is not surprising given that politicians usually focus their political campaigning exclusively towards adults, dismissing the needs and concerns of the young. As a result, young people often feel that politicians are not committed to dealing with issues that concern them.[156] Some attribute young people's lack of interest in politics to a lack of knowledge and others to cynicism. Yet it has been suggested that this cynicism does not necessarily mean that young people are indifferent or uninterested in broader political issues.[157] Rather, young people can express their interest in politics without being active members of political parties; may be politically active but not vote; and may have an adequate understanding of political issues but be sceptical about their ability to influence political agendas.

Therefore, it is important to recognise the various forms and levels in which young people may be politically engaged. Additionally, it is worthwhile to note that the socio-political involvement of individuals during the period in their lives which constitutes 'youth' is not fixed but is constantly evolving as they transition from youth into adults. Various studies have shown that interest in politics increases with age (only one third of adults are not interested in politics) and is more prominent among males than females.[158]

Political participation is influenced by several factors, such as gender, family background, social class and national origin.[159] Young people tend to follow their parents' political views and affiliation but their political awareness and/ or involvement is also affected by education and employment. Some analysts propose that political participation increases with education levels, as the young become more aware of the political process and undergo political socialisation. Others believe that new trends in education and the labour market have weakened the potential for collectivism by emphasising individualistic attitudes. Employment, and even more so unemployment, can also shape political participation: young people who have been successful in finding employment and establishing themselves are generally more interested and devoted to social or political issues;[160] alternatively, individuals who experience extended periods of unemployment are less inclined towards political involvement or activity.

Over the years, the low levels of participation have resulted in growing levels of concern in several developed countries, including Australia and the USA, where efforts have been made to encourage greater participation of youth. As the professionals, entrepreneurs, politicians and leaders of tomorrow, it is vital that young people take a more active role in society in order that they may become productive and active citizens, able to successfully sustain and improve their country's development for themselves and future generations. Cyprus is no exception to the above observations, and it is a fact that low levels of socio-political participation of youth are experienced on the island, and participation rates are on the decline.

## General Overview of Cypriot Civil Society

Former research studies have noted that, in Cyprus, the percentage of the population that engages in volunteerism and participates in civil society organisations (CSOs) is fairly low.[161] More often than not, CSOs are concentrated in urban areas, and attract the more affluent members of society.[162] As a result, this group is over-represented in such organisations, whereas individuals who do not belong to a certain social class (e.g. ethnic minorities, foreign workers and rural dwellers) are typically excluded from membership and positions of leadership.[163]

In Cyprus, many CSOs have continuously struggled to survive in a politically-charged climate; limited financial resources and a lack of cooperation and communication between CSOs seem to also play a part in preventing the growth of Cypriot civil society. It is generally recognised that relationships between CSOs and the state are heavily determined by the association that these organisations have with various political parties. Most Cypriot CSOs are directly linked to political parties (or, as is the case in the south, the Church). This, in turn, plays a determining factor in the type of individuals that are drawn to the various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating throughout the island. The financial or other backing provided by political parties invariably results in CSOs – and their members – becoming dependent on the political party and its party line. Many times, this state of dependence causes CSOs to look the other way, rather than holding the state or political corporations accountable for certain actions and policies. Limited financial and human resources, strong dependence on political parties and low participation rates are all factors that contribute to the limited strength and impact of CSOs in Cyprus. As a result, very little is done in order to promote the value of civic participation to the wider society.

Civil society in the north echoes a similar pattern to that in the south of the island and the development of civil society is hampered by limited financial and human resources, as well as infrastructure. In both communities, the efforts of CSOs to influence policy have been rather feeble and they have not been successful in holding the state or the private sector accountable for their actions.

| BOX 6.1 | KAYAD Community Centre |
|---|---|

The KAYAD Community Centre (KCC), a service offered by KAYAD (Kadından Yaşama Destek Derneği - Association of Women to Support Living), is an independent, non-profit, non-political, non-religious, volunteer organisation that aims to prepare individuals to become active and contributing members to a peaceful society in order to promote community development. KCC programmes and activities are designed to promote personal, cultural, intercultural and international learning. All of KCC's activities are within the framework of the principles of a 'Culture of Peace'.

A particular target group of KCC's activities are youth. KCC believes that youth with peace of mind, the determination for peace and the necessary skills for communication and conflict resolution, will be empowered to contribute to the shifting of attitudes and actions of society. With this in mind, KCC has played a leading role in organizing and coordinating one international and three bicommunal camps located in the northern and southern parts of Cyprus, and has played a partnership role in implementing six international camps. The camps have been conducted under the themes of Peace Culture, Environment, Gender Equality and Volunteerism, all emphasizing the importance of youth participation and responsibility in dealing with environmental and social issues.

Alongside youth camps KCC organizes monthly trainings, workshops, seminars and conferences for youth on issues including 'overcoming prejudices', 'empathy', 'positive thinking', and 'communication'. Moreover KCC offers a walk-in community centre for youth to come with their ideas of small scale volunteer initiatives aimed at community development. KCC then provide the necessary support to realize these initiatives.

KCC places a strong emphasis on the concept of sustainability and the importance of self initiatives by youth to coordinate and implement activities, as well as build networks to contribute to the reconciliation of the island and the peace process. So far KCC's activities and projects have led to an active database of young Peace Volunteers who continue to collaborate with each other on their own initiative. Providing such opportunities for youth, who previously regarded the 'other' community as untrustworthy, allows them to dispel false stereotypes and to formulate independent ideas about the 'other'. KCC will continue its efforts to empower Cypriot youth to become active members, contributing to a peaceful society.

*Mine Atlı*
*Project Assistant*
*KAYAD*

Young Cypriots, across both sides of the divide, have been accused of being indifferent to civic participation, opting instead to focus on personal endeavours, such as their education, and to spend their free time with friends or pursuing their personal interests and hobbies.

However a passive interest in socio-political participation is not specific to Cypriot youth. As noted earlier, many young people the world over have long since displayed a complete lack of enthusiasm for participation in socio-political matters.

Respondents of the $YAS_1$ were asked whether or not they actively participate in different socio-political organisations or associations, of a religious, human rights, charity or business nature. The largest percentage of participants by far (55% of Greek-Cypriots and 48% of Turkish-Cypriots) admitted that they did not actively participate in any organisation or association.

**Do you actively participate in:**



GC ▪ TC

| Category | GC | TC |
|---|---|---|
| None of these | 55% | 48% |
| A consumer organization | 2% | 7% |
| A business or professional organization | 4% | 10% |
| An environmental protection or animal rights organization | 6% | 11% |
| A human rights organization | 5% | 8% |
| The Scouts | 3% | 7% |
| A Youth Centre / Youth Association | 12% | 12% |
| A political party (or its youth branch) | 13% | 10% |
| Other pressure groups / Non-governmental organizations | 3% | 8% |
| A trade union | 3% | 4% |
| A religious organization | 9% | 9% |
| A charity or social aid organization | 12% | 14% |
| An education/arts/music/cultural association | 14% | 23% |
| A sports club or a club for outdoor activities | 19% | 36% |

**Table 6.1: Socio-political Participation among Cypriot Youth**

Organisations which attracted the greatest percentage of young Greek-Cypriots include sports clubs and outdoor activities – mainly football and basketball – (19%), associations/ organisations dealing with education, music, culture or the arts (14%), and (youth branches of) political parties or affiliated organisations (13%). Consumer associations (2%), NGOs (3%) and trade unions (3%) drew the least number of young Greek-Cypriots. Turkish-Cypriot socio-political participation is higher than that of Greek-Cypriots in all cases – except in the case of political parties (where it is slightly lower) and youth organisations (where it is the same). As with their Greek-Cypriot counterparts, Turkish-Cypriot respondents primarily participate in sports clubs or other outdoor activities (36%); also popular among the latter community are associations affiliated with music, education, culture and the arts (23%), charity organisations (14%), and environmental protection organisations (11%). Participation in trade unions and consumer organisations was much lower (4% and 7%, respectively). As already noted, both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot respondents exhibited a modest interest in participating in youth centres or associations – this stood at 12%. As is the case with CSOs, many youth organisations operating around the island are affiliated to/supported by different political groups; politically-backed organisations are among the strongest and most powerful youth organisations, which render non-political, autonomous youth organisations relatively powerless and non-influential. Although participation in political parties as such is not high, Cypriot youth do get involved with, or come under the influence of, political parties in various ways. For instance, most sports clubs are associated with a political party, a political 'camp'/ 'front', or a political ideology (notably of the 'Right' or 'Left'). Which team one chooses to support is usually a strong indication of the political views held by that person; fans of various local football teams are categorised as "anti-nationalist" or "nationalist" depending on the team that they support. Most other types of organisations are similarly linked to political parties and/or ideologies – including trade unions, youth and women's organisations, and so on. Hence in being members or associates of such organisations, young people come to indirectly connect themselves with political parties, political blocks, or political ideologies.

## Barriers Against and Motives for Participation

When asked to identify the reason why they do not belong to any organisations or clubs, the largest proportion of $YAS_1$ respondents stated that it was because they had no interest in them (33% of Greek-Cypriots and 36% of Turkish-Cypriot). Turkish-Cypriot respondents said they did not participate because they did not have the spare time for such activities (26%), and/or because they felt that nearly all of the associations were influenced by political parties (8%). Almost twice as many Greek-Cypriots (14%) did not participate because of the same reasons: lack of time and the perceived influence of political parties.[164]

**If you do not belong to any club or association, what is the main reason?**
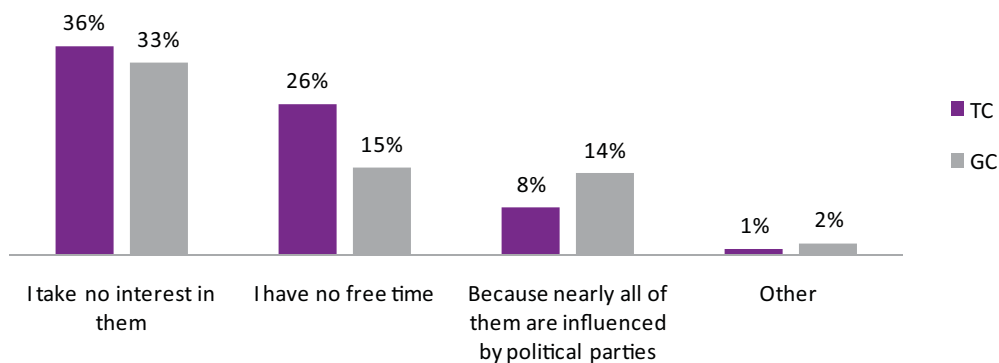


**Table 6.2: Reasons for Not Belonging to Any Club or Association**

The limited amount of free time at their disposal and a general disinterest in socio-political affairs were offered by interviewees as reasons for not actively participating in various organisations and associations. Moreover, young Cypriots did not fancy being subjected to the limitations associated with organisations, which, as noted, are usually backed by/linked to different political parties.

*I am not a member of an association because I do not like to be placed within the limits that an association defines for its activities and its place compared to other kinds of organisations.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 18, university student (electrical engineering), urban Famagusta]**

*It may be lack of interest, or I try to find new things on my own and I don't want to stay stuck on something* [...] *It depends on the organisation's subject, but, still, I don't think I even have the time to deal with that kind of stuff.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, university student, single, urban Nicosia]**

*There is no group or activity that I am interested in.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student (civil engineering), rural Famagusta]**

Young Cypriots were also asked whether or not they would spend some of their free time engaged in voluntary work. According to the responses of young Cypriots across both communities, a significant proportion would engage in volunteer work as, primarily, they considered it to be "emotionally rewarding" and secondly, a "moral duty". Turkish-Cypriots, more so than Greek-Cypriots, seemed to view volunteerism as a "religious duty". In spite of these views, only small numbers of Cypriots from both communities are actually engaged in such work. More specifically, 9% of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed are active participants in religious organisations, while 12% of Greek-Cypriots and 14% of Turkish-Cypriots are members of charities or social aid organisations.

Although it has often been stressed that the majority of young people do not actively participate in society, certain researchers argue that young people are in fact active participants; however, their contribution has evolved to take on a different form.[165] Young people are more likely to take part in less conventional, "soft" political activities such as signing petitions, donating money to charities and boycotting products or places. The third round of the *European Social Survey* provides evidence for this pattern of behaviour among young people in various European countries. For example, while 26.6% of youth in Germany and 27.9% of young people in the UK stated that they had signed a petition during the past twelve months, less than 2% of German or UK respondents had worked in a political party or action group during the same period of time. Indeed this seems to be true for Cypriot youth.

Regarding the level of such less conventional participation displayed by young Cypriots concerning political, social or environmental issues, 33.1% of Greek-Cypriots have signed a petition; 44% have taken part in a protest or demonstration and 58.8% have contributed money. Approximately 18% have not taken part in any such activities. On the other hand, 56.2% of Turkish-Cypriots have not taken part in any of the above mentioned activities. However, 20.5% have signed a petition, 17.3% have protested or demonstrated and 16.9% have donated money towards a political, social or environmental issue. These figures may, however, be misleading: Greek-Cypriots appear more actively involved in socio-political issues and activism, but higher percentages may mostly be the result of officially encouraged/endorsed Greek-Cypriot policies of signing petitions or participating in demonstrations against the continuous presence of Turkish military troops on the island and the declaration of an independent Turkish-Cypriot "state".

The survey attempted to determine the reasons why many young Cypriots do not participate in initiatives or activities similar to the ones noted above. The principal reason, given by both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth was that they are "not interested in such activities" and that they "do not believe in politics". Many also felt that there were "not enough people interested in making an impact" in society. Moreover, they were not convinced

that "citizens could influence the authorities or government". The leading reason for the lack of involvement among Turkish-Cypriots was the same as that cited by Greek-Cypriots: the apparent disinterest in activities related to socio-political participation. Additionally, they felt that "no one would listen" and that there was "no institution or appropriate officer to help present [their] ideas to [their] authorities or government". One could speculate the two 'reasons' given are directly related (and not two separate reasons). Young people feel disempowered, that politics is not for them, while political parties determine everything, irrespective of their views and feelings; resulting in further disinterest in politics.

| BOX 6.2 | Volunteerism Lessons for Beginners: An Alternative Youth Camp |
|---|---|

**The Project**

Having identified specific problems standing in the way of Cyprus to becoming a more open and progressive society, the Soma Akriton Youth Organisation thought of organising a series of weekly activities and events constructed in such a way as to assist young Cypriots to get involved in specific subjects which would encourage young volunteers to reflect on global problems and to develop an interest in meeting and communicating with youth from the other ethnic community.

The project included activities on Training for Camping, Culture and General Knowledge, Volunteerism, Environmental Awareness, World Problems and the Cyprus Problem. All these were tackled with suitable activities for all ages. Both phases of the project concluded with an international summer camp, which consisted of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot participants, as well as youth from Northern Ireland.

**The Participants**

More than 200 children and young people participated on a regular basis in the project, which lasted from September 2006 until August 2008. Greek-Cypriot participants consisted of regular, registered members of Soma Akriton. Parents were also invited to certain events, as well as other organizations and youth from the Turkish-Cypriot community.

**The Overall Experience**

In 2006 it was deemed necessary to prepare a project focusing on the disappointment of people and the negative attitudes created after the negative result of the 2004 referendum. Soma Akriton, as a Greek-Cypriot youth organization, worked with Greek-Cypriot youth in order to gradually prepare them for bi-communal activity. This was done during the first year of the project, by the end of which, several young participants expressed the will to meet with youth from the 'other' side. The second year included quite a lot of bi-communal meetings organised among youth from different age groups. It is estimated that around 160 young people from both communities came together over the span of planned activities.

The new developments concerning the Cyprus Problem in 2008 found young participants ready for more actions and initiatives that aim to support peace in Cyprus. The project activities focused on a variety of subjects and issues. Young people, from all age groups, were involved in direct activities related to conflict resolution, two-sided history, necessary communication and the history of the Cyprus Problem itself. Though a Greek-Cypriot organization, Soma Akriton endeavoured to provide participants with the opportunity to hear the views of the other community – through, for instance, inviting Turkish-Cypriot speakers.

**The Impact of Initiatives on the Youth of Cyprus**

The 213 project participants, and in turn their parents, were positively influenced by the project. Soma Akriton continues to try to bridge the gap between the two communities by explaining difficult political terms, discussing reconciliation, and by trying to send important messages through the educational system.

The youth of Cyprus is often accused of being indifferent to the political problem and of resisting rapprochement. This project showed how, through participating in such initiatives and activities, Cypriot youth can alter their attitudes and become more open-minded and tolerant.

*Chrystalleni Socratous*
*Youth Trainer*
*Soma Akriton Youth Organization*

| BOX 6.3 | Mediation Association: Converting Personal Assets into Community Development |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The Mediation Association was established as a non-profit, voluntary CSO in February 2000, by a small group of trained Turkish-Cypriot mediators from all walks of life. Many of its founding members had worked for many years on different island-wide projects to promote reconciliation and understanding between the ethnic communities in Cyprus.

The Association's simple, yet effective mission is 'to develop and spread the win-win philosophy of mediation by empowering Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots, to establish meaningful relationships through effective communication, tolerance and understanding'.

The Association recognises the power of mediation as a way of resolving conflicts, developing reconciliation, mutual understanding and tolerance, decreasing and even eliminating the wide variety of prejudices that exist in all levels of Cypriot society. The Association is concerned in resolving conflicts whether in families, work places, peer groups and organizations, on the island, the region and the world. The Association has always placed a great deal of importance on the training of children and youth. However, in recent years as a direct result of some group-work studies, undertaken particularly in various school settings, the Association was compelled to transform its approach to trainings and programme modification.

The studies revealed that Cypriots through formal education (on or off the island), or informal trainings, or even by the virtue of their life-values, possess a great deal of personal assets. However, rather than using these assets as catalysts for community development, they are utilized primarily for personal gains such as finding a new job, getting a promotion or improving one's social status within the community. Seeing this as an obstacle to 'community development', the Association started taking a more holistic approach to children and youth trainings. This was achieved through the integration of other components (such as teacher, parent, and youth leader trainings) into its programmes in order to foster community development.

An example of the programmes implemented by the Association is the "Need for Conflict Resolution Education/Peace Education (CRE/PE) in Cyprus" project. This consisted of a comprehensive one year teacher training project that had both mono-communal and bi-communal aspects. Some of the project outcomes included:

- Providing 40 hours of training to around 400 TC/GC teachers from around 100 schools in Cyprus, on different CRE/PE topics.
- Three-hour modular trainings were given to around 1000 elementary and high school teachers in 76 schools.
- Empowering TC teachers through trainings with relevant conflict resolution skills, so as to be able to resolve conflicts whether in the classroom, the school, the community or on the island.

The driving force behind the Mediation Association's work is the belief that youth can make a difference. Youth can be agents of change, not in the coming years, but today; only empowered youth have the ability to change Cyprus from a melting pot of deep misunderstandings, pain and suffering into an island of peace and tranquillity.

*Ali Yaman*
*Vice President*
*Mediation Association*

## Perceived Impact of Youth on Family, Neighbourhood, Municipality and Country

One measure of the levels of empowerment experienced by young people may be whether or not they feel as though they have the ability to influence or change the various social institutions and structures in their lives.

To this end, young Cypriots participating in the survey were asked whether they felt that they had the power to have an impact on issues related to their a) family, b) neighbourhood, c) municipality and d) country.

**Do you feel you have the power to have an impact on matters related to:**



| | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I am not sure | 17% | 16% | 33% | 25% | 28% | 25% | 34% | 20% |
| No | 9% | 7% | 34% | 55% | 64% | 62% | 58% | 70% |
| Yes | 75% | 77% | 33% | 19% | 8% | 13% | 8% | 10% |
| | Your family | | Your neighbourhood | | Your municipality | | Your country | |

■ Yes ■ No ■ I am not sure
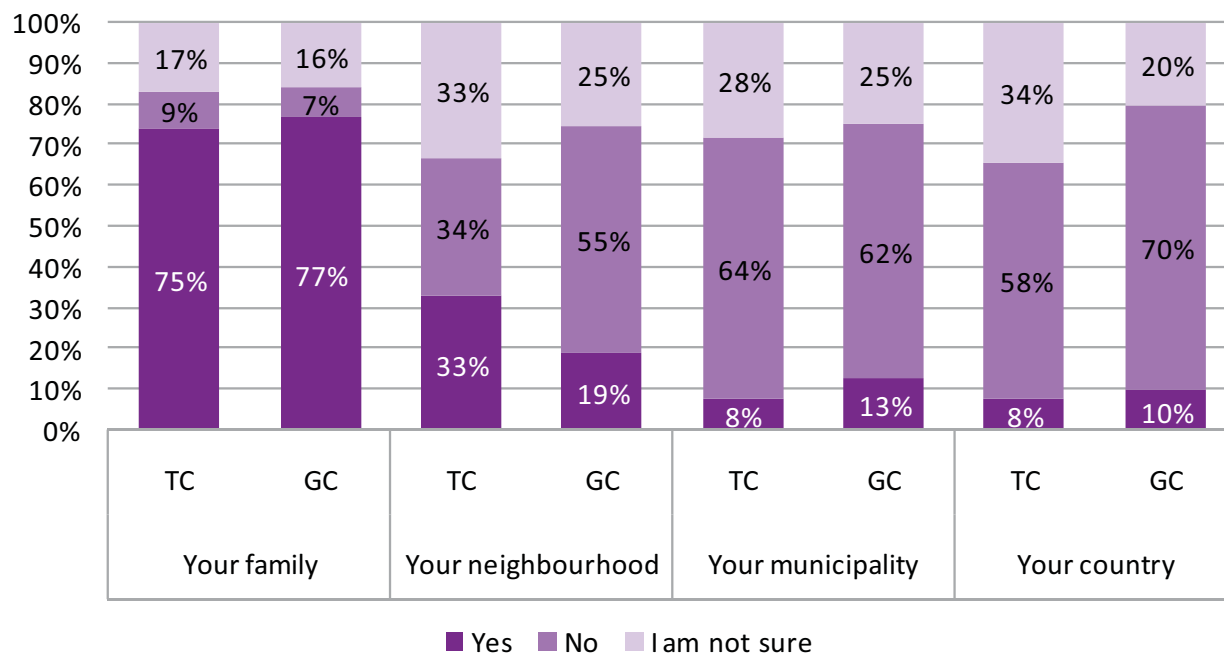
**Table 6.3: Cypriot Youth's Ability to Impact Family, Neighbourhood, Municipality and Country**

The survey findings demonstrated a strong degree of similarity as regards the feelings of young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots on their ability to impact their family.

Approximately three quarters of youth surveyed felt that they did possess the power to influence their families (77% Greek-Cypriots; 75% Turkish-Cypriots); with a much smaller proportion stating that they did not have any power (7% Greek-Cypriots; 9% Turkish-Cypriots).

Response rates for the next three categories were clearly less positive, with feelings of power diminishing with each subsequent question. Only a fifth of Greek-Cypriots and a third of Turkish-Cypriots felt that they had the ability to have an impact on their neighbourhood; approximately one tenth believed that they did have an input into matters concerning their municipality, and on issues related to their country. In each case, much larger segments of respondents felt that they had no influence over issues relating to their neighbourhood, municipality or country.

What lies behind these findings? A plausible explanatory account could start by pointing out that the fast pace of social change in the last few decades has been changing the nature of social relations in the two ethnic communities.

The much closer relationships of the past, when people used to know their neighbours quite well, and spend time together, exchanging visits, news and gossip; helping each other in times of need; knowing each other's problems and joining forces whenever necessary to tackle common tasks; all these instances of a more traditional society, imbued with a more collective spirit, are gradually succumbing to the forces of modernisation and to new ways of life, characterised by a more individualistic ethos.

The fact that the pace and extent of social change in the south has been both faster and more pervasive than in the north may explain why, in the survey responses, more Turkish-Cypriots than Greek-Cypriots (33% as compared to 19% respectively) said they felt empowered to have an impact on

their neighbourhoods. Despite this slight comparative difference, however, young respondents from both communities referred to an "each-to-his-own" attitude in describing their neighbours and neighbourhood. In-depth interviews offered more detailed insights as to why young Cypriots did not feel so empowered:

*Everybody looks after their own interests now […] yes, he concerns himself with the neighbours, but each person is after their own interest. They will not wait to see if I do something or disturb someone – each person tries to do what is in their own best interest.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, employed in a private company, single, urban Nicosia]**

*My family has been living here in this village for thirty years. We used to visit each other in the past. Now, we have no time to visit each other. We are living isolated in the same village. We have lost all our relations.*

**[Turkish Cypriot, female, 21, university student, rural Trikomo]**

*I am in my home; the neighbour is in his home.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, cashier, single urban Nicosia]**

It is not only social isolation which causes many to feel disempowered. Some respondents believed that their young age and lack of social clout stood in their way of effecting change in their neighbourhoods:

*Yes, if I am a part of the neighbourhood association, yes I can* [bring change, but] *I don't think I will reach that point because, if you think about it, I'm not someone important, who will be able to voice my opinion comfortably. I'm a regular girl whom nobody knows.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate (pre-primary education), works at a cooperative bank, engaged, urban Paphos]**

*It seems that they worry about young people. They keep criticizing our behaviour. But when it comes to serious issues, and we have the chance to make a contribution, they do not take our views seriously.*

**[Turkish Cypriots, male, 21, high school graduate, unemployed, urban Nicosia]**

Others attributed feelings of a lack of empowerment to affect their neighbourhood to personal deficiencies – and not to larger, social issues or power relationships:

*I could have* [an effect] *but because I am a very weak character I cannot do that […] I mean, I don't dare to enforce or do things, let's say, I am a quiet person […] I cannot impose myself, I don't dare do this; sometimes they take advantage of this and others always get their way.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, technical-vocational school graduate, salesperson, divorced with 2 children, rural Nicosia]**

Feelings of disempowerment gather force when it comes to having an impact on larger collectivities, such as the municipality, district, or country as a whole. Very often young people hold a very vague or general understanding of how one can impact such larger and more abstract entities; often power relationships involved become invisible and power is seen to reside in far away 'authorities' or individuals – who do not care to take into consideration the views and concerns of the young:

*Well,* [there is little impact] *because there are many big heads who will not sit to listen to the opinion of the people, or that of an eighteen year-old.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18, student, single, rural Limassol]**

A few of the young do come to realise that to exert influence at the municipal or country levels, they have to join forces in collective action; very often such work is channelled through the political parties, or through their related associations:

*There are people from many youth organizations which represent the youth of EDEK* [the Greek-Cypriot Socialist party]*, as well as other youth organizations, who take decisions and convey them to the Municipality.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university (pre-primary education), works at a cooperative bank, engaged, urban Paphos]**

## Young Cypriots and their Vote

Questioned as to whether or not they felt that young people were sufficiently represented in politics, only 17% of Greek-Cypriots and 13% of Turkish-Cypriots responded positively. However, the largest proportion in both communities (53% Greek-Cypriots; 60% Turkish-Cypriots) believed that there was insufficient representation of young people in Cypriot politics.

Interestingly, about a third of respondents did not have a view on the matter, perhaps in consequence to being unsure of how the political system in indirect democracies works, and how 'sufficient representation' may be measured.

**Do you think young people are sufficiently represented in politics?**
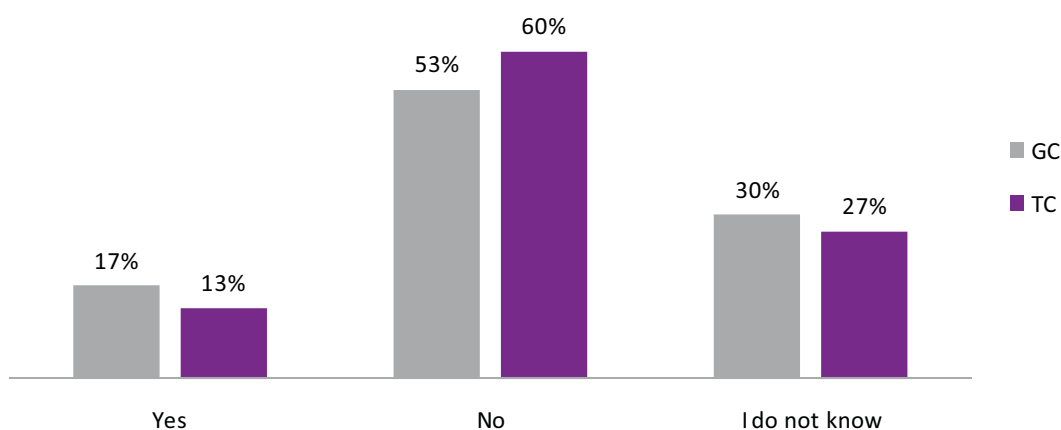


**Table 6.4: Representation of Cypriot Youth in Politics**

In order to determine their position on voting, young Cypriots were posed the question: If voting was not mandatory, would you vote in the next elections? Just under half of the youth surveyed stated that they would cast their vote (46% Greek-Cypriots; 50% Turkish-Cypriots); while a substantial 40% of Greek-Cypriots, compared to 27% of Turkish-Cypriots, would not cast their ballot if voting were not compulsory. Around one fifth (14% of Greek-Cypriots and 23% of Turkish-Cypriots) remained on the fence on whether or not they would vote.

**If elections were not mandatory, would you vote in the next elections?**
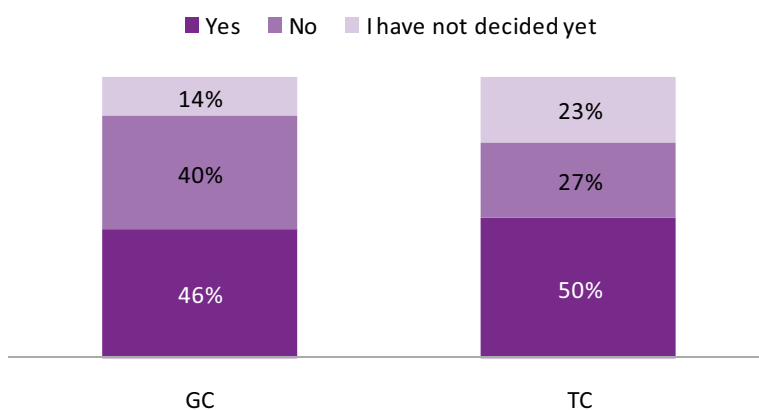


**Table 6.5: Cypriot Youth on Voting**

Respondents who would not cast their vote if elections were non-compulsory and those who were undecided were asked to explain the reasons behind their response. The three reasons cited by Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, respectively, as to why they would not vote are presented, in order of importance, below.

| Rank | Reason | Greek-Cypriots (%) | Reason | Turkish-Cypriots (%) |
|------|--------|--------------------|--------|----------------------|
| 1st | I do not trust politicians | 28 | There is no party I would like to vote for | 23 |
| 2nd | Politicians promote themselves or their party, not a specific agenda | 24 | I do not trust politicians | 19 |
| 3rd | There is no party I would like to vote for | 17 | There is no difference between parties | 16 |

**Table 6.6: Top Three Reasons for Not Voting**

Survey participants were asked how often they made an effort to keep up with current affairs, such as politics, as well as social and economic events.

**Do you make an effort to keep yourself informed about current events?**

■ Never ■ Seldom ■ Sometimes ■ Often ■ Always

TC: 18% | 25% | 38% | 14% | 5%

GC: 9% | 16% | 35% | 33% | 8%
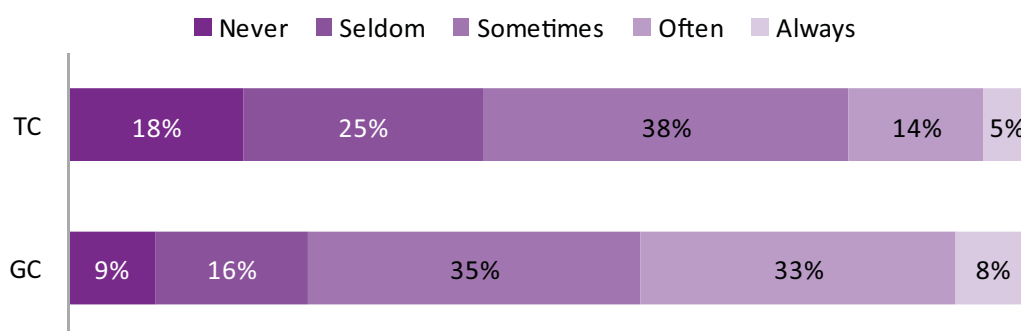
**Table 6.7: Keeping Up with Current Events**

Among Greek-Cypriot youth, 41% attempt to keep informed either "often" or "always", while 25% "seldom" or "never" followed up on current events and 35% tried to stay informed "sometimes". Turkish-Cypriots appeared less inclined to follow up on current events as 19% followed political, social or economic news "often" or "always"; approximately 38% followed current affairs "sometimes" and 43% "seldom" or "never" do.

To a large extent these differences may be related to the fact that the Turkish-Cypriot community has been largely closed-off from the outside world, as a consequence of its non-recognised international status; hence, for decades now, Turkish-Cypriots have been living as an insular community. Furthermore, the community's dependence on Turkey adds to its further insularity – thus, for instance, the relevance and impact of world economics is not so important, since Turkey heavily subsidises the "TRNC", sheltering it from global forces, thereby rendering such forces inconsequential or irrelevant. An examination of the statistical data available through the *European Social Survey* allowed for the comparison of attitudes exhibited by European youth towards politics and political affairs. For example, 54.1% of youth from Greece, as

against 43.9% of youth from Cyprus, stated that they did not spend any time at all per day reading about politics and current affairs in newspapers.[166] This figure was significantly lower among youth in Norway (19.5%) and Turkey (22.5%). Given that a considerable portion of Cypriot youth do not follow politics or current affairs in newspapers on a daily basis, it is not surprising that, in the same survey, 43.9% of Cypriot youth indicated that they were not interested in politics at all. Youth in Greece and Turkey displayed similar levels of political apathy; 39% and 44%, respectively. A smaller 18% of youth in Germany and 23.6% of youth in Poland stated that they had no interest in politics whatsoever.

Interestingly, similar percentages of Cypriot (51.8%), Greek (51.2%) and Turkish (48.5%) youth stated that they regularly, or frequently, felt that politics seemed too complicated to understand. This figure was lower among youth in Norway (32%) and Russia (36.9%). Though difficult to make generalisations, it is interesting to note that in the former group of countries (including Cyprus) politics is dominated by "national" priorities, revolving around, issues of "national interest" and "national enemies", often relating to "national problems"; many of these issues are often couched in legalistic terms of international or national rights, and so on – realities, which may seem important, yet distant from the ordinary concerns of individuals.[167] In countries such as Norway, politics seem to relate to much more mundane issues, which are, however, of more immediate concern to ordinary people – and much easier to understand.

## Attitude towards Religion

As noted in Chapter One, the vast majority of Greek-Cypriots are Greek-Orthodox Christians, while the Turkish-Cypriot community is mostly Muslim. Other denominations present on the island, include Armenians, Maronites and Roman Catholics. Historically, the Orthodox Church had a very important role in Greek-Cypriot society (*ethnarchic*, i.e. leading the nation). With increasing secularization and, especially, with the creation of an independent state, political parties and other institutions taking on political representation, the power and influence of the Orthodox Church has decreased, though not completely eliminated.

The Turkish-Cypriots have been a much more secular community, particularly ever since the triumph of Kemalism in Turkey, exported to Cyprus since the 1920s. Both communities though are quite conservative in their outlook towards life and values – both have been mostly agricultural, tradition being very important and modernization slow. In both, secular ideas do not have a strong indigenous base, but are largely imports from the West (primarily via education in Greece/Turkey and Europe/America). No wonder that the vast majority of respondents (94% Greek-Cypriots and 91% Turkish-Cypriots – much higher percentages than in most European countries) believe in a "higher power" differing in name, God among Greek-Cypriots and Allah in the case of Turkish-Cypriots. Only a very small percentage (1%-4%) said that they did not believe in God or Allah, and slightly more (5%) that they were not sure.

**Do you believe in God/Allah?**
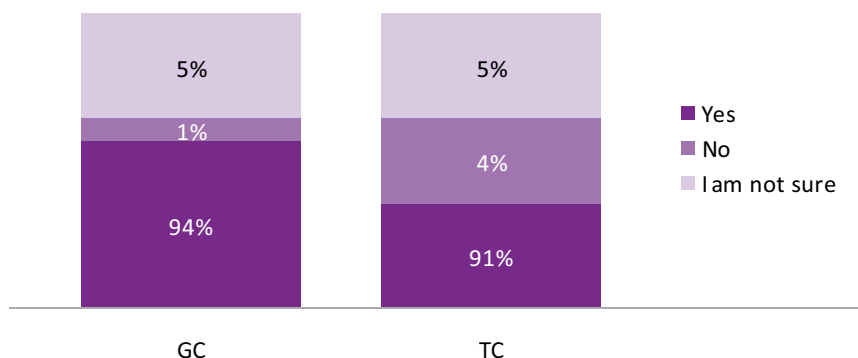


Table 6.8: Belief in Higher Power

Results from the *European Social Survey* support this, as 99.2% of Cypriot youth surveyed stated that they belonged to a particular religion; the figures were comparable with their counterparts in Turkey (95.8%) and Greece (91.5%). It was significantly lower in countries affected by Enlightenment and the Reformation such as Germany (45.1%) and the UK (31.1%).

On a related note, young Cypriots appear more religious than youth residing in other European countries: asked to rate how religious they are on a scale of 0 to 10 (0 = not at all religious and 10 = very religious), the mean score for Cypriot youth was 6.12, which was almost double that of youth in Germany (3.00), the UK (3.10) and Norway (3.31). Once again, the results for Cypriot youth were quite comparable with those for youth in Turkey and Greece; levels of religiosity were marginally higher – 6.48 and 6.71, respectively.

Young Cypriots who participated in in-depth interviews readily provided classic arguments in support of their belief in a higher power:

*I believe in God. I am not one of those people who say, "Why has God given me this problem?" God sends you whatever you can handle, God does not punish; He forgives.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, employed in a private company, single, urban Nicosia]**

*I think God is the reason we exist. I have a good relationship with God even though I do not have that much free time to go to church or on a pilgrimage. I believe that we should respect God.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 19, college student, employed part-time, single, urban Nicosia]**

The few respondents, who did not share the same outlook on the practice of religion or the existence of an afterlife, justified their views in diverse ways:

*No, and I don't want to seek it out. After life there is nothing […] heaven and hell are here.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18, college student (aesthetics), part-time salesperson, single, urban Nicosia]**

*I think* [heaven and hell exist] *only in fairytales, but I am not sure.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 19, student, single, urban Limassol]**

Many young Cypriots do not seem to unquestioningly adopt the religious viewpoints of their adult co-religionists but appear to struggle with questions of faith and especially with aligning their beliefs with the practices of local religious institutions (symbolised by the church and mosque) and figures (priests and imams):

*I have different thoughts about God at different times. I believe in the Muslim religion and in the God accepted by Muslims, but at times I become an atheist, especially, during religious holidays... We exhaust ourselves kissing the hands of our elder people... I do not know whether what we are doing is right or wrong; we perform all the duties of being Muslim but at times I feel as though I am not a Muslim. If I am a Muslim, then according to the religion's priorities I am a sinner because I am not careful about obeying religious matters all the time. I think that if there are so many people believing in God then, perhaps, religion must be something acceptable and satisfying.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24, works at a computer store, rural Nicosia]**

*I don't believe in **one** God, I am not one of those people who go to church every Sunday. Of course I believe that there is a higher being that people believe in, whether a person is a Christian, a Muslim or a Buddhist. I think we all believe in the same God. We just choose to believe in a particular God.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 24, university graduate, lawyer, single, urban Paphos]**

Many respondents seemed ready to adopt the justifications provided by the clergy or the Church on practices seemingly incompatible with religious teachings:

*The cloth does not a priest make. We are not supposed to go to church for a particular priest or for any priest; we are not supposed to go to church for holy men. I think this is a terrible, terrible mistake. One ought to go to church*

*because they feel like it; if they don't feel like it then they could stay home and sleep.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college, works as a cashier, single, urban Nicosia]**

Other young respondents held a more questioning stance on such incongruities; such a critical spirit is especially common among supporters of the left, but also of others exposed through their higher studies to secular ideas:

*The fact that, for example, a priest may travel around in an expensive car and have so much jewellery etc. while the simple people may suffer from poverty, I consider that this completely repels people from religion. Not just from the Church, but from religion in general.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

In accordance with the widespread belief in a greater power, over 70% of Cypriot youth accept the religious doctrine of creation as accounting for the existence of human beings. A relatively small 22% of Greek-Cypriots and 27% of Turkish-Cypriots adopt the more scientific

theory of evolution, believing that the human race is the product of a long process of ascent – but, more than half of these must uphold views which marry evolution with the possible divine direction of the process – since, as we have seen, 90% to 95% believe in a higher power.

Despite a prevalent belief in God or Allah, young Cypriots do not attend church or mosque services regularly. According to $YAS_1$ findings, Greek-Cypriots appear to mainly attend church once or twice a month (22%) or on important religious holidays, such as Christmas and Easter (51%). Turkish-Cypriot attendance is much lower – only 7% visit a mosque once or twice a month; 27% attend only on important religious festivals (e.g. Byram). The differences in the religious practices of young Cypriots from the two communities become even more obvious when we compare complete non-attendance: only 1% of Greek-Cypriots stated that they never attend church services, a significantly larger 38% of Turkish-Cypriots stated that they never attend – testimony, once again, to the more secular nature of the Turkish-Cypriot community.

**How often do you go to church/mosque?**
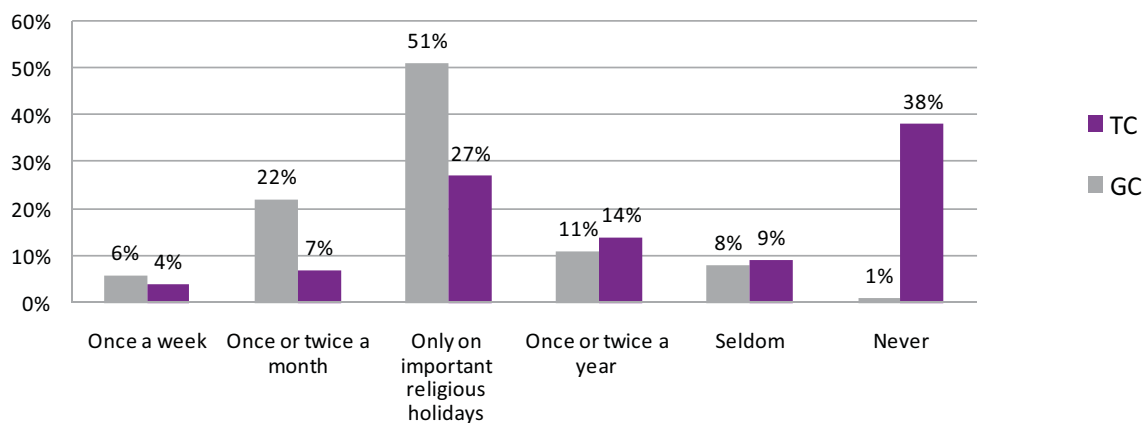


**Table 6.9: Frequency of Church/Mosque Attendance**

*Our society does not have very strong beliefs. They believe in God but no one attends religious ceremonies. Still, they respect one another's beliefs. But Turkish-Cypriots are not like Turkish people from Turkey* [the majority of which do attend religious services regularly].

**[Turkish-Cypriot, 17, student, rural Morfou]**

*Only Turkish people from Turkey go to mosques. Turkish-Cypriots believe in God but they are not fanatics. They* [only] *go to mosques in order to attend funerals or on religious holidays.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 22, student, rural Kyrenia]**

A similar question on church/mosque attend-

ance was posed in the *European Social Survey*, the results of which closely matched those of the *YAS₁*. While 51% of Greek-Cypriots surveyed in the *YAS₁* said they attend church solely on important religious holidays, 61.8% of (Greek-)Cypriot youth surveyed for the *European Social Survey* stated that they go to church only on special holy days. The latter figure was the highest among eight European countries examined; for example, only 16.5% of young Russians and 13.2% of youth in the UK attend church (only) on holy days such as Christmas and Easter Day. In contrast, nearly half the youth surveyed in Russia (45.2%) and the UK (56.0%) never attend church services, compared to a significantly smaller 3.3% of (Greek-)Cypriots.

It is interesting to note that, in comparing the responses of Greek and Turkish youth surveyed in the *European Social Survey* to those of the

Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriots surveyed for the *YAS₁*, strong similarities existed between the responses of Greek and Greek-Cypriot youth, as well as those of Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot youth. For instance, 22% of Greek-Cypriots attend church once or twice a month while 21% of Greeks attend service at least once a month. And 38% of Turkish-Cypriot and 40% of Turkish youth never attend religious services.

## Attitudes towards the Cypriot Media, Military, Politicians, Police and Religious Figures

Young Cypriots that participated in the *YAS₁* were asked to indicate the level of trust felt towards various institutions or figures – such as the media, the military, as well as teachers and politicians.

**How much do you trust the Cypriot…?** Mean results where 1 = not at all and 5 = very much
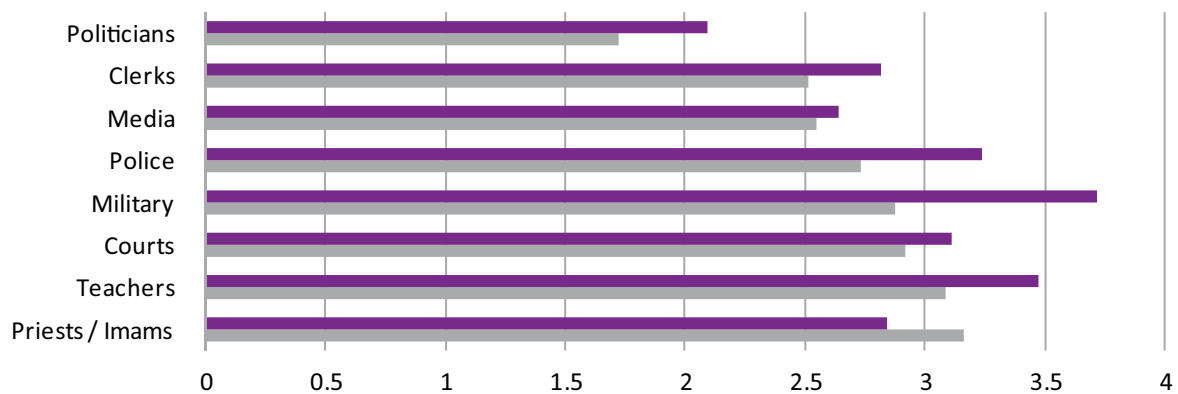


|  | Priests / Imams | Teachers | Courts | Military | Police | Media | Clerks | Politicians |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TC | 2.84 | 3.47 | 3.11 | 3.71 | 3.23 | 2.64 | 2.81 | 2.09 |
| GC | 3.16 | 3.08 | 2.91 | 2.87 | 2.73 | 2.54 | 2.51 | 1.72 |

**Table 6.10: Levels of Trust towards Figures and Establishments**

Interestingly enough, Greek-Cypriot youth place the greatest amount of trust in priests: 43% of respondents from the Greek-Cypriot community stated that they trust priests "a lot" or "very much". This reflects the greater historical importance of religion and the Church in Greek-Cypriot society, but also their perceived contemporary role in

preserving Greek-Cypriot culture and identity. In contrast, Turkish-Cypriots seem to place less stock in religious figures since only 32% of Turkish-Cypriot youth trusted either "a lot" or "very much" in imams, a preference which ranked fifth in order of importance (teachers, the police, the courts and the military all ranked higher).

Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed displayed the highest levels of trust in the military, with almost two-thirds (62%) stating that they trusted the military "a lot" or "very much". This reflects the general importance of the army as the guarantors of the nation and state, under Kemalism, but also the more specific importance acquired by the Turkish army among Turkish-Cypriots for its role as presumed guarantor of the safety and integrity of the Turkish-Cypriot community. In comparison, only 29% of young Greek-Cypriots trusted "a lot" or "very much" in the military.

Teachers garnered the second strongest feelings of trust from both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth, testifying the importance of education in both communities; with 35% of the former and 51% of the latter indicating that they trusted teachers "a lot" or "very much".

Politicians are another group that youth from both two communities share a common – albeit negative – trust-related attitude, as Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots questioned, displayed a strong absence or lack of trust towards them. Approximately 50% of Greek-Cypriots and 42% of Turkish-Cypriots did not trust politicians at all, while a further 30% and 22%, respectively, displayed "a little" faith in politicians; in both communities, politicians ranked last (8th) in terms of trust elicited among young respondents.[168]

Low levels of trust in politicians are not unique to Cypriot youth as young people in other European countries display similar sentiments towards the politicians in their countries. European youth surveyed in the second and third round of the *European Social Survey* were asked to indicate their level of trust in politicians on a scale of 0 to 10 (with 0 = no trust at all and 10 = complete trust). Among the eight countries examined, not one presented mean scores higher than 5, demonstrating that young people have very little trust in their politicians; trust levels in political parties echoed those held towards politicians.

The attitudes of young Cypriots towards various institutions and opinion leaders, such as teachers, the media, politicians and priests,

are valuable as they offer insight into the roles which these may play in the reunification of the island. For instance, young Cypriots across the divide share a high level of trust in their teachers. Hence, given this confidence, it is clear that education may play an important part in shaping the attitudes of future generations toward members of the other community.

On the other side of the spectrum, both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth displayed the lowest levels of trust in their politicians and the media, both of which enjoy a prominent place in the foreground of the process of reunification. The lesson here may be the reverse one – in that both politicians and the media may need to revise the way they handle and/or communicate such important issues as the Cyprus Problem.

## Attitudes towards Military Service

Military conscription is compulsory for both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot males. Greek-Cypriots, over the age of 18, must serve 25 months of military service, while Turkish-Cypriots serve between 12 and 15 months. Typically, military service takes place after young men graduate from high school and before they continue on with their tertiary education.

The dominant view of military service on the island is that it is an important national duty and a service to one's country; a necessity given the long-existing political situation, which requires men, aged 18 to 55, to be ready for battle at any given moment:

*It goes without saying* [that military service is necessary], *because we are, and must be, battle-ready at any instance, since you never know what will happen. I believe that women should also go to the army, even for a year, to be prepared for anything.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

Another common view is that the time spent in the army encourages male youth to mature into disciplined men with a greater respect for their society and their country. Given the close

ties of Cypriot families, it usually means that until the end of high-school one is considered a child – not yet mature to undertake the stages of life which follow. In all likelihood, secondary school will be followed by tertiary education or work, both of which demand more responsible and mature attitudes. Service is thus seen to mediate this transition and, especially in the case of males, 'toughen them up'; helping them become better equipped to face a world of increased responsibility.

*Because besides serving in an army, you become a man. You change character, become more mature, you pass through different situations that you haven't passed through in your life; in school things are very different. I believe it is necessary for someone to serve as a soldier.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

*I believe that because it is proven boys take a long time to mature, it is necessary that they become soldiers. It is a way towards aiding their maturity.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university student (pre-primary education), works at a cooperative bank, engaged, urban Paphos]**

*I think that everyone must attend military service; I finished my military service last year. But many of my friends prefered to go to university in order to postpone the compulsory military service. Personally, I think that they over-exaggerate the negative sides of this service. Sure, it is not easy, but there are many opportunities to form very good friendships.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 21, unemployed, rural Nicosia]**

*Besides learning order, discipline, some rules, in the army...you must enforce those rules, you learn to coexist within a social environment, and this helps men in particular I think, even though women should also go to the army, because... it may be that women need this more than men.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, student, single, urban Nicosia]**

The implicit assumption which stems from the above is that boys are immature or undisciplined until the army. Why then do the family and school fail to impart such socially

important traits? Psychologists propose that the issue reflects wider present-day societal realities: Contemporary Cypriot parents often 'spoil' their children, and fail to determine 'boundaries' to their children's behaviour. Whereas in traditional Cypriot society children worked hard in the household and had to behave within strict limits, nowadays, they are not expected to contribute very much and few limits are imposed on their lives; this is especially the case among Cypriot males.[169]

Present Cypriot society is thus seen to be marked by 'over-protectiveness' which leads to an unwillingness or inability of parents to set boundaries, or to children who are ever ready to ignore or push boundaries to the limit. Since unruliness is therefore recognised as "a problem" (created at home and augmented at school), the army is seen as offering the promise of 'correcting' this 'lack' (rendering the army as the male disciplinarian institution par excellence).

The time served in the military often evokes nostalgic memories of the time spent with fellow soldiers and resulting feelings of camaraderie and, especially, male solidarity – including the nurturing of a masculine culture of bravery, toughness, perseverance, and uncompromising values, often reaching aggression:

*As far as I know from my father and my elders, military duty is, in general, enjoyable. They have many memories of this. I think that I can perform my military duty just to have such funny and enjoyable memories.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 21, university student, urban Nicosia]**

Until recently the 'toughness' culture was quite acceptable and having a rough time in the army was considered a necessary part of growing up – or, rather, 'becoming a man'. But the gradual passing of traditional society and its values has meant that authority and authoritarianism have increasingly been questioned – hence the large numbers of those trying to avoid the army – often with their parents' consent, if not with their instigation. Even more universal is

the criticism that the army is "wasted" time that perhaps should be avoided. This stems from the new capitalist ethos, which sees time as money, and the great emphasis on utilitarian values, whereby preparing for a socially successful life (which includes a good university education, and a rewarding professional career) is paramount.

It naturally follows that the many months of service are considered by many Cypriots to be a waste of time; filled with long months of hardship and/or boredom, and postponing the pursuit of what truly matters. For the Turkish-Cypriots service has become more of a vain affair after the failure of the Annan Plan:

*It is a waste of time because, from what I know, they don't do very much in the army and I can see that two years in the army is unfair.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 20, completed high school, salesperson, urban Nicosia]**

*We were hopeful that there would be no compulsory military service after a solution to the Cyprus Problem. But when the Greek-Cypriots said 'no' to the Annan Plan our dreams were crushed. We still have to do military service and some people have left the country to avoid this.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, driver, urban Famagusta]**

Moreover, service in Cyprus is often unfavourably compared to the rest of the European Union, where the duration of service is less and often not compulsory. Universal drafting is not the case in other EU countries, where there is a stress on an individual's right to choose.

*I think it is a waste of time because it doesn't depend on peoples' desires. There is no such thing in the EU and we should adopt European standards. It should depend on peoples' willingness* [to serve].
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 18, high school graduate, unemployed, urban Famagusta]**

These are typical comments in a society in which many hold the questionable view that military service is important for the maturation of the young and do not seem to appreciate the value of other paths to maturity – such as youth participation in socio-political life.

## The Importance of Youth Participation in Society

While often practitioners, researchers, policy makers and the media are quick to point out the consistently low participation levels of young individuals, and many see the young as victims or problems, others have come to their defence by highlighting the pressing need to view youth as "collaborators in society", capable of effecting change in the world.[170] According to Hancock:

*Active participation of youth is essential to reenergising and sustaining the civic spirit of communities. Through skill development in the areas of collaboration and leadership, and the application of these capacities to meaningful roles in society, youth can play a fundamental role in addressing the social issues that are destined to impact their lives and those of future generations.* [171]

The inhabitants of Cyprus remain the victims of the longstanding political conflict on the island, suffering from the repercussions of the tragic events of 1963 and 1974. In particular, Cypriot youth have suffered from the longstanding conflict even though they were not directly a part of it. Given that the younger generation is the one who will continue to live with the consequences of past events, the participation of young Cypriots in moulding developments is of primary importance. While Cypriot youth should be regarded as co-agents in the construction of society, in practice, their full potential remains underutilised, or worse, overlooked.

The benefit of youth involvement in the larger social, political and economic context in which they live is twofold: the self-realisation of the young and the democratisation of society.[172] On the one hand, involving youth in socio-political activities allows them to develop alternative skills and competencies, in addition to those acquired through family, school and peer interaction. Also, young people are given the opportunity to spend their free time constructively rather than pursuing other high-risk behaviours. On the other hand, society benefits from the participation of

youth as they are able to bring fresh, creative ideas to the table, as well as an abundance of energy. According to Hart, improving youth participation is "one means of fundamentally improving the whole of society".[173] By allowing Cypriot youth to play a greater role in socio-political processes, and by engaging them more fully in the democratic process, society benefits from the establishment of 'engaged citizens'. [174]

Available statistics that point to the typically low participation rates of young people around the world, beg the question: Are youth ready to take on the role of public actors in society? On the surface, it might appear as though they are neither willing nor able. However, a deeper analysis highlights that, often times, young people view their social role as marginal; one which has been relegated to the periphery.[175] Young people feel that the few opportunities available to them are largely dictated and driven by adult agendas and processes; they see little reason to get involved. This Chapter has shown that Cypriot youth in both communities share the same sentiments.

Regarding youth as social problems that need 'fixing', and their exclusion from social responsibilities, leads young people to feel undervalued and, in turn, not feeling a sense of obligation or responsibility towards society.[176] France warns that "a lack of rights undermines young people's desire to undertake social responsibilities", advising that society has to "recognise that young people need a stake in the society [...] in which they live". [177] Echoing this point, Hart emphasises the connection between rights and responsibilities – the two must co-exist. [178] In a similar manner to which youth are afforded greater rights with age (such as the rights to drive and vote) requiring them to display varying degrees of responsibility (for example, not driving when intoxicated), young people must be given the right to participate in their society by providing them with opportunities and fostering their sense of responsibility towards their society.

Special attention must be paid to the manner in which young people, and in this case, young Cypriots, are engaged in socio-political processes. Hart stresses that youth

participation can take on several forms on a continuum (or ladder) varying from non-participation to stronger degrees of participation.[179] At the bottom rung of the ladder, youth participation can take on the form of manipulation, decoration or tokenism with young people serving decoratively on committees or boards of organisations. As we progress higher along the ladder, youth participation becomes increasingly more active and, at its highest rung, youth participation is initiated by young people who make shared decisions with the adults involved. This is the ideal form of participation with young people and adults acting as productive collaborators.

The attitudes of adults towards youth can sometimes act as a barrier to youth participation as many adults find it difficult to give up the power that they possess in their positions.[180] Put off by the attitudes of adults, young people opt out of participating. To avoid this, adults may need to undergo training in order to understand the potential of youth as mutual actors and to appreciate young people's aspirations, culture, ways of thinking and limitations. According to the National Commission on Resources for Youth the challenge and task facing the adult world is to create the "climate and the conditions" that will permit youth to play participatory roles in society on a widespread scale given that they cannot do this on their own.[181] Thus, as collaborators, adults can play the role of supporter and educator, rather than the typical role of director and instructor that they are accustomed to; acting as allies and partners, by guiding youth and equipping them with the needed information and resources, which youth often lack access to. [182]

By allowing Cypriot youth to genuinely participate in projects, concerning real problems, they may begin to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility. Through continued participation, youth begin to develop the confidence, and competences required to participate. In a sense, participation should be viewed as a double process whereby youth are given the time, space and encouragement to develop the skills that they need to participate effectively; through this knowledge youth are then able to take action and effect change.[183]

Typical skills might involve training on research and data analysis, as well as public speaking. While this capacity building may take time, both learning and action can take place in parallel with the proper adult support and guidance.

Typically, youth are viewed as citizens of tomorrow but not today. In fact, several barriers to their participation exist such as their inability to vote before the age of 18, time curfews and their parents forbidding them to take part in demonstrations, to name a few. T. H. Marshall advocated that youth should be considered "citizens in the making"; the young being socialised and educated to take on increasing rights for, and responsibility towards, their socio-political role in society.[184]

Schools ought to play a role in preparing young people to be informed, active citizens in society as they could serve as a venue for promoting a balanced understanding and experience of participation. In spite of this, family and television continue to be the main sources from which young people receive their citizenship education and schools have a long way to go in offering youth the opportunity to build their political knowledge, as well as their democratic values and skills. [185]

This section has attempted to highlight the benefits of, and difficulties involved in, empowering youth to be active members of society. Parents, schools and youth workers in Cyprus have an important role to play in terms of educating and socializing Cypriot youth so as to improve their levels of socio-political participation, as well as building Cypriot youth's sense of responsibility and capability to act as active collaborators.

# ATTITUDES TOWARDS CYPRUS AND THE OTHER COMMUNITY

## Young Cypriots and Identity

Compared to past times, young people in the developed world today find themselves in a more privileged position as they are afforded greater cultural and material opportunities; the weakening of traditional norms and the growing individuation have resulted in a wider choice of opportunities and pathways.[186] As a result of these changes it becomes increasingly more difficult for youth to find their place in society. Increased opportunities are coupled with increased uncertainty and insecurity; youth find themselves having to make first-time decisions, which are often considered private or individual affairs. Consequently identity issues take on greater importance as young people navigate between childhood and adulthood. In the case of Cyprus, the issue of identity is further complicated by the island's history of colonisation, identification with the respective "mother countries" and the enduring division between the two main communities.

Young Cypriots were asked to indicate which broad, geographical-cultural identity was the most characteristic of Cypriots. The options presented were: Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and European. Respondents were also given the options of "none of the above" and "other". The identity which the majority of both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth believed best represented the inhabitants of the island was "Mediterranean". Interestingly, this identification by far overshadowed Cypriots' European identification.

The Mediterranean dimension seems to be the one which creates a link with the region and peoples surrounding Cyprus. Since ancient times, the Mediterranean Sea has facilitated all kinds of exchanges, linking together diverse civilisations and cultures, through travel, trade and war.[187] Cypriots clearly seem to feel that they share more with other cultures in the region immediately surrounding the island, rather than the more distant European world.

**Which of the following mostly characterise Cypriots?**
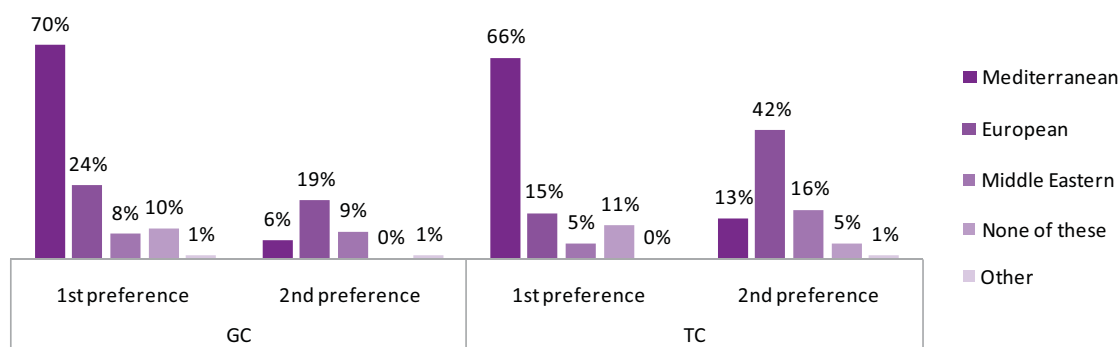


**Table 7.1: Regional/Geographico-cultural Identification of Cypriots**

It should be noted that Cypriot youth displayed much weaker identification with the Middle East, in spite of its close geographical proximity. This possibly relates to negative, "Orientalist" stereotypes of the Middle East, that link it with the East/Orient, as opposed to more positive stereotypes of the West/Occident.[188] This distancing from the Middle East and what it stands for applies to both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots.[189] Overall, it seems that in the minds of Cypriot youth, the felt proximity with the Mediterranean and the aspired identity with the West and especially Europe, lead to the hybrid identity of "Euro-Mediterranean"; a combination which places the Cypriots right in-between the familiar polarity between East and West, Orient and Occident (albeit, closer to the West than to the East).

Turning to Cypriots' identifications with nation and country/state, despite the age-long close association of Cypriots with their "mother countries", and the respective nations, only a small proportion of youth identified themselves as more Greek/Turkish than Cypriot (5% of the total sample), and only a slightly larger proportion (approximately 9%) classified themselves exclusively as Greek or Turkish.[190] In both communities the larger segments, by far, identified with country or state, rather than with the nation.

**How do you identify yourself?**



| | Cypriot | More Cypriot than Greek/Turkish | Equally Cypriot and Greek/Turkish | More Greek/Turkish than Cypriot | Greek/Turkish |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TC | 39% | 9% | 32% | 6% | 14% |
| GC | 48% | 17% | 28% | 3% | 4% |
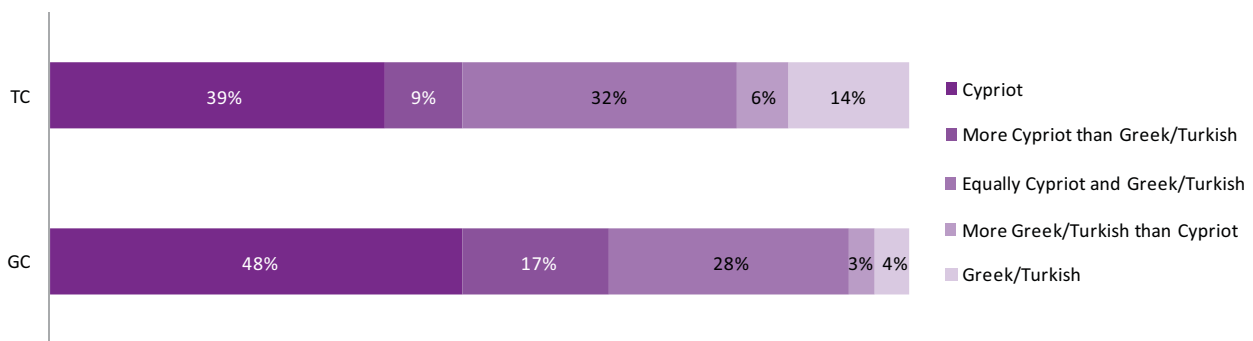
**Table 7.2: Identification with Nation and Country/ State**

On the face of these findings one could jump to the conclusion that 'civic' identity is, or has become, more important than the 'ethnic' identities of the two communities.[191] This would allow optimistic scenarios about the future, since it would indicate that Cypriots are finally recognising more commonalities than differences to each other, and this, in turn, could mean that a solution, which would bring them back together under the same political roof, is close at hand.

But what does the term Cypriot stand for? Does it signify an inclusive, civic identity, transcending ethnic differences and incorporating both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots? The evidence does not seem to support such an interpretation, for 'Cypriot' seems to be used by most young respondents as synonymous to their own ethnic community, and not to all Cypriots, despite their ethno-cultural origin. More specifically, when faced with the question, *"which group of people do you usually mean when you use the term 'Cypriot'?",* 86% of Greek-Cypriots and a corresponding 55% of Turkish-Cypriots indicated that, when using the word 'Cypriot', they were referring exclusively to Greek-Cypriots or Turkish-Cypriots respectively. Fewer than 14% of Greek-Cypriots and 43% of Turkish-Cypriots said they refer to both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots when using the term 'Cypriot'.

**Which group of people do you usually mean when you use the term "Cypriot"?**
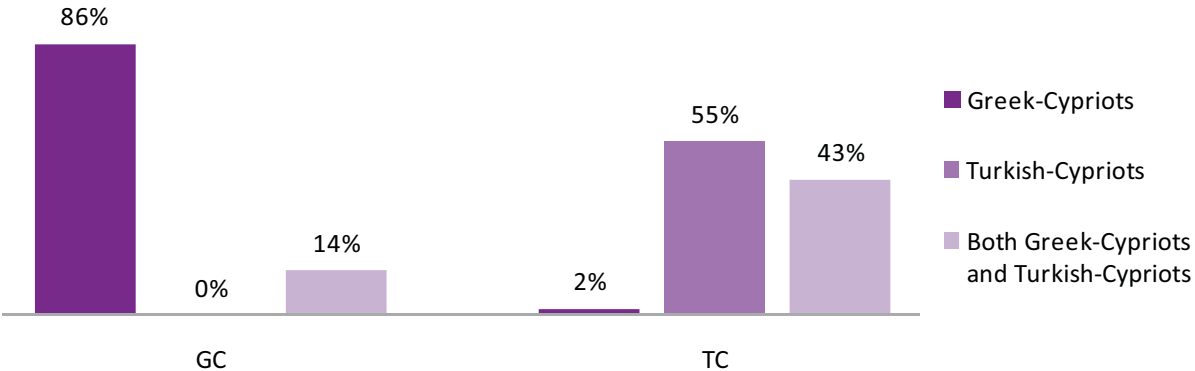


**Table 7.3: Cypriot Youth's Use of the Term 'Cypriot'**

What explains the difference in percentages? The vast majority of Greek-Cypriots seem to feel that Cyprus is somehow 'theirs', for a number of reasons: for instance in terms of numbers or demography – Greek-Cypriots constitute the large majority of the population;[192] in modern liberal democracies, following the principle "one-man-one-vote", majorities seal the identity of the country. Greek-Cypriots also resort to historical arguments, pointing that they have been the 'original' inhabitants of the island traceable since 3,000 years ago, which makes them the real 'natives', with historical or natural rights to the land. Such data, along with the resilience and strong presence of Greek culture on the island through the ages, are seen to bear testimony to the 'fact' that "Cyprus is Greek". In parallel, since they view the Turkish-Cypriots as more recent arrivals, and only a minority element, they are assumed not to have an equal claim to the island.

Turkish-Cypriots who feel that Cyprus is 'theirs', tend to stress the physical proximity of the island to Turkey/Anatolia with which the island was presumably joined to in ancient time. The first inhabitants of Cyprus are claimed to have come from Anatolia, which is another version of the 'origins'/'natives' argument. Furthermore, stress is put on the many sacrifices and blood shed by the Ottomans who

conquered the island in the sixteenth century – seen to legitimate the present claim on the island that "Cyprus is Turkish".[193] Such Turkish-Cypriot views should not obscure the fact that almost half (43%) believe that Cyprus belongs to both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots (or, what is the same, that both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots are Cypriots) – a much bigger percentage than Greek-Cypriots sharing the same sentiment (14%).

But these figures are also an outcome of the separate existence and growth of the two communities – so that for each the 'other' community is largely rendered invisible (as if, in effect, it did not exist). As has been noted earlier, 'co-existence' amounted to the cohabitation of two separate societies, leading parallel lives. In such circumstances, the only 'self' of any importance was the 'ethnic self' – rendering the 'ethnic other' of little or no significance. In effect, one's own community expanded to fill all social space, bracketing away the other and causing it to be invisible or insignificant. Hence 'Cypriot' came to mean one's own ethnic community.

Yet identities are never unitary or one-dimensional, or even binary in nature – but are usually multiple or multi-layered. In the last few years Europe has been gaining increasing importance for Cypriots on both sides of

the divide and this has apparently affected identity perceptions, adding another layer to pre-existing ethnic and civic identifications. Indeed, about 38% of Greek-Cypriot and 34% of Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed, either "agreed", or "strongly agreed" with the statement *"I feel that I am both a Cypriot and a European citizen"* (although almost similar numbers, 33% and 37%, respectively, "neither agreed nor disagreed" with this statement). When presented with the statement *"I feel that I am a European citizen"*, responses of young Greek-Cypriots paralleled those of young Turkish-Cypriots (with 30% of Greek-Cypriots and 28% of Turkish-Cypriots either "agreeing" or "strongly agreeing" with this).

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

A. I feel that I am both a Cypriot and a European citizen
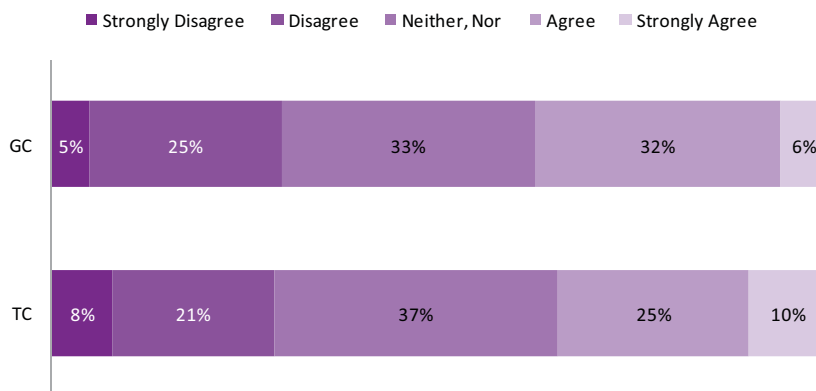


B. I feel that I am a European citizen
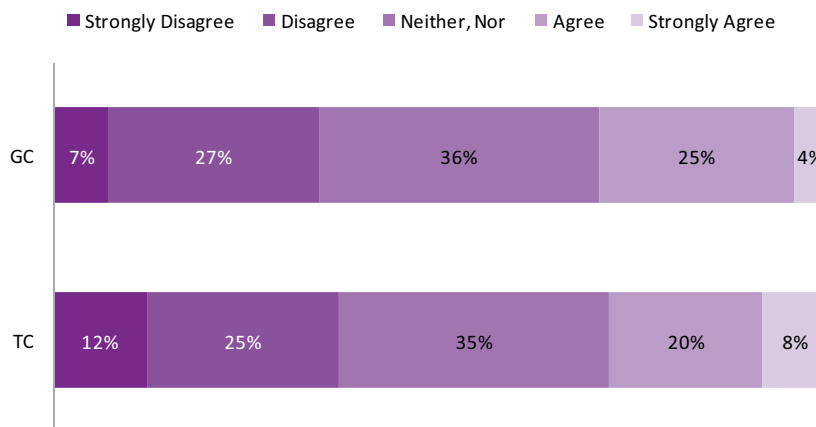


**Table 7.4: Cypriot versus European Citizenship**

In-depth interviews afforded youth from both communities the opportunity to elaborate on the rationale behind their identity designations. Additionally, their responses provided a means of gauging the underlying complexities relevant to Cypriot identity. One group of interviewees, who identified themselves as, above anything else, Cypriot, did this by counterposing this at the expense of their ethnic/national identity:[194]

*I am Cypriot; I am neither Greek nor Greek-Cypriot, nothing* [relating to Greek]. *I am Cypriot, I was born in Cyprus, Cyprus is an independent state, and we have no connection to Greece. The only thing is we speak our Greek as a dialect. One may, of course, propose that the Cypriot* [dialect] *is closer to ancient Greek, but we have nothing to do with Greece.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 16, student, single, rural Limassol]**

Yet most of those who chose Cypriot did not do so through rejecting their ethnic/national identity. In most cases it rather seems that 'Cypriot' assumed or implied the ethnic dimension. For many, emphasising the 'Cypriot' component of their identity was a matter of correct priorities:

*Firstly, I feel myself as a Cypriot, then as a Turk.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student]**

Respondents seemed to grapple with how to combine the civic with their ethnic identity, how one could be both a Cypriot and a Greek or Turk, while the new connection with Europe has introduced another layer of identification which Cypriots try to come to terms with and to 'rank' in relation to the pre-existing ethnic/national and civic/country identifications. Different youth seem to make different deductions as to the relevance of this new dimension:

*I am Cypriot, because Cyprus is the place I was born, where we have our traditions […]; Greek, because it is the language we speak. Ok, you cannot view the Greeks as outsiders - we are all Greeks, the mainlanders and the Cypriots. And, finally, European, although I have never felt like one.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, cashier, single, urban Nicosia]**

*Because I was born in Cyprus, therefore, I am Cypriot. My nation is Greece* [sic]*, I am Greek. And now we've entered Europe, so I am European.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 16, student, urban Limassol]**

Yet again, some young Cypriots seemed to accept both the Cypriot and European identity, while shunning the ethnic identity:

*Firstly, I am Cypriot because, let's say, I was born in Cyprus, so that's how it goes. Then, I am European, because Cyprus has joined Europe now. I don't think I am Greek, because I don't think I have any connection with Greece.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate, nurse, cohabits with her boyfriend, rural Limassol]**

The responses cited above demonstrate the views of young Cypriots towards their relatively newly acquired European identity, given the island's accession into the EU in 2004. Greek-Cypriots' identification with Europe has been strengthened as a result of joining other European countries in the 27-country Union.

Many Turkish-Cypriots, on the other hand, did not feel as though they were entitled to feel European given the fact that, at the time Cyprus entered the EU in 2004, it was the Republic of Cyprus which became the legitimate EU partner, and not the "TRNC", which remained outside – and where to this day, the European *acquis communautaire* is still not applied.

*I do not feel myself as a European because our country is not defined as such, therefore, how can I feel myself as European?*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student]**

Although not in fact a part of the EU, many Turkish-Cypriot respondents expressed their desire to become Europeans, as this hides the promise of more properly identifying with the West; furthermore, Europe is expected to bring progress, economic development, political stability and an opening to the outside world – thus the desire towards Europe:

*I wish I could be a European Turkish-Cypriot.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student, urban Nicosia]**

Another way of finding out about identifications is through considering how defensive one becomes when an identity is questioned, challenged, or ridiculed. National pride calls for the defence of the honour of the good name of one's ethnic community, state, or nation.

Respondents were asked to rate, along a continuum scale, how they felt when a) the Cyprus Republic or the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", b) Greece or Turkey and c) the EU were insulted. The five-point response scale ranged from "I don't care/I don't feel anything" (represented by the number 1) to "I care and I feel very disappointed/angry" (represented by the number 5).

| | Greek-Cypriots | Turkish-Cypriots | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **How do you feel when:** | **Mean Scores** | | **How do you feel when:** |
| The Republic of Cyprus is insulted | 3.819 | 4.397 | The "TRNC" is insulted |
| Greece is insulted | 3.020 | 3.929 | Turkey is insulted |
| The EU is insulted | 2.402 | 2.073 | The EU is insulted |

**Table 7.5: Feelings towards Own State, "Mother Countries" and the EU**

Among Greek-Cypriot youth, the strongest feelings of anger or disappointment, indicated by the mean score of 3.819, related to the expression of insults against the Republic of Cyprus. Insults targeted towards Greece and the EU evoked progressively weaker responses (mean scores of 3.020 and 2.402 for insults towards Greece and against Europe, respectively). The response pattern of young Turkish-Cypriots mirrored that of Greek-Cypriots – only it was stronger for "TRNC" and Turkey, and weaker for the EU. Interestingly, the strongest feelings of disappointment or anger experienced related to insults against the "TRNC" (mean score of 4.397). It seems that the more an identity is questioned, the more defensive feelings are strengthened (in this case, Greek-Cypriots have been questioning the legitimacy and very existence of the "TRNC", but also the legitimacy of Turkey's links to Turkish-Cypriots and the former's motives in helping the latter since 1974). These were followed by feelings relating to insults against Turkey (mean score of 3.929).

## Cypriot Youths' Views on European Union Membership

A 2007 Eurobarometer survey, conducted with both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, showed that 37% of Greek-Cypriots viewed their entry into the EU as positive and another 42% as neither good nor bad.[195] Despite the Greek-Cypriots' predominantly positive assessment, this represents a regression when compared to the much more positive pre-accession ratings;

the change relates to the Greek-Cypriots' expectations that joining the EU would have led to the solution of the 'Cyprus Problem' and that Turkey would have been compelled by the EU into making serious concessions (such as withdrawing her military forces on the island, allowing Greek-Cypriot refugees to return to their homes and so on) – expectations which have clearly not come to fruition.

Across the divide, even though Turkish-Cypriots have not joined the EU, an even higher percentage of 47% regarded EU membership as a positive thing: this is because accession has brought many benefits to the Turkish-Cypriots, mostly via their Republic of Cyprus citizenship, allowing them to acquire EU passports and hence to travel abroad freely. An even larger number (59%) supported that the Turkish-Cypriot community would benefit from full EU membership.[196] The same Eurobarometer study noted that 55% of Greek-Cypriots trusted the EU (the EU27 average is 48%). Turkish-Cypriot support for the Union seemed to be on the decline: a very high 72% believed that the voice of their community was not heard, nor were their interests taken into account.

In an attempt to gauge what the EU meant to young Greek-Cypriots or Turkish-Cypriots, $YAS_1$ respondents were presented with a range of options and asked to indicate the level of agreement or disagreement with each statement;[197] measured along a 5-point continuum, ranging from "strongly disagree" (represented by the number 1) to "strongly agree" (represented by the number 5).

**What does the EU mean to you?** Mean results where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree

■ GC  ■ TC

| | GC | TC |
|---|---|---|
| A risk of losing our national identity | 3.01 | 3.11 |
| Guaranteed lasting peace | 3.21 | 3.1 |
| More bureaucracy | 3.24 | 3.36 |
| Enhancement of multicultural policies in Cyprus | 3.4 | 3.57 |
| A good means for the economic improvement of Cyprus | 3.43 | 3.69 |
| An outside authority to resort to when a citizen is unhappy with his/her own government | 3.56 | 3.5 |
| More/better protection of human/citizens' rights | 3.7 | 3.63 |
| A better future for young people (e.g. more jobs will be available) | 3.7 | 3.82 |
| Technological and scientific improvements in Cyprus | 3.86 | 3.7 |
| The ability to travel freely in all EU countries | 3.94 | 3.87 |

**Table 7.6: What does the EU Mean to Cypriot Youth?**

Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth strongly associated the EU with the ability to travel freely between all EU countries. Furthermore, young Cypriots from both communities correlated the EU with technological and scientific improvements in Cyprus and with a better future for young people. Additionally, Greek-Cypriots seem to associate the EU with the increased protection of human and citizens' rights, whereas Turkish-Cypriots believed that the EU represented a good means for the economic improvement of Cyprus – reflecting the perspectives of their communities at large, on what each view as the main benefits of membership/close association with the EU.

For the most part, Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots seemed to be sceptical as to whether or not the EU represented the guarantee of lasting peace. At the same time, few in either community perceived the EU as a threat to losing their national identity.

Views on the EU were further explored with a question which asked young Cypriots to evaluate the merits of joining the EU. Very large numbers of Cypriots, 63% of Greek-Cypriot and 64% of Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed, either "agree" or "strongly agree" that, overall Cyprus' accession to the EU is a positive step for its people. A comparable 38% of Cypriot youth from the Greek-Cypriot community and 37% from the Turkish-Cypriot community either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement, "I trust the EU", while 47% and 37%, respectively, neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

A. Cyprus' accession to the European Union is a positive step for its people

■ Strongly Disagree　■ Disagree　■ Neither, Nor　■ Agree　■ Strongly Agree

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither, Nor | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | 3% | 7% | 28% | 51% | 11% |
| TC | 5% | 6% | 24% | 39% | 25% |
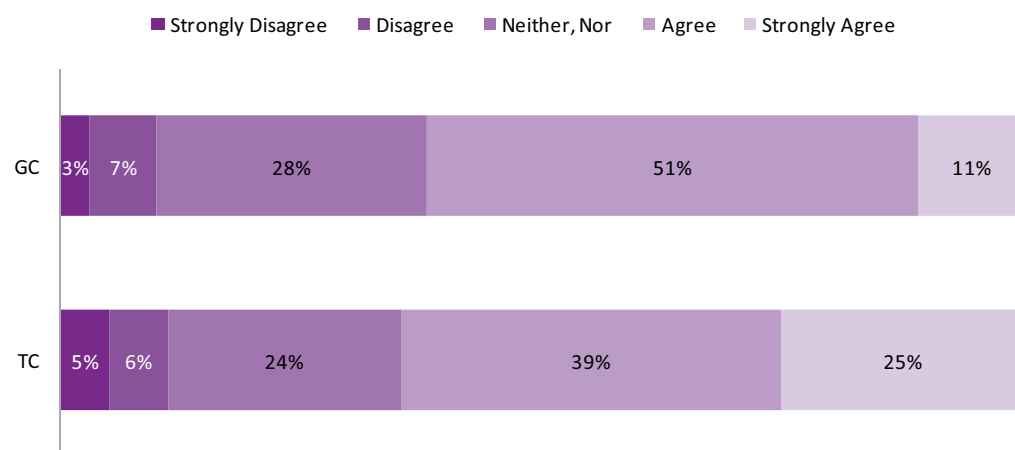
B. I trust the European Union

■ Strongly Disagree　■ Disagree　■ Neither, Nor　■ Agree　■ Strongly Agree

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither, Nor | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | 4% | 11% | 47% | 33% | 5% |
| TC | 8% | 17% | 37% | 27% | 12% |
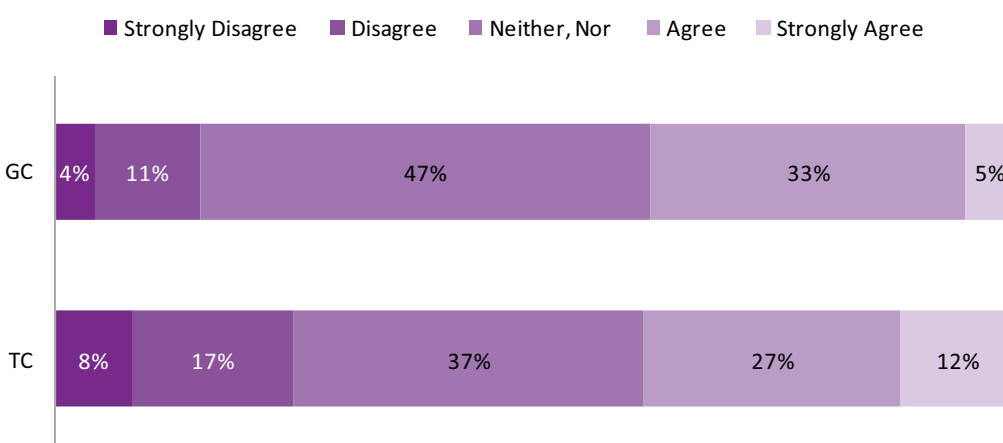
**Table 7.7: Attitudes towards the EU**

During the in-depth interviews young Cypriots were encouraged to share what they felt were the main advantages and disadvantages of Cyprus' accession to the EU. As noted before, the advancement of the Cypriot economy and the ability to travel freely were cited by many respondents as positive benefits of EU membership.

*With the change of currency into Euro, there will be no currency exchange if you want to go to another country, there are no duties as in the past, and therefore the effects on the Cyprus economy are positive.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, university graduate, chemist, single, rural Limassol]**

Not all the interviewees viewed EU membership positively. A frequent worry revolved around the number of foreigners that have immigrated to the island since its accession in 2004:

*I haven't seen any difference…besides that in the last few years many outsiders have come,*

*many foreigners in Cyprus, and this bothers me personally because a country like us, which is small, cannot have almost half its inhabitants being foreigners. Besides their getting our jobs…everything, it impacts Cypriots a lot…I mean, the fact that our gates have opened for all the world bothers me exceedingly.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

Some respondents felt uneasy with joining a much larger whole, feeling that aspects of this move would lead to diminishing the distinctiveness of being a national of an independent country. One respondent was troubled by the recent change in currency, from Cypriot Pound into Euro, which took place on January 1, 2008, believing that the loss of a national currency affected the uniqueness of being Cypriot.

*They changed the currency of our country as well, when, supposedly, the currency is something which indicates the uniqueness of a country* [...] *I think it wasn't right that we entered the European Union, since even alone we could still travel – what was the problem* [with not joining the EU]*, the visas let's say?*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 16, student, rural Limassol]**

Most Turkish-Cypriot youth seem to believe that full membership to the European Union could potentially help to improve the situation in the north of Cyprus (given the many economic and social problems faced) and to decrease dependence on Turkey:

*I think we should join the EU because the situation of our country is very bad…for example our economy, health institutions, education and so on… and nobody knows what we should do; we are in chaos. If we enter the EU it will certainly be beneficial.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24, works in a computer shop, urban Nicosia]**

*Our country depends on Turkey and we have faced a lot of limitations, like* [an] *embargo. So if we want to become an independent country we should join the EU.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 22, public service, state, urban Nicosia]**

Overall young Turkish-Cypriots presented conflicting views on the EU; these ranged from claiming disinterest in the matter to believing that, as things stood, the EU was a far-off, unattainable dream:

*I said that I am not interested in this matter; it doesn't matter if we join the EU.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student (psychology), urban Morfou]**

*I think that the EU will be an* [unattainable] *dream for Cyprus, if things keep on going like this.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 21, university student, rural Nicosia]**

## Attitudes towards Members of the Other Community

It is worth reiterating that, prior to the opening of some checkpoints in 2003, which allowed for Greek-Cypriots to visit the northern, and Turkish-Cypriots the southern, parts of the island, interaction between the two communities was virtually non-existent. Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth born post 1974 had grown up separate from one another. Thus the attitudes and feelings that young Cypriots harboured towards members of the other community have largely been shaped by factors other than their own social experience. Such influences include the experiences, assessments and perceptions or attitudes of family members and friends, as well as those conveyed through their respective education systems, political parties and leaders, as well as the media.

In attempting to examine the attitudes of Cypriot youth towards members of the other community, young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots were correspondingly presented with the statements, "I do not like Turkish-Cypriots" and "I do not like Greek-Cypriots". Around a third of respondents, 31% of Greek-Cypriots and 25% of Turkish-Cypriots, disagreed with this statement, while slightly more than a third (37% and 39%, respectively) agreed to it.

In-depth interviewees reveal some of the reasons behind the figures. Some youth displayed

less than favourable attitudes when it came to either Greek-Cypriots or Turkish-Cypriots:

*Keep them* [Greek-Cypriots] *away from me; keep them close to Allah.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, male, 21, university student (education), urban Nicosia)**

Those who presented a more positive attitude towards their fellow Cypriots, made a distinction between painful events and happenings experienced by their parents in the past and present-day realities:

*I like them; they didn't cause me any harm.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student (psychology), urban Morfou]**

*Young people treat Turks* [sic] *in a very racist way. I believe they should not view them in a hostile* [manner]*…It doesn't mean that because of what took place so many years ago, all Turks are bad… even the kids at my school…there are many Turkish-Cypriots, and I see how they are treated. Sure, there is no direct teasing, but they* [Greek-Cypriots] *would not go talk to them on their own…*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 16, high school student, urban Nicosia]**

*We are people and so are they. There are some things that come from the past. Their church* [still plays an important role and constitutes a danger to us]. *If anything is to change then the past has to be completely forgotten.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 21, university student, rural Nicosia]**

*We can ask this question to my mother and father because I don't have any negative feelings on this matter. At the end of the day, they are human beings too, so I can forge a relationship or communicate with them.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 20, university student]**

Participants in the *YAS*$_1$ were further asked how they would feel if they had a Turkish-Cypriot (directed to Greek-Cypriots) or a Greek-Cypriot (directed to Turkish-Cypriots) as a) a neighbour, b) a friend, c) a business partner, d) a boyfriend or girlfriend, e) a husband or wife, and f) the president of Cyprus.

In general, it appears that Turkish-Cypriot youth are slightly more receptive than Greek-Cypriots are to the idea of having a neighbour, friend, or business partner from the other community.

**How would you feel if you had a Greek-Cypriot / Turkish-Cypriot...?**
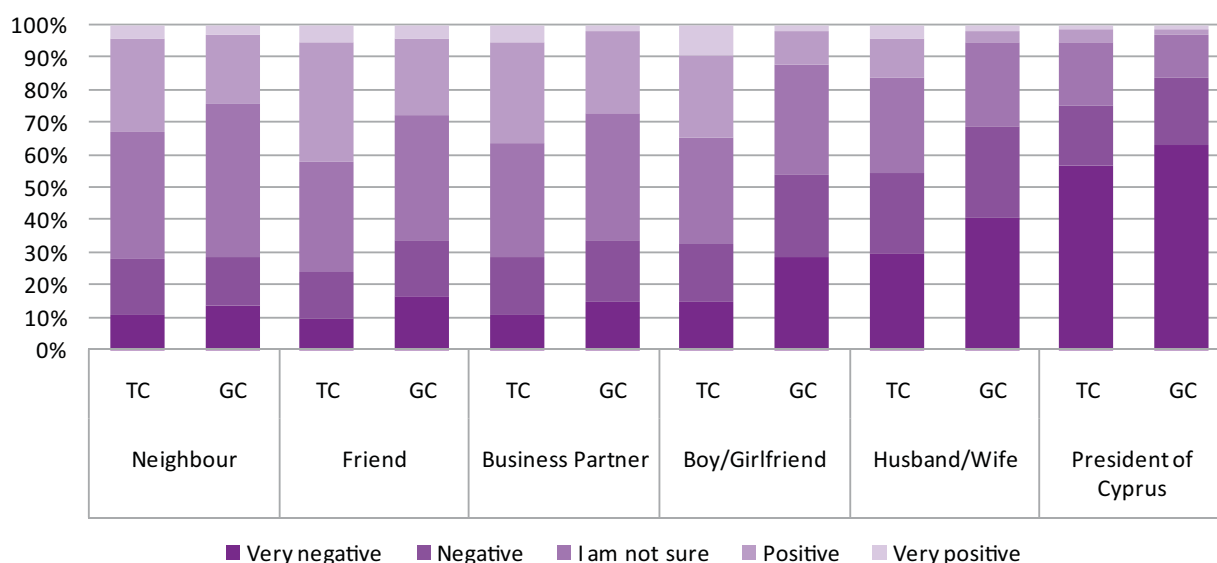


**Table 7.8 Attitudes towards Significant Ethnic Others**

For example, approximately 32% of Turkish-Cypriots would feel "positive" or "very positive" having a Greek-Cypriot neighbour, whereas only 25% of Greek-Cypriots stated that they would feel this way if they had a Turkish-Cypriot neighbour. When it came to having a husband/wife or president from the other community, both Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots were more strongly opposed.

Only 15% of Turkish-Cypriots and a minor 5% of Greek-Cypriots would have "positive" or "very positive" feelings about marrying someone from the other community: one may speculate that the much lower readiness of Greek-Cypriots relates to the stronger impact of the Church and religion among Greek-Cypriots (Turkish-Cypriots being more secular than Greek-Cypriots).

Both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth admitted that they would not feel positive with a president from the other community as indicated by the 85% of Greek-Cypriots and the 75% of Turkish-Cypriots who stated that they would feel "negative" or "very negative" if the president of Cyprus was a Turkish-Cypriot or a Greek-Cypriot respectively: again the difference in responses must relate to the Greek-Cypriot feeling that they as a majority have the 'democratic right' to elect a president from among their own.

In order to try to understand the motives behind their choices, respondents who replied that they would have negative feelings, and those who were not sure about how they felt, were asked to identify the primary reasons why this was the case.

**If to some of the above your answer was negative or not sure, why is that? Primarily because...**
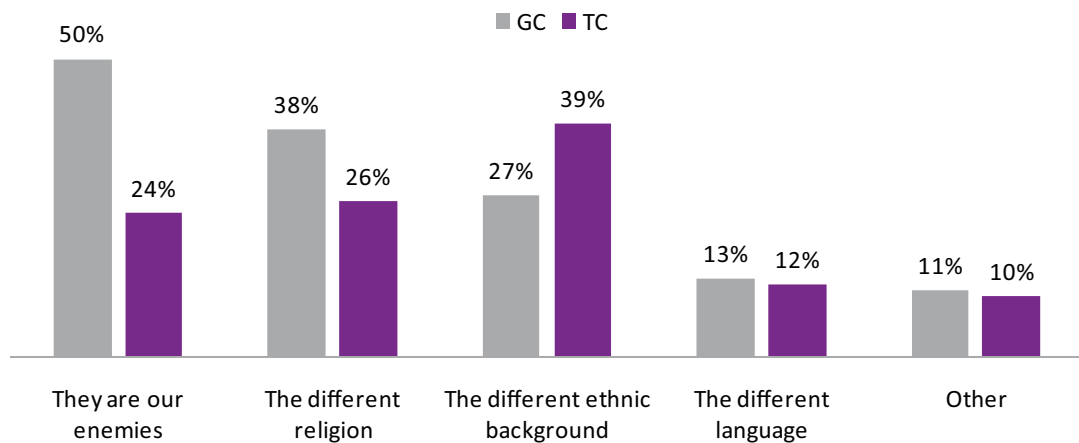


**Table 7.9: Reasons for Negative Feelings**

The primary reason highlighted by Greek-Cypriot participants, as accounting for their negative attitudes, was their belief that Turkish-Cypriots "are our enemies" (50%), while the second most cited reason was the difference in religion (38%); the different ethnic background of each community was the third most important motive for the negative perceptions expressed by young Greek-Cypriots (26%).

The responses from Turkish-Cypriot youth were contrary to those of the Greek-Cypriots:

they cited differing ethnic backgrounds as the primary reason behind their responses (39%), followed by the differing religions (26%); the response "they are our enemies" (24%) was the third in importance. Language appeared to be the least important reason among both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots (13% and 12%, respectively) as to why respondents might feel negatively about befriending members of the other community, working with them as business partners or marrying them.

A possible explanation as to why more Greek-Cypriots feel as though Turkish-Cypriots are their enemies is due to the former feeling that they are the ones who lost a war, thus holding Turkey and Turkish-Cypriots (though more the former than the latter) responsible for the loss of their land and for the division of the country. Turkish-Cypriots seem to be generally happier with the outcome of the 1974 conflict (since it bestowed them with security they thereto had not enjoyed), so most seem to feel as if the enmity account has closed; consequently, most do not seem to see Greek-Cypriots as 'enemies' but as 'ethnic' and/or 'religious' others (this obviously does not rule out feelings of deep division and unresolved differences).

## Views on Non-Cypriots

Although the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities represent the two main communities on the island, the proportion of mainland Turks (residing solely in the Turkish-Cypriot controlled areas) and foreign workers (living in either community) has been increasing

substantially, contributing to the changing fabric of Cypriot society. Young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots were asked to respond to a series of statements concerning the mainland Turks, as well as foreign workers in Cyprus.

When it came to the statements concerning the Turkish settlers, Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth appeared strongly divided on this issue. The vast majority of Greek-Cypriot youth (79%) agreed or strongly agreed that "all Turkish settlers should leave Cyprus". While 23% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents felt the same, approximately half of them (49%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Moreover, almost twice as many Turkish-Cypriots (52%) compared to Greek-Cypriots (27%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "some Turkish settlers (e.g. those who are married to Turkish-Cypriots) could stay after a solution". While 61% of Greek-Cypriots agreed that "Turkish settlers are only a source of problems in Cyprus", Turkish-Cypriots were three times less likely to feel this way (21%).

| How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements: | Strongly disagree % | | Disagree % | | Neither, nor % | | Agree % | | Strongly agree % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC |
| All Turkish settlers should leave Cyprus | 2 | 24 | 6 | 25 | 13 | 29 | 31 | 11 | 48 | 12 |
| Some Turkish settlers (e.g. those who are married to Turkish-Cypriots) could stay after a solution | 14 | 5 | 21 | 13 | 38 | 29 | 25 | 40 | 2 | 13 |
| Turkish settlers are only a source of problems for Cyprus | 2 | 24 | 10 | 25 | 27 | 30 | 33 | 14 | 28 | 7 |

**Table 7.10: Cypriot Youth's Attitudes towards Turkish Settlers**

The contrasting views are not surprising, considering that young Turkish-Cypriots have grown up with Turkish settlers who, today, make up a considerable proportion of the population in the north. A number have married Turkish-Cypriots and have fully

integrated into society. However, this does not mean that Turkish-Cypriots have accepted their presence: though they share a common language and religion, many Turkish-Cypriots seem to feel that Turkish settlers have little in common with them and

their Cypriot culture. Greek-Cypriots, on the other hand, feel strongly that the settlers from Turkey have no legitimate place on the island; indeed, the increasing numbers of Turkish settlers (from 1974 onwards) is seen as an underhand attempt to alter the island's demographics.

When it came to the issue of foreign workers, Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth displayed a greater degree of similarity as regards their attitudes towards the foreign labour force in Cyprus, with Turkish-Cypriot youth exhibiting slightly stronger levels of tolerance.

| How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements: | Strongly disagree % | | Disagree % | | Neither, nor % | | Agree % | | Strongly agree % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC | GC | TC |
| There are too many foreign workers in Cyprus | 1 | 5 | 0 | 11 | 3 | 21 | 53 | 37 | 43 | 25 |
| Foreign workers in Cyprus should have the same rights as Cypriots | 17 | 15 | 31 | 21 | 26 | 31 | 23 | 23 | 3 | 11 |
| Foreign workers add to the richness of cultural experiences in Cyprus | 11 | 11 | 35 | 15 | 36 | 42 | 17 | 24 | 1 | 8 |
| Foreign workers add strength to our economy | 14 | 11 | 34 | 17 | 31 | 38 | 20 | 27 | 2 | 7 |
| Send all foreign workers back to their countries | 7 | 11 | 30 | 25 | 30 | 33 | 21 | 20 | 11 | 11 |

**Table 7.11: Cypriot Youth's Attitudes towards Foreign Workers**

For example, 34% of Turkish-Cypriots, compared to 26% of Greek-Cypriots, agreed or strongly agreed that "foreign workers in Cyprus should have the same rights as Cypriots". Additionally, while nearly one third of Turkish-Cypriots agreed that "foreign workers add to the richness of the cultural experiences in Cyprus" (32%) and that they "add to the strength of the economy" (34%), these sentiments were only shared by approximately one fifth of Greek-Cypriots (18% and 21%, respectively).

Perhaps the most marked difference between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth's attitudes towards foreign workers relates to the number of foreign workers residing on the island: a staggering 97% of Greek-Cypriot youth agreed that there were too many foreign workers in Cyprus, compared with 62% of young Turkish-Cypriots feeling the same.

A main reason for the large differences in the responses may relate to the fact that, in the north, most of the foreign workers are Turks, from mainland Turkey. This ethnic element tends to make Turkish-Cypriots more tolerant towards foreign workers – who are their co-nationals. In the case of Greek-Cypriots, most foreigners come from Asia, and other less developed countries, hence the ethnic factor is not there to mitigate negative feelings; on the contrary, the 'oriental' origin of foreign workers (many of which are uneducated or unskilled), seems to render them inferior in their eyes and their presence in large numbers undesirable. Young Cypriots from both communities were, however, equally divided when it came to whether or not all foreign workers should be sent back to their countries (a clear third wants them to stay, another third wishes them to go, and another third does not have a view either way).

Youth surveyed for the *European Social Survey* were asked to indicate on a scale of 0 to 10 whether immigration was *bad* or *good* for their country's economy (where 0 = bad and 10= good). Out of a group of eight countries examined, including Cyprus, Greece and Turkey, mean scores ranged from 4.32 (Cyprus) to 5.76 (Poland). This indicates that young people in Europe do not necessarily view the contribution made by foreign workers as either a bad or a good thing. This could be attributed to the fact that most young people are still pursuing their secondary or tertiary education and are not as concerned about the effect of immigrants on their country's economy.

In the same survey, young people were asked to select on a scale of 0 to 10 if they thought that their country's cultural life was *undermined* or *enriched* by immigrants (where 0 = undermined and 10 = enriched). Looking at the same group of countries, mean scores ranged from 3.80 (Russia) to 6.72 (Poland), with Cyprus (4.09), Turkey (4.20) and Greece (4.31) displaying some of the lowest mean scores. Perhaps of some interest is the fact that countries such as Norway, the UK and Germany displayed higher mean scores when it came to the latter question, indicating that young people felt more positively about the contribution made by foreigners living in their country to the cultural life experienced as opposed to the strength of the economy. This was not the case among youth in Cyprus, Turkey and Greece who all displayed lower mean scores for the latter question.

## Inter-communal Interactions: From the Past…

Turning back to the attitudes of Cypriot youth towards members of the other community, participants were asked about the possible interactions that their parents or grandparents might have had with members of the other community before they were separated from one another. A proportion of respondents, 37% of Greek-Cypriots and 33% of Turkish-Cypriots, did not know if any member of their family had associated with individuals from the other community. More than one third of Greek-Cypriots (34%) stated that no member of their family had interacted with Turkish-Cypriots before the division of the island, while approximately a third (30%) knew of family members who had had such interaction. Similar results were derived from the Turkish-Cypriot respondents: 41% did not, and 26%, did have family members who interacted with Greek-Cypriots before the two communities were separated from one another.

Respondents who positively indicated that a member of their family had had some form of contact with a member of the other community before the division were asked to describe the nature of these interactions.

**Type of Interaction**
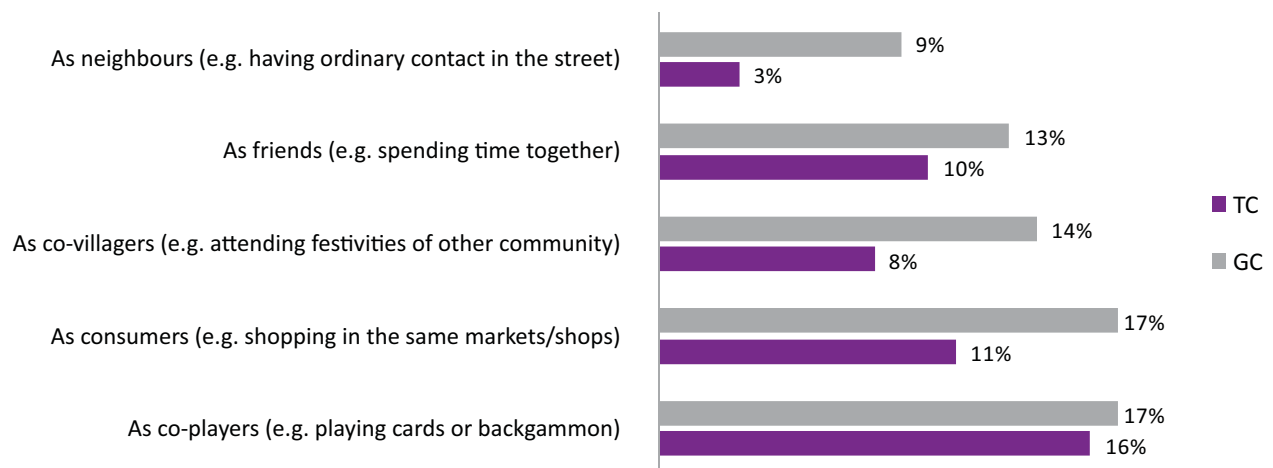


**Table 7.12: Types of Inter-communal Interaction**

Greek-Cypriot recall of greater interaction possibly relates to the official Greek-Cypriot discourse of "peaceful co-existence" between the two communities in the past. The opposite applies for Turkish-Cypriots, whose official discourse stresses the past tensions and conflict between the two communities; furthermore, in the 20th century Greek-Cypriots overshadowed Turkish-Cypriots (in terms of numbers, but also, socio-economic status) and often looked down on Turkish-Cypriots whom they tended to view as an undeveloped minority, hence Turkish-Cypriots may have felt Greek-Cypriot attitudes towards them to be patronising rather than friendly.[198]

Overall, what is striking about the low level of interactions is that they provide an indication of the segregation of the two communities, which largely led 'parallel lives', and had few close relations; indeed most interaction seems to have been of the type described by Furnival long ago, who writing about 'plural societies' such as Cyprus, pointed out that a 'plural society' comprises of two or more groups or segments which "live side by side yet without mingling, in one political unit" [...] "a medley of peoples [who] mix but do not combine. As such, each group holds its own religion, its own culture and language, its own ideas and

ways. As individuals, they meet but only in the market-place, in buying and selling [...] living side by side but separately [...] in the society as a whole there is no common social will".[199]

## ...to the Present

Four years after the opening of some of the crossings, young Cypriots around the island were asked whether or not they had interacted at all with young people from the other community. The response rates of participants from both communities were comparable, with only 15% of Greek-Cypriots and 19% of Turkish-Cypriots indicating that they had experienced some type of interaction with young Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots, and 85% and 82%, respectively, stating that they had not. Young

Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots were also asked whether or not they had cultivated friendships with anyone from the other community. Only 6% of Greek-Cypriots have Turkish-Cypriot friends, whereas 94% do not. On the other hand, a considerably larger 25% of Turkish-Cypriots said they have made friends with Greek-Cypriots, while the remaining 75% have not.

**Do you have friends from the other community?**
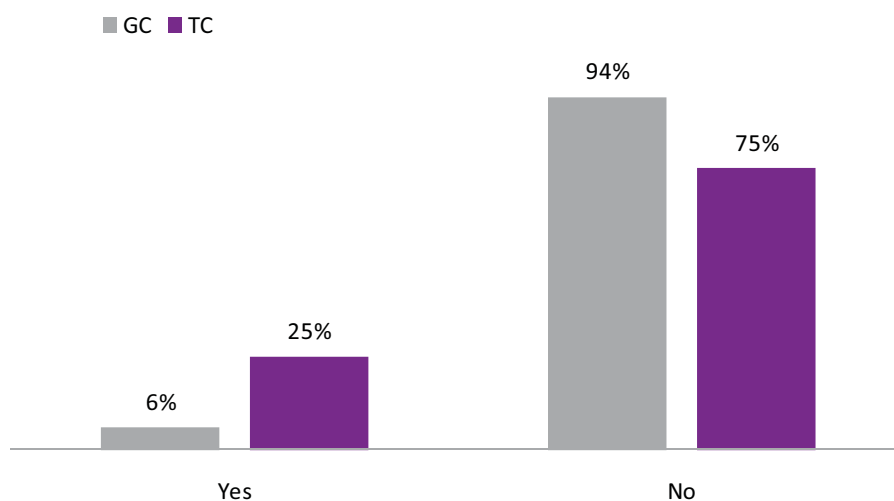


**Table 7.13: Friendships with Members of the Other Community**

Among young Cypriots who did have interaction with members of the other community, the most common form of interaction in both communities is meeting one another in person (57% of Greek-Cypriots and 49% of Turkish-Cypriots). They also rely on the exchange of electronic mail and Internet chat in order to communicate with one another. This medium of communication seems to have served as a link, bringing together young members of both communities, since the mid-1990s when the Internet began to make its presence in the homes of Cypriots. Interestingly, communicating with each other via telephone is not a popular form of communication on either side. Calling a Turkish-Cypriot from the Greek-Cypriot community is equivalent to calling Turkey – thus, the caller is charged with international telephone rates, making this form of communication prohibitively expensive. Similarly, Turkish-Cypriots are also charged international calling rates when calling numbers in the south.

Those who had not made friends with members from the other community were posed the question of whether they would have liked to make such friends. The willingness to make friends with Turkish-Cypriots was expressed by 32% of Greek-Cypriots. In comparison, 43% of Turkish-Cypriots indicated that they would like to have friends from the Greek-Cypriot community. On the other hand, quite high numbers, 68% of Greek-Cypriots and 57% of Turkish-Cypriots, said that they do not want to have friends from the other respective communities. When probed as to the reasons why they felt this way, a good number of Greek-Cypriots (42%) and Turkish-Cypriots (29%) indicated that, primarily, they did not care to befriend young Cypriots belonging to the other community; that they felt indifferent towards them. Secondly, a smaller portion of those surveyed stated that they did not want any friends from the other community because they "disliked or hated" them. Although this reason was given by both sides, more than twice as many Greek-Cypriots (24%) felt this way, compared to Turkish-Cypriots (11%). Again, this must be because many Greek-Cypriots seem to believe that it is inappropriate to befriend those who captured their land and are illegally occupying it. Building on this, many Greek-Cypriots do not wish to cross over to the Turkish-Cypriot community as this requires presenting identification, thereby implying recognition of a border or of entering another state.

For those who did wish to make friends, the main reasons cited as preventing them from doing so was the lack of existing opportunities to meet Turkish-Cypriots or Greek-Cypriots (21% of both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots). Additionally, Turkish-Cypriots (7%), more than Greek-Cypriots (4%), worried about the social stigma or criticism which they might experience in their own community due to associating with individuals from the other community. Greek-Cypriots (6%), on the other hand, said that they were more fearful of possible dangers emanating from the other community (compared to 4% of Turkish-Cypriots). An equal percentage of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots (6%) stated that the amount of time and effort required to meet stopped them from making friends with members of the other respective community.[200]

| Those who want to befriend people from the other community, what prevents you from having friends from the other community? | Greek-Cypriots (%) | Turkish-Cypriots (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of opportunities to meet Turkish/Greek-Cypriots | 21 | 21 |
| Worry about the social criticism/stigma of my own community | 4 | 7 |
| Fear of possible dangers coming from the other community | 6 | 4 |
| Amount of effort involved | 6 | 6 |

**Table 7.14: Barriers to Befriending Members of the Other Community**

## Inter-communal Interactions: Looking to the Future

As outlined in this Chapter, the issue of identity among Cypriot youth is neither simple nor clear-cut. Given the island's location, at the crossroad of three continents, its unique position within the European Union and each community's association with the "mother countries" of Greece and Turkey, Cypriot youth have at their disposal a number of identities to choose from. As the results of the $YAS_1$ demonstrate, approximately two-thirds of youth from the two communities felt that the 'Mediterranean' identity was the most characteristic of Cyprus. This finding could serve as a starting point to bridging the gap between the two communities who have long since been separated mentally, emotionally and physically.

The psychological consequences of the physical division of the two communities are clearly evident in the attitudes of Cypriot youth. When using the term 'Cypriot', nearly 86% of young Greek-Cypriots are referring exclusively to Greek-Cypriots and not Turkish-Cypriots; a smaller, but nevertheless substantial, 55% of Turkish-Cypriots associate the term 'Cypriot' with Turkish-Cypriots and not Greek-Cypriots. These findings do not come as a surprise given that Cypriot youth have spent most, if not all, their lives living apart, resulting in an "out of sight, out of mind" state of affairs.

Cyprus' accession into the EU in 2004 added another dimension to the identity issues facing Cypriot youth; this applies to the case for Turkish-Cypriots even though the European *acquis communautaire* is not applied in the northern part of the island.

The non-inclusive attitudes of Cypriot youth tend to spill over into the attitudes expressed towards people of other nationalities living in Cyprus today, indicating a need for greater understanding on the part of youth. The need for tolerance and respect becomes even more vital in the face of today's increasingly multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious world. In the case of Cyprus, these characteristics become even more necessary given the existing political conflict and the ongoing peace process. Irrespective of the final outcome, Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots will continue to inhabit the same island and will need to find a way to be more aware of and sensitive to the needs, feelings and views of their fellow residents.

| BOX 7.1 | Can Contact Make a Difference? |
|---|---|

Direct contact between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth seems to be a very effective way to reduce negative attitudes towards members from the other group. This was recently verified by both a questionnaire survey with both a representative sample from both the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot community[1&2] and an experimental intervention of Greek-Cypriot students coming into contact with Turkish-Cypriot students.[3] Converging evidence also comes from the evaluations given by Greek-Cypriot students of their first contact with Turkish-Cypriots.[4] In particular, about 30% report that their first contact was neither a positive nor a negative experience and about 40% report that it was a positive experience. Also many of them report that the experience was better than expected (47%), whereas others (41%) found it as expected.

This demonstrates that, on the background of a somewhat prejudiced picture of the other group, the experience of contact is proving to be a pleasant surprise for a substantial part of the youth population that opens up an opportunity for perspective-taking and the reduction of perceived threats. Contact can also help the students revise their prejudiced representations of the history of Cyprus and particularly of the Cyprus issue. Still, there is a lot to be done by educational authorities across the divide to revise the teaching of history so as to avoid ethnocentric and mono-perspective views of history. Ideally the two official narratives may be coordinated into a more inclusive form of historical narrative that will promote reconciliation;[5] this, however, can only be achieved if the aims of history teaching shift from the promotion of national identity to the promotion of critical thinking. Such an effort would take its true meaning if a broader shared vision of both communities for a viable and productive co-operative future in a reunified Cyprus is promoted in a way that the youth will feel that a solution is not threatening but worth striving for.

*Charis Psaltis*
*Lecturer of Social and Developmental Psychology*
*University of Cyprus*

**References**

[1]Psaltis, C. & Hewstone, M. (2007, 7th September). Intergroup contact as an antidote to social exclusion. Paper presented at British Psychological Society (B.P.S) Social Psychology section conference, Kent, UK.

[2]Psaltis, C. (2008). Mapping the field of inter-communal relations: A social-psychological analysis. International and European Policy (in Greek), 11, 133-143.

[3]Ioannou, M. (2008). Comparing Direct and Extended contact in Cyprus. Unpublished MSc thesis at the Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford.

[4]Pachoulides, K. Psaltis, C. Ioannou, M. (manuscript in preparation). Greek-Cypriot perspectives of university students on bi-communal relations, identities and contact.

[5]Makriyianni, C. & Psaltis, C. (2007). History teaching and reconciliation. Cyprus Review, 19, 43-69.

Inter-communal interactions between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth seem to be the exception, rather than the norm. Although Cypriot youth increasingly find themselves sharing the same commercial space, relations between the two communities are predominantly superficial in nature rather than deep, genuine friendships. This is understandable given the number of years spent apart, as well as the underlying mental, emotional and social barriers. Young Cypriots today, as well as future generations, could benefit from the development of a shared, or a group consciousness. As Ellis points out, social change cannot take place merely through the responsible efforts of individuals; rather, a group consciousness is required, among young people, in order to help them develop a sense of power and the ability to believe that they can make a difference.[201] This group consciousness could be promoted through stressing a "common humanity" whereby individuals are encouraged to show respect for other traditions and tolerance towards the multi-ethnic, multi-religious nature of modern societies and nations. [202]

Interaction among members of the two communities could serve as one tool to allow Cypriot youth to "create new meanings, perceptions and solutions".[203] Providing youth with opportunities for participation and interaction could foster a greater sense of understanding, compassion and responsibility towards the people they share the island with.

Such change could not happen overnight, but requires a great deal of time, effort and commitment at all levels of society, such as family members, teachers, politicians and the media. However, this would result in the strengthening of youth identity, which would, in turn, have a positive effect on youth development and empowerment.

# CYPRIOT YOUTH ON THE CYPRUS PROBLEM

Previous Chapters of this Report have attempted to highlight some of the key areas and issues concerning Cypriot youth living on the island today. Like their counterparts around the world, young Cypriots are mainly preoccupied with their studies, finding a good job after university and socialising with friends and family, either through more traditional forms of interactions (face-to-face contact) or through new information and communication technologies, such as mobile phones and the Internet.

Akin to youth around the world, Cypriot youth are not actively involved in socio-political actions, preferring to limit their political participation to less-involved activities such as the signing of a petition.

Yet Cypriot youth differ from most in the sense that they have grown up apart from one another as a result of the long-standing political conflict on the island, with the two communities living in near isolation from each other. And though Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth appear to enjoy relatively peaceful and safe living conditions, the Cyprus Problem lurks in the background, affecting their lives, in all kinds of visible and invisible ways.

## Problems Facing the Two Communities

Young Cypriots were asked to indicate what, in their opinion, were the biggest problems currently experienced in Cyprus. Both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth believed that unemployment was the most immediate problem. Greek-Cypriots also believed that the failure to reach a solution to the Cyprus Problem was the second most important problem faced in Cyprus; inflation was considered the third most significant issue of concern. Turkish-Cypriots felt that, after unemployment, inflation was the second main problem affecting their community; the rise in crime being the third most important troubling issue. Greek-Cypriot youth also showed concern with the rising levels of crime, which many attribute to the increase in the number of foreigners living on the island.

*Unemployment [...] because the appropriate [jobs] do not exist ... that all people can be employed; there are many graduates from universities who cannot be employed in the position they studied. High prices, as most goods have gotten more expensive.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, university graduate, chemist, single, rural Limassol)**

Within the context of reflecting on the biggest problems and life in contemporary Cyprus, a frequent Turkish-Cypriot response was to question their loyalty towards their country, justified by the belief that it did not provide enough for them. A number of factors were blamed for lending to such an outcome, including a bad economy, characterised by difficulties in securing basic necessities, such as education. Many link all these to the dependence of Turkish-Cypriots on Turkey, itself the outcome of the non-recognition of the "TRNC", resulting in a sense of anomie and feelings of helplessness and entrapment within Turkish-Cypriot society, which often lead to the questioning of authority, to nepotism and similar phenomena. One of the respondents put it as follows:

*I do not feel myself accountable to my country at this point because there is nothing that my country provides for me. The country I am living in is exploiting us instead and never gives anything in return. I am just thankful that we get educated and have completed our primary, secondary and high school education – but, nowadays, the ones who have no money cannot do this [i.e. successfully go through all levels of education]. It is because the basic needs are getting very expensive... Also, I don't feel responsible to our state because I did my military duty and now I do not care about other things.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 24, works at a computer store, rural Nicosia]**

Interestingly, despite voicing such negative views towards the state, the same respondent goes on to point out the increasing individualism and the importance of the self as against the community; the problems faced by Turkish-Cypriots could only be solved if they collectively put their country ahead of their personal needs and the desire for financial gain:

*If people start to think about their country instead of themselves and if people start to get what they deserve then our country may improve. I mean, if people change their mentality we can improve. We cannot solve our problems if we only think about money.*

While the young Turkish-Cypriot's views may seem to conflict with one another, the respondent seems to be making a distinction between the 'state', to which he does not feel he owes much loyalty, and *country*, to which he does acknowledge a collective debt.

## Cypriot Youth on Future Economic, Social and Political Conditions

More than 53% of Greek-Cypriot youth stated that they were satisfied with the current **socio-economic conditions** on the island. This was not the case among young Turkish-Cypriots as two thirds of respondents (66%) were not satisfied with the living conditions experienced – as one would have expected, considering the relatively less developed conditions in the north.

Despite this difference, youth from both communities displayed strikingly similar outlooks when it came to considering their future. Respondents were asked to complete the statement: *"I believe that in the future my life, in general, will be…"* Optimism was expressed by the largest proportion of youth from both communities, as 46% of Greek-Cypriots and 40% of Turkish-Cypriots believed that, in the future, their lives would be "better". Only one tenth of respondents (11% Greek-Cypriots, 10% Turkish-Cypriots) believed that their lives would be "worse", and slightly more than one fifth (22% Greek-Cypriots, 23% Turkish-Cypriots) felt that their lives would be "the same". Nearly 21% of Greek-Cypriots and 28% of Turkish-Cypriot youth more pragmatically thought that their lives would be "worse in some aspects and better in others".

The change of government of the Republic of Cyprus seems to have been accompanied by a more pessimistic attitude among Turkish-Cypriot respondents about the future economic and social conditions facing the island. When asked about the future prospects of the Cyprus economy in the initial survey, only 10% of Turkish-Cypriots thought that conditions would worsen – but this figure increased to 30% in the follow-up survey.[204] And while, initially, 41% of Turkish-Cypriots felt that the economic conditions on the island would improve in the future, this figure dropped to 24% in the

follow-up survey. Similarly, a higher percentage of Turkish-Cypriot youth felt that, in the future, social conditions would either worsen (10% $YAS_1$; 19% $YAS_2$) or remain the same (22% $YAS_1$; 37% $YAS_2$). The percentage of Turkish-Cypriots who believed that social conditions would improve dropped from 41% ($YAS_1$) to 33% ($YAS_2$).

**A. I believe that in the future economic conditions in Cyprus will be -**



| | | Worse | The same | Better | In some aspects worse and in some others better |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | YAS1 | 33% | 29% | 26% | 12% |
| | YAS2 | 31% | 33% | 8% | 28% |
| TC | YAS1 | 11% | 23% | 42% | 25% |
| | YAS2 | 30% | 29% | 24% | 18% |
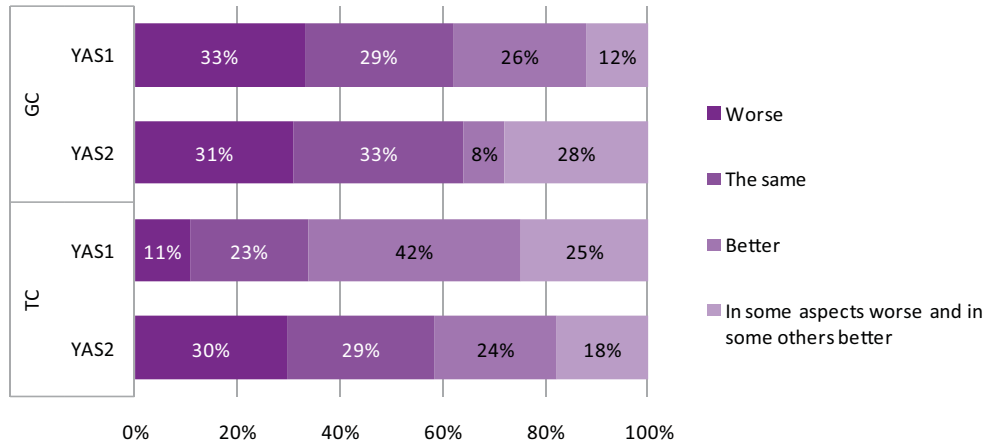
**Table 8.1: Future Economic Conditions – $YAS_1$ and $YAS_2$**

**B. I believe that in the future social conditions in Cyprus will be -**



| | | Worse | The same | Better | In some aspects worse and in some others better |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | YAS1 | 26% | 37% | 23% | 15% |
| | YAS2 | 18% | 41% | 11% | 30% |
| TC | YAS1 | 10% | 22% | 41% | 27% |
| | YAS2 | 19% | 37% | 33% | 11% |
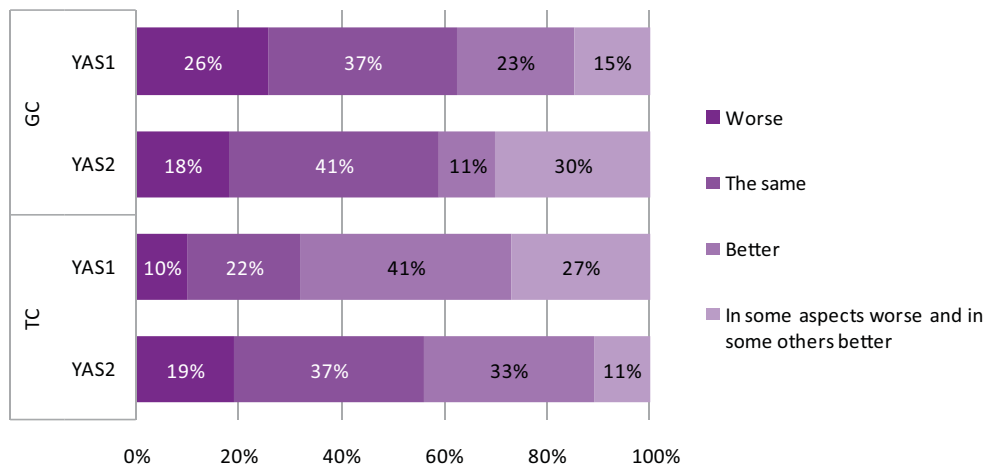
**Table 8.2: Future Social Conditions – $YAS_1$ and $YAS_2$**

Interestingly, the greatest difference in the responses elicited from the Greek-Cypriots was an increase in the percentage of youth who felt that both the economic and social conditions in Cyprus would, in the future, be worse in some aspects and better in others. This presents a picture of Greek-Cypriot youth as being *cautiously* optimistic about what the future held in store, as regards some aspects of the economic and social conditions. The situation among Turkish-Cypriot youth differs considerably as responses to the follow-up survey painted a gloomier assessment of the future. A possible explanation for this is that, in the run up to, and following the 2004 referendum, the international community/climate supported ending the isolation experienced by the Turkish-Cypriot community. And while the period immediately following the referendum, saw the government of the Republic and the European Union implementing various measures to alleviate the effects of this isolation on the members of the Turkish-Cypriot community, Turkish-

Cypriots, four years on, have once again begun to feel increasingly frustrated by the continued economic and international seclusion.

Young Cypriots were asked if they felt that, in the future, the **political conflict** in Cyprus would worsen, remain the same, or improve. A comparison of Greek-Cypriot responses did not highlight any dramatic shift in opinion. However, when it came to comparing the answers of the Turkish-Cypriot participants, the percentage of respondents that believed the political conflict would worsen in the future increased from approximately one fifth (22%) to more than one third (36%). Moreover, while initially 40% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents believed that the political problem would be better in the future, in the follow-up survey this percentage decreased quite dramatically to 21%.

**I believe that in the future the political conflict in Cyprus will be –**
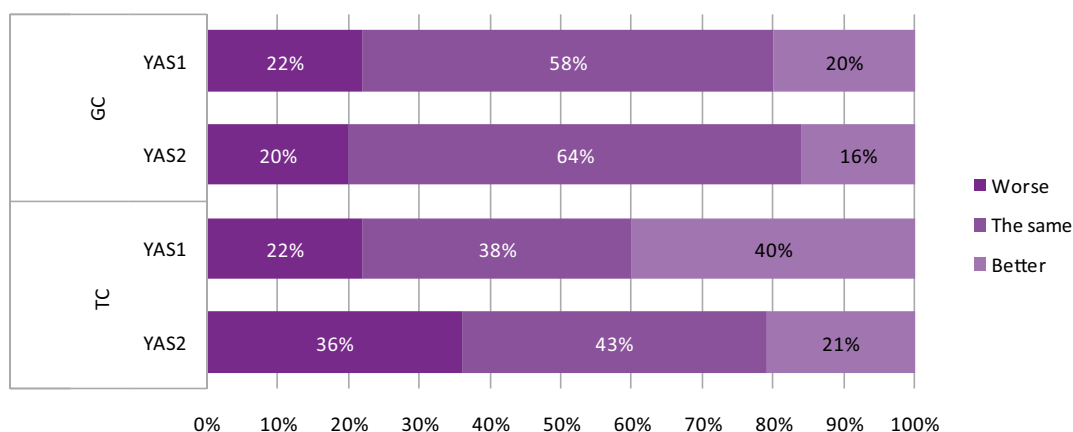


**Table 8.3: Future Political Conditions – YAS$_1$ and YAS$_2$**

The latter findings would indicate that Turkish-Cypriot youth, and by extension the Turkish-Cypriot community, have become increasingly pessimistic about the political situation and the likelihood of reaching a lasting peace agreement.

The Turkish-Cypriots' hopes were raised in the run up to EU accession, which was preceded by the 2004 referendum. Hopes dissipated with the referendum, but some optimism remained since the international community and especially the EU seemed unhappy with developments and went on changing this situation – mainly through pressures on the Greek-Cypriots. But, as time passed without any significant results in the negotiations, optimism began to wither. What is more, Turkish-Cypriots seem to feel they were not adequately rewarded for their positive stance during the 2004 referendum (for instance, their 'isolation' was not lifted as they hoped it would) thus gloom about future prospects has prevailed. Turkish-Cypriot leader, Talat, was received very positively in his early days in power. However, as time passed, the lack of progress as regards the Cyprus Problem, as well as perceived inefficiencies and mishandling of power by his party's government, led to a loss of faith in Talat and his political associates. Meanwhile, on the Greek-Cypriot side President Papadopoulos was perceived by the international community as a hard-liner (on the Cyprus Problem) and thus more sympathies were shown towards the Turkish-Cypriot community - hence Talat's rule led to more optimism. But this changed when the more moderate Christofias came to power in the south, who managed to regain EU trust and to tie further benefits to the Turkish-Cypriots to Turkish concessions and progress in peace negotiations.

Overall, Cypriots on both sides of the divide seem to acknowledge that the two (left) leaders who have risen to power in recent years are both strong advocates of reconciliation. Yet each side seems to maintain the view that the leader of the *other* community is reluctant to abandon the entrenched positions of his community, and this (as well as other 'external' difficulties, such as the interests of other

parties/countries involved with the problem) maintains the stalemate. The views of the two communities on the political problem of Cyprus and its solution will be the subject of the remaining portion of this Chapter.

## The Impact of the Division of the Island on Young Cypriots and their Families

Young Cypriots were asked whether or not, in their opinion, their families were impacted by the division of the island, either economically, socio-politically or emotionally. Almost half of all participants (50% Greek-Cypriot; 49% Turkish-Cypriot) felt that the division of the island did indeed have a negative effect on their family's financial affairs, resulting from the loss of land or property still inaccessible to them.[205]

A little less than half of the respondents (45% of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots) believe that the division of the island has had no direct economic impact on their families. Similarly, while almost half (46%) of the respondents thought that their families had not experienced any emotional effects attributable to the

division of the island, even larger numbers (49% Greek-Cypriots and 46% Turkish-Cypriots) felt that their families did have to live with negative emotional consequences, as a result of the 1963 and 1974 violence and the ensuing division. Such emotional effects included the loss of loved ones, who may have died during the war or been taken as war hostages, many of which remain missing until today.[206]

Concerning the socio-political impact that the division of the island may have had on their families, the majority of Greek-Cypriots (58%) and Turkish-Cypriots (51%) felt that their families had been negatively affected. As expected, the degree of whether or not a young person's family had been impacted by the division varied according to the physical location of the family; for example, respondents from the town of Paphos which, compared to Nicosia, lies furthest away from the Green Line, were the least likely to have been negatively affected by the division of the island.[207]

Besides effects on their families, young Cypriots were asked whether or not the division of the island had impacted their personal life-chances in any way.

**Has the division of Cyprus affected your personal opportunities in any of the following?**
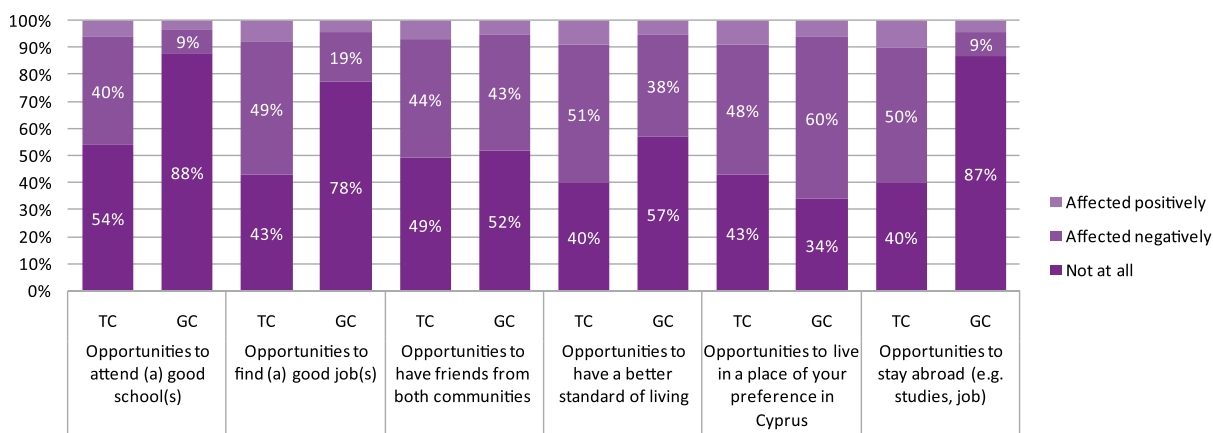


Table 8.4: Impact of the Division of Cyprus on Cypriot Youth's Personal Opportunities

The majority of young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots feel that the division of the island has undermined their personal opportunities in one way or another. The fact that a significant proportion of the island's youth (60% of Greek-Cypriots and 48% of Turkish-Cypriots) share a common frustration with their inability to live in a place

of their choosing reflects the deep emotions associated with displacement and the cost of conflict, which still affect both communities. In comparative terms Greek-Cypriot youth seem to more strongly feel this deprivation (as the figures show, Greek-Cypriots consider it the primary problem), which may relate to the widespread Greek-Cypriot view that the

partitioning of the island was, and continues to be, something totally unacceptable.[208]

This is one of the reasons why all other effects of the conflict fade into the background – along with the fact that Greek-Cypriots have managed to successfully tackle most of such effects (thus, for instance, the ability to attend good schools is only seen as a problem by 9% and the opportunity to find a good job by 19% – much smaller percentages compared to those stressing the impact of displacement).

Turkish-Cypriots also consider the inability to live in a place of their preference as a problem but this is only one among the several difficulties experienced – the opportunity to find decent employment, to live abroad and to have a better standard of living, being other important concerns (49%, 50% and 51%, respectively).

From a social perspective, slightly more than two-fifths of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots considered the separation of the two communities from one another to have hindered their ability to make friends from both communities. For the youth, the distance from past events may allow a chance to discover a shared empathy with the trauma of each other's communal suffering. Through bicommunal interaction youth may cultivate the common values necessary for a generation of Cypriots which will be responsible for shaping the future of the island.

## Cypriot Youth on the Origin of the Cyprus Problem and its Solution

Today's Cypriot youth have grown up in a divided Cyprus and, unlike older generations, have no recollection of the previous relations between members of both communities, besides the stories passed down from family members, the history learned at school and the information presented to them via the mass media. During the in-depth interviews, young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots shared their thoughts on the Cyprus Problem and the ethnic other. When asked who they felt was responsible for not finding a solution to the Cyprus Problem, youth

from both sides of the divide assigned a large part of the blame to the older generation, and more specifically to the politicians:

*The Cyprus Problem is the fault of the politicians of Cyprus, who are exceedingly elderly, whose viewpoints are the same as those of 40 years ago, and they do not allow a new spirit to prevail and to let go of the hatred; they just stay with these ideas and become their servant, thereby perpetuating them.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, student, single, urban Nicosia]**

As a consequence, many young respondents stressed the need for change when it came to political decision makers:

*I think that people, who have been chosen in past times, should not be allowed to hold power again.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 21, university student, rural Nicosia]**

Other young Cypriots felt that although politicians and/or the governments may have been to blame initially, nowadays the fault may mostly lie with the Cypriot people themselves, who seem to have learned to live with separation and are not ready to accept the changes necessary for the two communities to come together again.

*Its creation, I believe is* [the fault of] *the governments. But its perpetuation is not only the governments'* [fault]*; [Greek-] Cypriots are also a little closed-minded...The idea of living again with Turkish-Cypriots* [...] *[many Greek-Cypriots] cannot accept them. The* [Greek-] *Cypriot is very close-minded, he thinks that "oh, he is a Turk* [sic]*, I don't like him, I don't want him, I don't want him in my life" – and so he does not try to find a solution, to live with a Turkish-Cypriot once more...while in the past we lived with them, we coexisted, they were our friends.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

Young Cypriots surveyed were asked to select what they felt was the best solution to the Cyprus Problem. The response elicited from the largest proportion of youth from both

communities (42% of Greek-Cypriots and 44% of Turkish-Cypriots) was "I do not know/I am not sure".

That more than 40% of survey participants across the island indicated that they were not sure what the best solution was, can be interpreted in a number of ways. For one, individuals, especially youth such as the ones surveyed for the YAS, may not have been able to clearly distinguish the meaning and differences between the various political options being discussed as possible solutions of the Cyprus Problem – such as "federation", "confederation" and "unitary state". But even more, it may reflect the impasse reached after the 2004 referendum, as to the way forward and the most desirable or appropriate type of political regime which would enable the two communities to come together once again, while also learning to live with their differences (managing to achieve unity while maintaining diversity).

**The best solution for the political problem of Cyprus is:**



| | GC | TC |
|---|---|---|
| Federation | 6% | 9% |
| Confederation | 2% | 3% |
| A unitary state | 24% | 5% |
| Two separate states | 10% | 23% |
| Things to stay as they are | 14% | 14% |
| I don't know/I am not sure | 42% | 44% |
| Other | 2% | 1% |
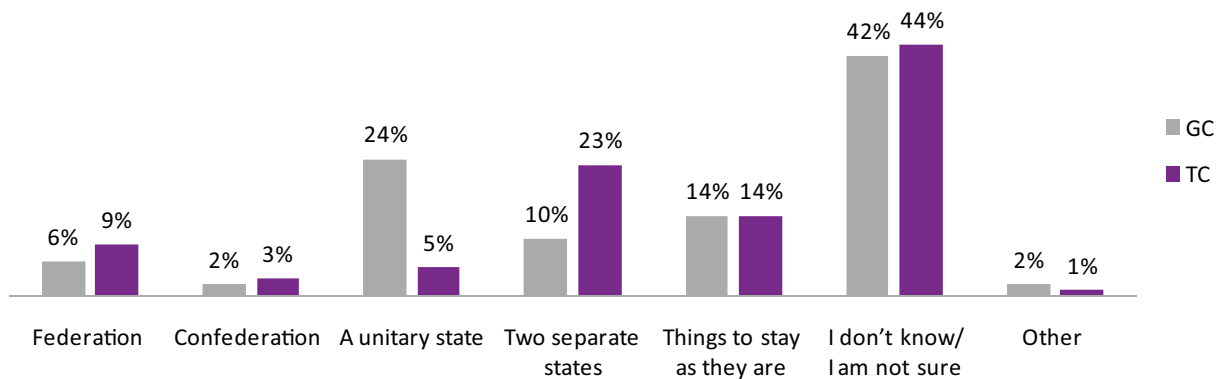
**Table 8.5: Best Solution to the Cyprus Problem – YAS$_1$ (a)**

A cross-tabulation highlighted that young female Cypriots were more likely to be uncertain about the best solution to the political problem: 62% of female respondents, compared to 38% of males, opted for the "I don't know/I am not sure" answer.

A possible explanation would relate to the fact that women in Cyprus have traditionally been excluded from the public sphere, and politics, rendering their interest in political issues of secondary significance; despite the strides towards more equality between the sexes, politics is still a domain dominated by men.

Besides the large number of undecided/ uncommitted responses, the most popular option among Greek-Cypriots (24%) was "a unitary state", whereas among the Turkish-Cypriots (23%) the "two separate states" option. Both of these positions reflect the mainstream ideal preferences, and second-best compromises of the two communities whose roots go back in history and relate to the dia-chronically dominant national(ist) narratives within each community.

Starting with the Greek-Cypriots, their original collective goal was union with "motherland" Greece (*enosis*) – with whom they felt they shared a common history, culture and identity. Once union proved impossible to achieve, and the 1960 power-sharing regime gave Turkish-Cypriots rights which Greek-Cypriots considered disproportionate to their size, the new goal became that of steering developments towards a unitary state in which the majority could rule, without 'undue' rights to the minority.

After 1974, the new compromise was seen to be a federal arrangement with a strong central government through which the majority would, once more, ensure a check on any inordinate demands or actions by the Turkish-Cypriot

community (including Turkey's undue influence). The Turkish-Cypriots, on the other hand, initially reacted to the Greek-Cypriots' calls for *enosis* with demands for the partition of the island. They later stressed that the 1960 Republic of Cyprus was a partnership between two equal communities and refused to accept that they were a "mere" minority – as the Greek-Cypriots saw them. After the 1963 collapse, they sought increasing autonomy, which after 1974 (and especially after 1983) was transformed into a preference for two separate entities or states. Their compromise position would be, first, confederation (the joining together for some limited purposes of two independent states) and, failing that, a federal solution with a weak central government and more powers devolved to the component states.



Greek-Cypriot Ideal Positions — Compromise — Turkish-Cypriot Ideal Positions

Unitary State — 'Strong' Federation — 'Loose' Federation — Confederation — Two States
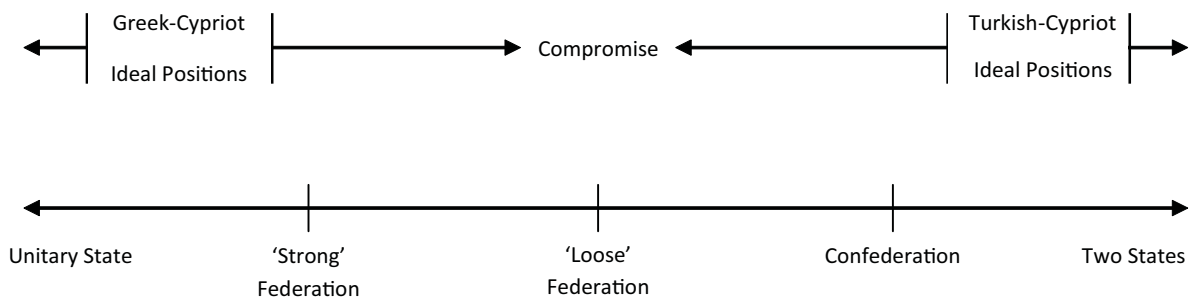
**Figure 8.1: Ideal and Compromise Positions of the Two Communities on the Desirable Political Regime**

Returning to the survey findings which indeed show that (besides the large number of undecided/uncommitted respondents) the most popular response among Greek-Cypriots was a "unitary state" – selected by 24% of respondents. Possibly this related to the growth of more "hard-line" positions on the solution of the Cyprus problem during Papadopoulos' presidency, an aspect of which was that entry into the EU would have 'forced' a solution (by pushing Turkey for concessions) more favourable to Greek-Cypriots, on the basis of European principles and values – believed to be enshrined in the *aquis communautaire*. Such a solution would have more or less amounted to a unitary state, in the sense of a liberal, majoritarian democratic political system, with minority rights for Turkish-Cypriots.

Among young Turkish-Cypriots, 23% felt that "two separate states" would be the best possible option, reflecting the return to dominance in the north, of the view that a separate existence is necessary for guaranteeing the Turkish-Cypriots autonomy and integrity. Both of these positions reflect the mainstream "ideal" choices of the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities more generally.

Since the "ideal" position of each side is not acceptable to the other, the only feasible solution would logically seem to be some kind of federal system, which by definition tries to do the apparently impossible – i.e. bring the two sides together, while also keeping them apart; achieve unity, while also maintaining diversity; or allow self-determination and co-determination at the same time.[209]

Yet the numbers of those choosing the option of a federal solution (the solution supposedly both sides have been officially endorsing in the post-1974 era) were disappointingly low: only 6% Greek-Cypriots and 9% Turkish-Cypriots saw federation as the way out.

Again, these low figures may be explained in light of the events leading up to the 2004 referendum and its outcome, as well as developments since that period. As regards Greek-Cypriots, most became convinced, at the time, that the solution offered to them via the Annan Plan, would, in reality, constitute a set back, leading to the dissolution of the Republic of Cyprus, without any guarantee as to whether the new united Cyprus would be a viable state.

Ever since saying 'No' to the Plan, many seem to have concluded that such a federal plan (and by extension, federal plans more generally), may lead to undesirable outcomes – and are thus to be avoided; since a compromise solution is out of sight, they seem to have returned to their "ideal" choice of a unitary state.

Most Turkish-Cypriots, on the other hand, feel that the Plan was a great opportunity missed, because of Greek-Cypriots' unwillingness to accept them as equal partners in the new state; since the compromise federal solution was rejected, they have reverted to their own "ideal" choice of two separate states.

Failing their "ideal" choices, the second best solution for both sides (14%) is for "things to stay as they are". This may not be so much the expression of a particular stand as a fear to move forward from one's present position of relative/perceived safety: immobilization or paralysis may indeed be the result of not wanting to venture into the unknown. Strangely enough this brings us back to our first observation of the very large percentage opting for the "I don't know"/"I am not sure" responses, which similarly betray a reluctance to move forward and to commit to an unknown (and hence perceived as risky) future.

In order to check whether respondents' views were affected by the difficulty of distinguishing between the alternative political systems/terms under discussion, we posed the question concerning the preferred solution to the Cyprus Problem using a different set of response options which avoided the use of technical political terms. Thus instead of asking about federation, confederation and so on, the researchers asked respondents to state how close or distant they wanted to be with the other ethnic community.

In this case, 36% of Greek-Cypriots stated that the best solution to the political problem in Cyprus was "to be as closely united and integrated as possible", which is usually the case in a unitary state, or in a federal state with a strong central government – the Greek-Cypriots more favoured positions; unsurprisingly, only half as many Turkish-Cypriots (18%) felt the same.

The most popular response among Turkish-Cypriots, chosen by 38% of respondents, was for "things to stay as they are", in other words divided, with little or no contact between the two communities. Besides their preference for the *status quo*, the second most popular option (28%), considered to be the best solution among Turkish-Cypriots was "to be next to each other and have strong positive relationships" – which may be said to hint at a federal state with a weak or light centre (and which would obviously entail positive relationships between the component parts); among Greek-Cypriots, this option was selected by 21% of respondents

**The best solution for the political problem of Cyprus is:**
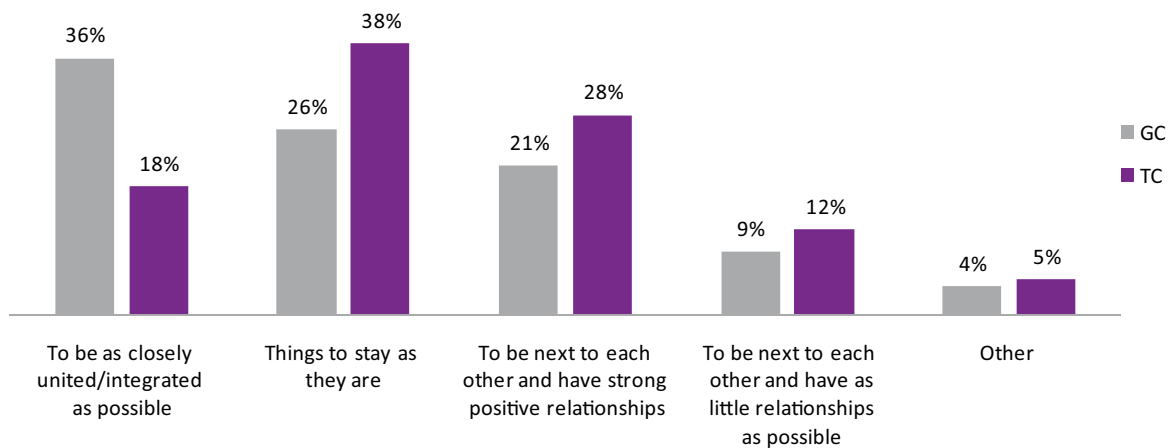


Table 8.6: Best Solution to the Cyprus Problem – $YAS_1$ (b)

– a relatively smaller percentage, since Greek-Cypriots tend to stress the need for a strong central government in a federal state.

Overall, the above findings seem to, once again, reflect the official discourses of the two sides: official Greek-Cypriot positions tend to place emphasis on a unified/ integrated Cyprus, which will return things, as much as possible, back to the pre-74 era; Turkish-Cypriots seem to feel that this option (integration) would entail the dominance of the Greek-Cypriot majority – thus constituting an undesirable regression; the fact that official Turkish-Cypriot positions emphasise the need for Turkish-Cypriots to be autonomous, sovereign and equal, as a community, to the Greek-Cypriots, may explain the large preference (38%) of young Turkish-Cypriots for things to stay as they are – a situation which, despite its problems, would preserve the much valued autonomy and sovereignty of the Turkish-Cypriots as a community.

What is surprising in the above findings is the large numbers of Greek-Cypriot youth (26%) who expressed preference for the *status quo* option, despite Greek-Cypriot official positions against 'division'/'partition'.

This may relate to the increasing disillusionment among the Greek-Cypriots of the possibility of reaching a solution which would be acceptable to them (in the sense of being "just", "viable" and so on) or in their growing conviction that rather than a solution which will not have the required traits, and may put the Republic of Cyprus (and therefore the Greek-Cypriot community) in jeopardy, it would be better for things to stay as they are.

Put differently, separation seems to be popular once the taboo terms 'partition' or 'division' are not used. In this case, the option was for things to "stay as they are", which does not carry the negative connotations that 'partition' does, but rather denotes the familiar *status quo* – with its obvious limitations but also the merit of being known (and thus without unpredictable risks or dangers). For many, the alternative political solution of federation would constitute

a risky "leap into the dark", leading to the dissolution of the Republic of Cyprus, which the Greek-Cypriots have regarded as their safe haven ever since 1963.

The above results demonstrate what Cypriots feel concerning various options for resolving the political problem. It is obvious that such views are not static, but vary as a consequence of changes in the real world; as noted earlier, and will be further documented below, Cypriots' views changed following the change in leadership on the Greek-Cypriot side.

The Report has also referred to other factors which may have influenced Cypriots' perceptions – such as the results of the referendum, the messages conveyed by the media, the role of external powers (such as the EU, Greece and Turkey), and so on. It is therefore clear why the mere figures of any survey, though good indicators of the views of people at any given time, cannot be a dependable guide in making policy.

Data need to be theorized and put into a proper context before policy deductions are made. For instance, politicians cannot assume that because at a particular time or historical juncture, a majority believes that a "wall must be erected to separate two communities", they have to necessarily abide by such views, and turn them into policies. It may be that such views are unduly influenced by pressing short-term considerations and concerns, rather than more vital longer-term factors.

Social facts are, after all, human constructions. Hence the issue may not be to heed to what respondents may be saying at a particular time but to the reasons why they are saying something. Politicians may need to work on changing perceptions rather than merely accepting these as sacrosanct and as unchanging natural 'facts' or realities.

In the case of Cyprus, the views of respondents have obviously been influenced, beside particular historical developments and conditions, by the dominant or official political discourses. These continuously focus on what is good for one's own ethno-national

community; great efforts are expended in shooting down the adversary's proposals, while little is done to understand the concerns behind such proposals.

The historically pre-determined ideal goals of each community seem to have a great impact on what are seen as current, satisfactory compromises.

Principles or models are appealed to, even if they do not seem to match the specific problem at hand: for instance, the model of democracy underpinning Greek-Cypriot positions is of the liberal, majoritarian kind, whereas it is obvious that Cyprus best fits the case of consociational or consensus democracy, where many important decisions must be taken by the representatives of the different "blocks"/ "pillars"/ "communities" constituting society.

At the same time Turkish-Cypriots adopt an extreme corporate version of the consociational model (instead of a more liberal one), which entails pushing for ethnically-based decisions in all fields of life, and not just in those few domains vital for maintaining their identity or integrity as a community.[210]

Greek-Cypriots often push for federal models which have little to do with Cyprus' realities (such as the American one, in which ethnicity plays no role whatsoever in the way the federal system works); whereas Turkish-Cypriots push for federal models which appear to be fragile (such as the Belgian one, which has shown signs of fragility and increased deterioration with time).[211]

A final problem seems to be the fact that despite the many years of apparent consensus between the leaders on both sides of the divide, that a federal system will constitute the agreed solution in Cyprus, in practice they have done little to advance agreement on the specifics of what such a system may entail. One could even say that they have mostly paid lip-service to the ideal rather than really accept and explain to the ordinary citizens its principles and, above all, the "spirit" which federation entails.[212]

No wonder then that young Cypriots seem to be so confused, undecided and ambivalent in their views. Indeed, young people themselves stressed, in their interviews, the responsibility they assign to politicians for the lack of progress in the path towards a solution. Leaders, after all, are not supposed to simply follow people's views or wishes, but rather to guide them in forming these views.

Young Cypriots may therefore be justified in not having clear views of what the best solution to a very complicated problem may be: but they certainly do have views on the many benefits which may result from a solution, on what seem to be the barriers to finding a way forward, as well as on how such barriers may be overcome – which are precisely the issues examined in the remaining sections of this Chapter.

## Youths' Views on the Benefits Resulting from a Cyprus Solution

Naturally, any potential solution to the political problem affecting the island would bring about a series of changes to the prevalent economic and socio-political conditions. In light of this, young Cypriot respondents were presented with a list of foreseeable benefits should the Cyprus Problem be resolved in the near future.

Certain benefits were assigned relatively similar degrees of importance by Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth.

These included, for example, 'better social relationships between the two communities' (Greek-Cypriot mean = 3.24/rank = 6, Turkish-Cypriot mean = 3.47/ rank = 6); the 'lessening of political tensions between the two communities' (Greek-Cypriot mean = 3.23 / rank = 7, Turkish-Cypriot mean = 3.39 / rank = 8); the 'ability to manage the island's environmental resources in a sustainable way' (Greek-Cypriot mean = 3.21 / rank = 8, Turkish-Cypriot mean = 3.39/ rank = 9); and the 'overcoming of fears and prejudices towards the other community' (Greek-Cypriot mean = 3.18 / rank = 9, Turkish-Cypriot mean = 3.35 / rank = 10).

| What benefits can you foresee if the Cyprus Problem were resolved tomorrow? (Mean results where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) | Greek-Cypriots (Mean) | Greek-Cypriots (Rank) |
|---|---|---|
| Freedom of movement | 3.85 | 1 |
| An improved environment for democracy and freedom of speech | 3.48 | 2 |
| The demilitarization of the island and the departure of foreign troops | 3.34 | 3 |
| A return of property lost during different conflicts | 3.29 | 4 |
| Economic development for both communities | 3.26 | 5 |
| Better social relationships between the two communities | 3.24 | 6 |
| Lessening of political tensions between the two communities | 3.23 | 7 |
| The ability to better manage the island's environmental resources in a sustainable way | 3.21 | 8 |
| The overcoming of fears and prejudices towards the other community | 3.18 | 9 |
| Compensation and justice for those who suffered from the Cyprus conflict | 3.18 | 10 |
| More job opportunities | 3.11 | 11 |
| The revelation of the truth behind war crimes in Cyprus committed in the past | 3.09 | 12 |
| The ability to effectively tackle social problems (such as drugs trafficking, people trafficking and the spread of HIV/AIDS) | 3.02 | 13 |
| Better educational opportunities | 2.92 | 14 |
| There would be no significant benefits for my community | 2.92 | 15 |

**Table 8.7a: Benefits Resulting from a Solution to the Cyprus Conflict – Greek-Cypriots**

| What benefits can you foresee if the Cyprus Problem were resolved tomorrow? (Mean results where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) | Turkish-Cypriots (Mean) | Turkish-Cypriots (Rank) |
|---|---|---|
| More job opportunities | 3.73 | 1 |
| Economic development for both communities | 3.69 | 2 |
| Better educational opportunities | 3.61 | 3 |
| Freedom of movement | 3.60 | 4 |
| The ability to effectively tackle social problems (such as drugs trafficking, people trafficking and the spread of HIV/AIDS) | 3.49 | 5 |
| Better social relationships between the two communities | 3.47 | 6 |
| An improved environment for democracy and freedom of speech | 3.44 | 7 |
| Lessening of political tensions between the two communities | 3.39 | 8 |
| The ability to better manage the island's environmental resources in a sustainable way | 3.39 | 9 |
| The overcoming of fears and prejudices towards the other community | 3.35 | 10 |
| Compensation and justice for those who suffered from the Cyprus conflict | 3.30 | 11 |
| A return of property lost during different conflicts | 3.26 | 12 |
| The revelation of the truth behind war crimes in Cyprus committed in the past | 3.20 | 13 |
| The demilitarization of the island and the departure of foreign troops | 3.12 | 14 |
| There would be no significant benefits for my community | 2.76 | 15 |

**Table 8.7b: Benefits Resulting from a Solution to the Cyprus Conflict – Turkish-Cypriots**

At the same time, there were certain benefits that Greek-Cypriots felt strongly about and others that stood out among Turkish - Cypriot respondents.

Greek-Cypriots displayed stronger levels of agreement to statements stressing the benefits of freedom of movement, demilitarisation and the return of property. Freedom of movement was in fact the primary benefit for Greek-Cypriots (mean 3.85) – this ranked fourth among Turkish-Cypriots (mean 3.60). This reflects the view of Greek-Cypriots regarding the post-1974 state of affairs as a forcible division of the country causing their exclusion from a part of the island which is rightfully theirs; consequently their view of a solution as involving the re-integration of the island and the restoration of the right of access to the whole country.

The Turkish-Cypriots tend to see division as a necessary evil and thus a future solution as the restoration of relations between the two communities – living "side by side" but not re-integrated into the same spaces; hence limitations on freedom of movement, though also reprehensible for Turkish-Cypriots, are less so as compared to how Greek-Cypriots feel (since they are largely viewed as a price to pay for enhanced security).

An 'improved environment for democracy and freedom of speech' was the second most important benefit according to Greek-Cypriots (mean 3.48); this ranked seventh among Turkish-Cypriots (mean 3.44). Demilitarization of the island ranked third among Greek-Cypriots (mean 3.34) – in contrast, this ranked second to last among Turkish-Cypriots (mean 3.12). Evidently a large part of the Greek-Cypriot attitude relates to their seeing the Turkish army as the main cause of division – and in order to secure the latter's withdrawal, they would be prepared to condone the disbanding of all armies.

On the contrary, for Turkish-Cypriots the Turkish army is seen as a source of security, which they would not want to see withdrawn, explaining why much fewer favour demilitarisation. The 'return of property lost during different conflicts' was also considered to be an important benefit among Greek-Cypriots as compared to Turkish-Cypriots (ranking fourth among the former

and twelfth among the latter). Again this must derive from the Turkish-Cypriot stress on two segregated areas/bi-zonality as a vital feature of a future settlement, which entails that property restoration (to both sides) cannot take priority.

Economic disparities exist between the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities with the latter lagging much behind than the former. Additionally, higher unemployment levels are experienced in the Turkish-Cypriot community – especially among young people. Hence it was not surprising that the two most important positive outcomes of a solution indicated by Turkish-Cypriot youth were greater job opportunities and economic development for both communities. Both these benefits were less important to Greek-Cypriot youth.

Improved educational opportunities represented another significant advantage resulting from a potential solution and ranked third among Turkish-Cypriots (this was considered one of the least important benefits among Greek-Cypriots). To a large extent this must mostly relate to the difficulties Turkish-Cypriot youth face in having access to education in Western countries – as a result of the non-recognition of the "TRNC" and its institutions, including educational ones. The ability to properly address and resolve social problems was also of significance to Turkish-Cypriot youth.

The above findings show a marked differentiation between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youths' views of what would be the benefits of an immediate solution to the Cyprus Problem, their views reflecting the current realities of each respective community.

## Youths' Opinion on the Main Barriers to Finding a Solution

Besides the obvious territorial barrier (the Green Line), Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth outlined several other barriers, which they see as standing in the way of building bridges, forcing both communities to live apart.[213] These barriers include religion, language, polarised views about past events and history, prejudice and superiority feelings by Greek-Cypriots, the presence of mainland

Turks in the northern part of Cyprus, perceived differences in lifestyles and lack of previous contact. Many Cypriot youth felt that the two communities could not come together as a result of what they perceived to be the great differences between the two **religions** mainly practiced on the island, Christianity and Islam. Turkish-Cypriots, in particular, felt that the Orthodox Church has historically had a negative influence over Greek-Cypriots' attitudes towards their own community.

*The* [Greek Orthodox] *Church is very important; I think that young people are influenced by the* [Greek Orthodox] *Church. How can you expect to build better relations when all these important* [Church-related] *people* [such as the archbishop and bishops] *keep saying negative things about the other side?*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 17-24 years old)**[214]

Approximately 31% of Greek-Cypriot and 33% of Turkish-Cypriot youth who took part in the survey "agreed" or "strongly agreed" to the statement "Religion serves as an obstacle to a peaceful solution to the Cyprus Problem", while approximately one third of Turkish-Cypriots (31%) and 41% of Greek-Cypriots disagreed with this. The remaining respondents (27% Greek-Cypriots and 36% Turkish-Cypriots) neither agreed nor disagreed.

To a lesser extent, **language** was seen as a barrier between the two communities, as only a minority of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots speak Turkish or Greek, respectively. Many young Cypriots felt that this was an obstacle that could be overcome with time.

*When I crossed to the other side, I never felt insecure…I think that we can live together… the only problem is language…we cannot talk to each other…but we will see that in the future people will gradually learn each other's language. Those who are working there* [the south]*, even those who do not know any Greek are gradually learning the language – it depends on relations* [between the two communities].

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 17-24 years old)**

Both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth felt that **polarised views** held about past events were among the toughest barriers that hindered the possibility of both communities coexisting peacefully. Young Cypriots cited several parties, including parents and other family members, schools and the mass media, as being responsible for perpetuating extreme, and often negative, ideas and attitudes about the members of the other community.

*It's just that, from what I hear, I don't want to have any give-and-take with that race* […] *Well, maybe the people themselves are not to blame, but the way we were raised* [we were taught that] *"our enemy is the Turk", with whom we cannot become friends with anymore.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 16, student, urban Limassol]**

*People prefer to speak negatively about relations between the two communities. I think this is because they feel disappointed; they don't see any hope for a solution to the Cyprus Problem.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 17, high school student, rural Kyrenia]**

*A parent may tell his child that 'we lost everything, they have taken our house and our possessions' … the child may have to hear this all his life…*

**(Greek-Cypriots, 14-18 years old)**

*When the anniversary of the war approaches, they* [the Greek-Cypriot media] *discuss the bad things that they did to us; that they were killing us and so on…*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

*I believe that parents are to blame a little too, and the way we are educated, and what we always hear on the news* […] *that this is the enemy* […] *I believe that our perceptions need to change in general, along with whatever surrounds us,* [instilling in us] *these negative perceptions.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 16, student, single, urban Nicosia]**

Some Turkish-Cypriots believed that Greek-Cypriots held themselves in greater regard and, as a result, looked down on Turkish-Cypriots; even some young Greek-Cypriots admitted that some members of their community held

**derogatory views** towards the Turkish-Cypriot community that bordered on prejudice, or even racism. Such attitudes, young Cypriots felt, prevent the two communities from coming together easily.

*I think that this* [overcoming the barriers] *will not happen because Greek-Cypriots think of themselves as superior to the Turks. This is not just my idea, many people think this.*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 17-24 years old)**

More worrying is the fact that some Greek-Cypriots felt that the two main ethnic communities could not come together on account of the numerous **cultural differences** between them; they felt that they "had nothing in common" with Turkish-Cypriots and that any interactions with them would not hold any meaning or significance. To a large extent, besides the negative stereotypes instilled by the various socialisation agents from early on, such perceptions stem from a lifetime of limited contact with members of the other community and, as a result, limited or biased knowledge about the other, which translates into a reluctance to get to know one another.

## Overcoming the Barriers between the Two Communities

Young Cypriots participating in the *YAS₁* were asked whether or not they felt that Cypriots could overcome the barriers which forced them to live apart. Approximately one third of Greek-Cypriot respondents (33%) were optimistic that Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots could overcome the barriers forcing them to live separately; among Turkish-Cypriot respondents, only a fifth (20%) believed that this was possible.

Again, the difference in perceptions must relate to the different dominant narratives in the two communities. Another third of Greek-Cypriots (31%) were more pessimistic, and felt that the barriers between members of both communities could not be overcome; finally, a little more than a third (36%) were not sure. Uncertainty was the predominant Turkish-Cypriot feeling, as 44% of respondents were unsure as to whether existing barriers could be broken; and a third (36%) felt certain that the barriers could not be overcome. It is interesting that, overall, uncertainty was the primary attitude in both communities.

**Do you believe that Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots can overcome the barriers that force them to live separately?**



■ Yes   ■ No   ■ I am not sure

| | GC | TC |
|---|---|---|
| I am not sure | 36% | 44% |
| No | 31% | 36% |
| Yes | 33% | 20% |
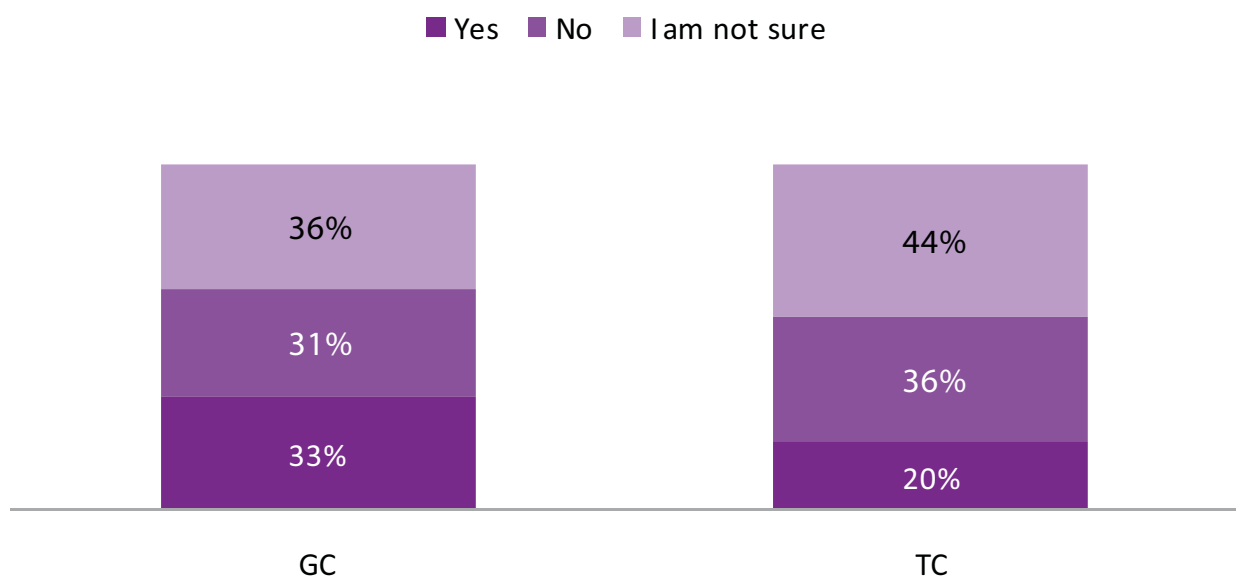
**Table 8.8: Ability to Overcome Barriers Contributing to Separation – YAS₁**

Respondents who felt that barriers between the two communities could be overcome were asked to indicate how this could be done. The responses of the Greek-Cypriot sample corresponded with those of the Turkish-Cypriot sample, showing a rare degree of congruence.

**Communication** and **dialogue** between the *citizens* of the two communities appeared to be the most favoured method for overcoming barriers among all respondents (19% Greek-Cypriots; 9% Turkish-Cypriots). Communication and dialogue among the *leaders* of the two communities was chosen by slightly less respondents (14% Greek-Cypriots; 7% Turkish-Cypriots). The next option chosen was that the two communities could grow closer through initiatives which allow individuals to come together to **work on specific projects** (11% Greek-Cypriots; 7% Turkish-Cypriots).

Respondents who felt that the barriers between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots could not

be overcome were asked to select what they felt to be the most important reason as to why this was so. Once again, a similar response pattern emerged. The most important reason chosen by both was *"because **there is too great a gap** [there are too many differences] between the two communities"*, leading to the conclusion that "there is no way for them to come together" (38% Greek-Cypriots; 42% Turkish-Cypriots).

The second most popular reason among Greek-Cypriots was *"because **nationalism prevents us from coming together"*** (16% Greek-Cypriots; a lower 11% Turkish-Cypriots chose this); whereas among Turkish-Cypriots the second important barrier was *"because **foreign interests prevent the two sides from coming together"*** (15% Turkish-Cypriots; 10% Greek-Cypriots). Interestingly, the least cited reason by Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth was *"because **the two "mother countries" (Greece and Turkey, respectively) prevent us from coming together"*** (6% Greek-Cypriots; 7% Turkish-Cypriots).

**If you answered "no" or "I am not sure" in the above question, why is that?**



- ■ Because there is too great a gap / there are too many differences between the two communities, so there is no way for them to come closer
- ■ Because nationalism prevents us from coming together
- ■ Because foreign interests prevent the two sides from coming together
- ■ Because the two "mother countries" prevent us from coming together
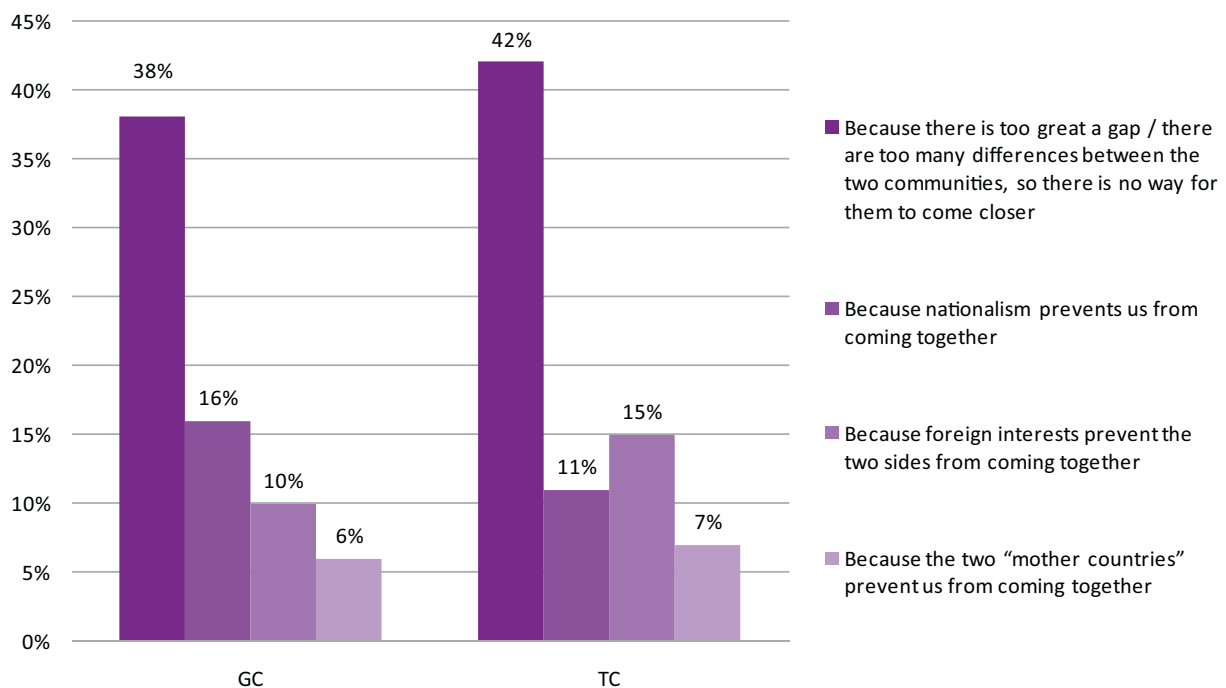
**Table 8.9: Reasons for Being Unable to Overcome Barriers**

Given the barriers facing young Cypriots, respondents of the *YAS₁* were asked whether or not they felt that, in general, both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth were interested in building bridges with members of the other community. The responses are presented below:

**a) Young Greek-Cypriots are not interested in building bridges between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots**

■ Agree / Strongly Agree  ■ Neither, Nor  ■ Disagree / Strongly Disagree

| | TC | GC |
|---|---|---|
| Disagree / Strongly Disagree | 12% | 23% |
| Neither, Nor | 40% | 39% |
| Agree / Strongly Agree | 48% | 38% |

**b) Young Turkish-Cypriots are not interested in building bridges between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots**

■ Agree / Strongly Agree  ■ Neither, Nor  ■ Disagree / Strongly Disagree

| | TC | GC |
|---|---|---|
| Disagree / Strongly Disagree | 20% | 24% |
| Neither, Nor | 45% | 54% |
| Agree / Strongly Agree | 35% | 23% |
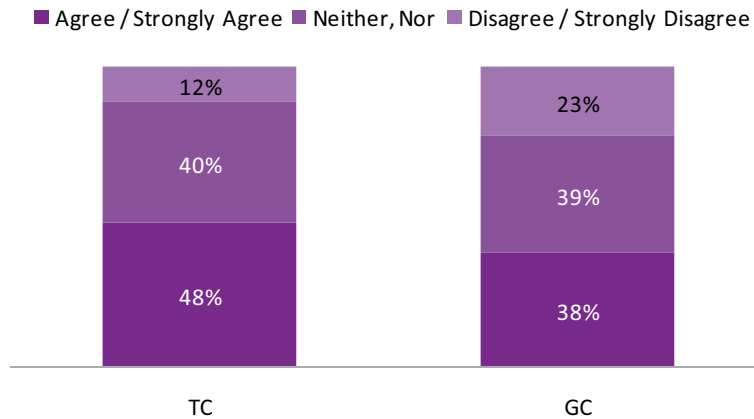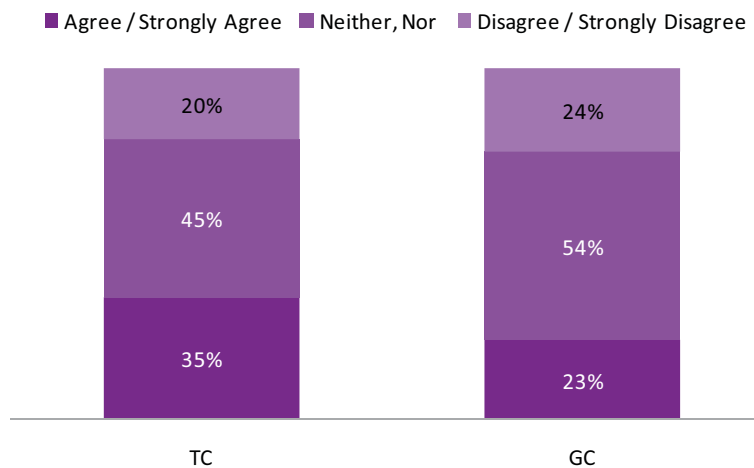
**Table 8.10: Interest in Building Bridges between the Two Communities**

That almost half of young Cypriot respondents were uncertain/undecided about the intentions of the youth of the other community, may be attributed to the fact that, five years after the opening of the check points, interaction between members of both communities remains limited in frequency and superficial in nature (such as sharing the same retail or restaurant venues) – hence understanding of each other's behaviour seems difficult. Compounded by the conflicting messages transmitted through family, friends, schools and the media, the perplexed attitude of Greek-Cypriot youth does not come as a surprise. The response of Turkish-Cypriot youth, on the other hand, more certain of Greek-Cypriots' unwillingness to build bridges, seems to be guided by the outcome of the 2004 referendum: the resounding 'No' from the Greek-Cypriot community in response to the Annan Plan has been interpreted by many Turkish-Cypriots as a door slamming closed – the best proof that Greek-Cypriots are not interested in building bridges with Turkish-Cypriots.

In-depth interviews offered additional insight into the reasons why young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots were hesitant to mend fences between the two communities.

For one, Cypriot youth indicated that while they were ready to take steps towards reconciliation, the actions of their leaders and the inability of the latter to reach a solution discouraged youth from attempting to come closer to each other:

*Both our and their youth show an interest* [to build bridges]. *But our leaders are the problem, one says this and the other says something else… and they certainly do not find the solution.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

Many young Turkish-Cypriots believed that their Greek-Cypriot counterparts were not interested in coming closer together and finding a solution since. In their opinion, Greek-Cypriots did not have much to gain from a potential solution:

[Greek-Cypriots do not want a solution] *because they don't have much of a problem. But we have big problems: No one recognises us… Our economy is not developed… That's why we want a solution.*
**(Turkish-Cypriots, 17-24 years old)**

*I think that Turkish-Cypriots have more reasons to solve the Cyprus Problem…because they need a solution for a better economy, and better rights…but Greek-Cypriots already have all these – how can we expect them to accept anything?*
**(Turkish-Cypriots, 17-24 years old)**

Turkish-Cypriot youth referred to the outcome of the 2004 referendum as evidence that Greek-Cypriots do not care for a solution:

*Turkish-Cypriots said "Yes" to the Annan Plan. But they* [Greek-Cypriots] *said "No". This indicates that they don't want any solution."*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 17-24 years old)**

This opinion was certainly not shared by all. For instance, some Turkish-Cypriots believed that Greek-Cypriots would be in favour of a solution which would bring more security to their community, calling for the departure of the Turkish military, present since 1974:[215]

*I don't agree* [that Greek-Cypriots would have no significant gain from a solution]*: they are afraid of the Turkish army, so they do want to solve the Cyprus Problem.*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 17-24 years old)**

A number of young Cypriots did display an interest in bridging the divide. To some extent, this interest was driven by their curiosity to get to know youth from the other community, recognising that this was one way in which they could overcome the ignorance factor that served as a barrier to communication between the two sides:

*Personally, I would like to get to know them* [Turkish-Cypriots]: *I would like to talk to them and hear about their beliefs regarding the events that happened between our two communities…what happened that made us come to the point that we are at now.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

*I don't have Greek-Cypriot friends but I want to have* [some]*, whom I can meet in common activities. I really want to learn more things about them.*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 17-24 years old)**

*I would like to learn about their way of life.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

Others underlined the basics of what they thought were prerequisites for bringing the two communities closer together; these included reaching out to the other community and putting a halt to the spread of hatred:

*To have someone approach you, you must show that you are approachable…you have to demonstrate that…how can you when you don't go near them?*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

*Love, only love can save us.* [For] *so many years they have been spreading hatred, particularly the politicians from both sides, and they show facts subjectively; you see one set of things in the history of the Turkish-Cypriot community and other things in the history over here. Therefore, as Cypriots, we do not know the "objective truth" – that is why each stays with "their*

*truth", and uses it negatively.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 17-24 years old)**

## A New Government and a Renewed Attempt for a Solution

The 2008 presidential elections in the Republic of Cyprus marked the coming to power of a new government, which seemed ready to exercise renewed efforts towards finding a lasting solution to the Cyprus Problem. The $YAS_1$ was conducted shortly before the new government assumed office. In order to examine whether this change in government had any effect on the attitudes of young Cypriots, a supplementary survey ($YAS_2$) was conducted, approximately five months after the new government assumed office, which yielded a new set of data, serving as an additional component of the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project*.

As part of the follow-up survey, young Cypriots were asked if they thought that the new government of the Republic of Cyprus had stepped up efforts towards reaching a solu-tion to the Cyprus Problem. Surprisingly, less than one third (27%) of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot respondents appeared to think that this was indeed the case.[216] Those who were more positive in their assessment, felt that there was now a better political atmosphere, as a result of the more pro-conciliation attitude of the newly elected leader:

*With Christofias as president we can move further ahead, that's why his slogan was "I look forward".*

**(Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, student, single, urban Nicosia)**

*The atmosphere is different today...I mean it is better now.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Some Cypriot youth ventured a comparison between the former and current president of the Republic, noting that the new leader was more open to discussion:

*I don't think anyone doubts that the current president has a "softer" approach towards the Cyprus Problem...that he wants something*

*to happen more [than his predecessor]. Mr. Papadopoulos held a tighter grip on things. His attitude was: "I will hold fast to my positions: I believe in these things and if you do not give me these, I accept nothing". Whereas I believe Mr. Christofias is more flexible, more ready to discuss everything on the table.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, male, 19, high school graduate, single, rural Nicosia)**

*I believe that Christofias is more [of a] humanitarian. I remember that once he stated that all citizens, whether Turkish-Cypriots, Greek-Cypriots, or Armenian-Cypriots – they are all the same and equal. This is a good approach. Papadopoulos never said anything like this...I prefer Christofias.*

**(Turkish-Cypriots, 19-24 years old)**

*I think that out of all the governments that have held power, this is the first time that a correct move is made... this government has a favourable attitude [towards a solution] as compared to other governments of the past... He is trying to bring Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots closer together.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

Still, a substantial 62% of Turkish-Cypriots, and a smaller number of Greek-Cypriots (26%), did not think that the new government had produced any results in reaching a settlement. In fact, some young people showed signs of impatience, and were frustrated with the slow pace in which matters were progressing:

*I feel that there is no progress, and everything is [standing] still. Turkish-Cypriots think that Christofias is different [...] but nothing has happened yet.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

Almost half of the Greek-Cypriots surveyed (46%) remained undecided or uncertain, as they "did not know" or were "not sure" whether or not the government had in fact enhanced efforts to find a solution (whereas only 12% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents seemed undecided or uncertain).

Respondents who felt that the new govern-ment was attempting to secure progress with

the Cyprus Problem were then asked if they thought that these efforts would in fact result in a solution to the ongoing problem. While 55% of Greek-Cypriots and 40% of Turkish-Cypriots "somewhat" believed that a solution would be reached, a further 31% and 27%, respectively, felt "more certain" that the Cyprus Problem would be resolved. Only very small percentages proved totally pessimistic – approximately 2% of Greek-Cypriots and 9% of Turkish-Cypriots believed that these increased efforts would fail to result in a solution.

During the follow-up survey ($YAS_2$), young Cypriots were once again asked whether or not they believed that Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots could overcome the barriers causing them to live apart. Their responses may be compared to those of the initial survey ($YAS_1$):

**Do you believe that Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots can overcome the barriers that force them to live separately?**
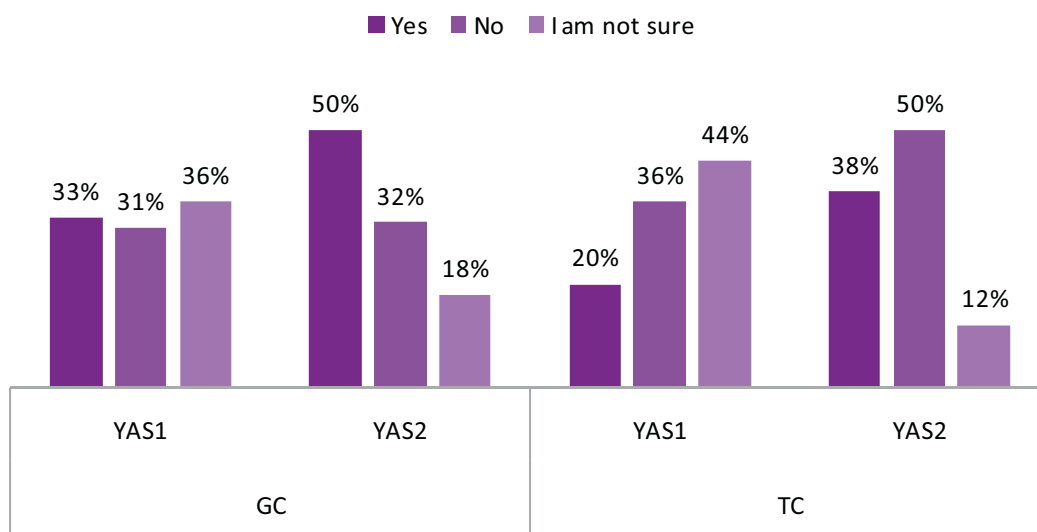


**Table 8.11: Ability to Overcome Barriers Contributing to Separation – $YAS_1$ versus $YAS_2$**

Previously, 36% of Greek-Cypriots surveyed were not sure if the barriers separating the two communities could be broken down; this figure dropped to 18% in the follow-up survey. The percentage of those with a negative evaluation as to the possibility of overcoming separation remained constant (31%) – obviously, they did not feel a change of leadership could contribute to the break down of barriers and the transcendence of separation. All of the 17% respondents who shifted from uncertainty moved to a positive evaluation that 'yes' the barriers could break down. This is an interesting and important finding, demonstrating the difference that leaders may play in creating confidence that the resolution of a difficult and seemingly intractable problem is possible. One could counter, however, that in the case of ethnic conflicts, this change could only relate to the ethnic community within which the change of leadership occurred. If so, one would expect no parallel effect (from the change in leadership) within the Turkish-Cypriot community in Cyprus.

This, however, was not entirely the case. Turkish-Cypriots, who took part in the follow-up survey, moved to more positive evaluations given the change in leadership – even though this was to a lesser extent than their Greek-Cypriot counterparts. To begin with, there was a notable decrease in the level of uncertainty demonstrated by Turkish-Cypriots: only 12% (as compared to 44% in $YAS_1$) did not know, or were not sure, if Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots could move forward together. This difference translated into shifts to more positive or more negative evaluations. Nearly

half felt that the two sides could not overcome the existing barriers; which marked an increase in negative evaluations of 13% (from 36% in $YAS_1$ to 50% in $YAS_2$). But positive evaluations increased even more, by 18% - from 20% in $YAS_1$ to 38% in $YAS_2$. Obviously the impact of the change in leadership was not confined within the boundaries of the community within which the leadership had changed (although the positive change within the latter was larger).

Overall the results show an increased level of optimism on the part of young people from both communities, with Greek-Cypriots displaying slightly more hopefulness than Turkish-Cypriots (the new president was, after all, a Greek-Cypriot leader; Turkish-Cypriots, influenced by their community's scepticism towards the leader from the other community, were not as positive in their assessment as Greek-Cypriots were).

## The Reopening of Ledra Street

Despite the partial lifting of the barriers in April 2003, one significant crossing point remained closed. This was located on Ledra Street, the main traditional shopping street in the heart of the capital, which extends from the south to the north and is effectively split in two by the division line. One could view Ledra Street as a main artery pumping blood from the heart to the rest of the body, thereby breathing life into the city and its inhabitants. After the opening of the crossing points in 2003, many expected that the opening of Ledra Street would follow soon after. The failure of this to materialise served as a reminder of the division of the island and as a symbol of the disunity between the two communities.

As Demetriou puts it, "opening up the most major street in the old part of the city would be tantamount to opening up the 'heart' of the city"; such a crossing point would "have the potential of bringing reunification home and perhaps making it much more apparent than it has already been".[217] Shortly after coming into power, the new government of the Republic of Cyprus announced its intention to push for the opening of the Ledra Street crossing point. After months of negotiations, problems and setbacks, the Ledra Street crossing point opened on April 3, 2008: this small but symbolically powerful event was considered by both the Cypriot and international community as historically significant – a historic step towards the reunification of the island.

Indeed, nearly 47% of Greek-Cypriots and 53% of Turkish-Cypriots concurred that the opening of Ledra Street was a *positive* step towards the reconciliation of the island, while slightly less than 35% of respondents felt that this was neither a positive, nor a negative step.

**In your opinion, the opening of Ledra Street is:**
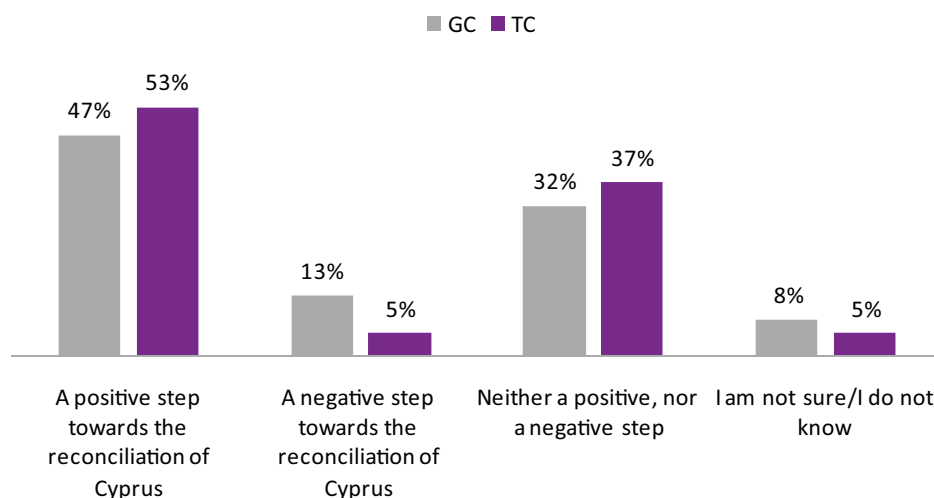


**Table 8.12: The Opening of Ledra Street Crossing – A Positive or Negative Step?**

Cypriot youth who viewed the opening of Ledra Street as a positive development explained that they could now visit the other community more easily, and spend time socialising with their peers. In this way, young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots would be able to break down the barriers which have built up between them, and to begin to reassess the stereotypes which they have come to associate members of the other community with.

*The good* [thing] *that has happened, is that Ledra* [Street] *opened, where there are many young people and we can go opposite to their cafes, their bars, listen to music… we can go meet them, become friends. It's a very easy thing.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 17, student, employed part-time as salesperson, single, rural Nicosia]**

[The decision to open the Ledra Street crossing] *was one of the best decisions made over the last few years. Now you can travel easily to the other side and they can do the same without any trouble. This will help us understand each other better and will allow us to enjoy more trade. In this way, each side will benefit.*

**[Turkish Cypriot, female, 21, employed as a secretary, Nicosia]**

*I think* [the opening of the Ledra Street crossing point] *was a good step because now that we've crossed over we had the chance to see their life also. And I believe that if you know them better, you can have a better idea about them. I mean positive ideas about them...Because if you don't know anything, some other people impose their ideas on you.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

Still, a number of young people did not regard the opening of Ledra Street as favourably as others did. Some felt that better preparation could have led to better results, and that the young people's deep prejudices would continue to hamper contact:

*In principle, it was a good idea. However, in practice, there needed to be some prior arrangements, such as certain restorations before the opening of Lokmacı* [Ledra Street

---

crossing]. *At least now we can see each other on a regular basis, which is very good. But young Greek-Cypriots do not visit our side… they are fanatics;* [it is] *older people who prefer to cross from Lokmacı.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student, Nicosia]**

Others felt anxious about the easy access provided by the crossing and worried that things would now be worse off than before. For instance, the growing number of encounters could result in an increase in troubles between the two communities.

Some Greek-Cypriots expressed concern that the authorities of the Republic would not be able to control the rising criminal activity, which they associated with increasing numbers of Turkish-Cypriots in the south.

*I feel that it is bad because there could be disagreements among the people from each side. Now there is a greater possibility of danger. Anything could happen.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*I believe that we would lose control. Turks may stay in the free territories and we will not know who stays… the city crime rate may increase.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Young Cypriots who took part in the follow-up survey were asked in July 2008 whether or not they had crossed the Ledra Street checkpoint. While a substantial 35% of Greek-Cypriots and 42% of Turkish-Cypriots surveyed had crossed Ledra Street since its opening, the majority, 65% and 58% respectively, had not.[218]

Of those who had not crossed, 48% of Greek-Cypriots and 64% of Turkish-Cypriots indicated that they planned to do so in the near future; 10% and 6%, respectively, were not sure if they would; a further 42% of Greek-Cypriots and 30% of Turkish-Cypriots said that they had no plans to cross Ledra Street soon. Those who indicated that they had no plans to cross, or were not sure about crossing in the future, were asked to explain the reasons why. The five responses most cited by Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots are presented below:

| Greek-Cypriots (5 most cited responses) | % |
| --- | --- |
| I do not want to visit the north/occupied area | 52 |
| I do not want to show my passport | 30 |
| I do not like mainland Turks | 4 |
| I am not a refugee | 3 |
| I go from other checkpoints when I want to | 2 |

| Turkish-Cypriots (5 most cited responses) | % |
| --- | --- |
| I do not want to visit the south | 48 |
| I do not have the time | 9 |
| Ledra Street is far away from my house | 9 |
| İ cannot cross due to my Turkish origin | 6 |
| I prefer to cross with my car, rather than on foot | 6 |

**Table 8.13: Reasons Not to Cross Ledra Street Checkpoint**

As indicated, the top reason cited by both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth is that they simply have no desire or interest in spending time in the north or the south, respectively.

Among Greek-Cypriots the second most popular reason for not using the Ledra Street checkpoint (or any checkpoint for that matter) is because the particular respondents did not want to have to show their passport or ID to visit the other side of the island.

While young Cypriots seem to place a strong emphasis on the issue of free movement around the island, needing to show a passport or identity card to do so is a matter of concern among many (much more for Greek-Cypriots and to a smaller extent, for Turkish-Cypriots), as illustrated by the following quotes:

*The fact that I must show an ID card to get into my country is a little silly for me. I mean, the solution should have been found years ago, so that now we'd live peacefully and we'd be able to visit any part of Cyprus we want, without interferences, without crossing some border, without showing your ID card, which*

*you only show to go to another country, not to go to* [the other side of] *your own island!*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

*I want peace in my country* [...] *I do not want to show my identity card to go somewhere or other. I think people living in the same island can live in peace.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, female, 20, university student, urban Nicosia]**

## Revisiting Cypriot Youths' Views on the Best Solution to the Cyprus Problem

Young Cypriots taking part in $YAS_2$ were once again asked to state what they felt might constitute the best solution to the Cyprus Problem.

Surprisingly, despite renewed efforts towards reconciliation, the most preferred solution was not that of federation but that of two separate states. What possible explanations may account for these paradoxical findings?

**The best solution for the political problem of Cyprus is:**

Legend:
- Federation
- Confederation
- A unitary state
- Two separate states
- Things to stay as they are
- I don't know/I am not sure/other

| | | Federation | Confederation | A unitary state | Two separate states | Things to stay as they are | I don't know/other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | YAS1 | 6% | 2% | 24% | 10% | 14% | 44% |
| GC | YAS2 | 20% | 5% | 15% | 30% | 9% | 21% |
| TC | YAS1 | 9% | 3% | 5% | 23% | 14% | 45% |
| TC | YAS2 | 4% | 6% | 13% | 41% | 26% | 10% |
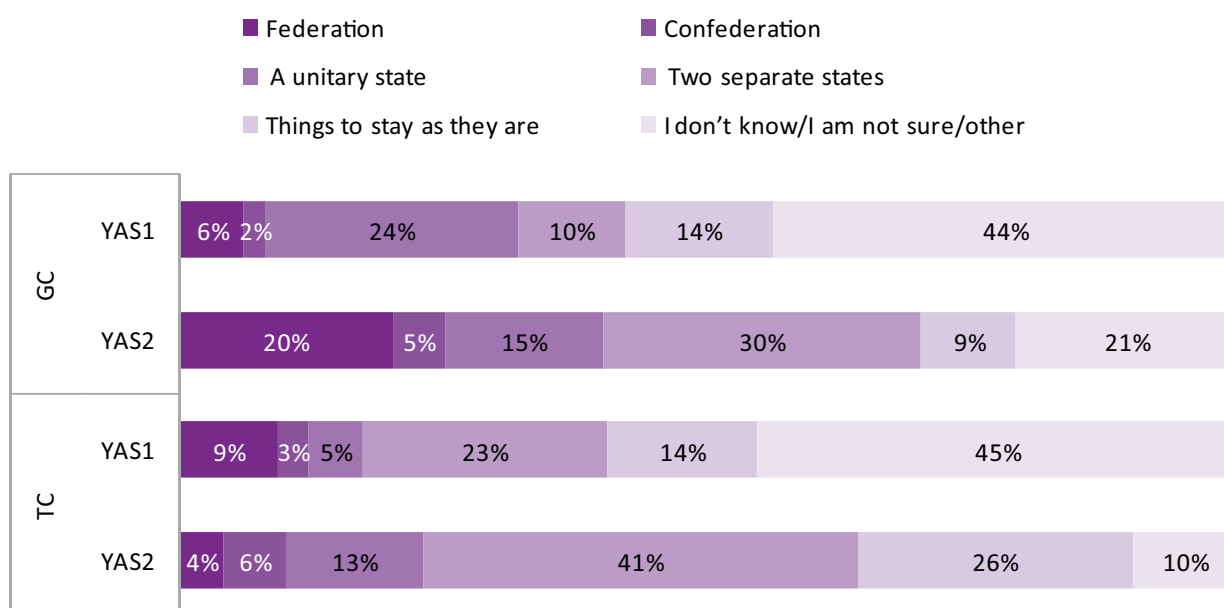
**Table 8.14: Best Solution to the Cyprus Problem – YAS$_1$ versus YAS$_2$ (a)**

It has already been mentioned that during the period in which the *YAS$_1$* was carried out, a unitary state was both desired and aimed for by Greek-Cypriots. The unitary state option represented the "ideal" solution, which Greek-Cypriots were now more confident and hopeful that it could be attainable, given the muscle of the EU – a newly found supporter to the aid of Greek-Cypriots. Although a federal solution has been the official line of both communities since 1974, only a small percentage of Greek-Cypriot (6%) and Turkish-Cypriot (9%) respondents (*YAS$_1$*) actually selected this (in late 2007/early 2008) as the best solution. By the time the follow-up survey was carried out (July 2008), a new Greek-Cypriot president and government were in power and had begun to take the first few steps towards rekindling peace negotiations. As the new president was more clearly in favour of a federal solution, this translated into an increase in faith on the part of young Greek-Cypriots towards the possibility of such a solution: in fact this time, (YAS$_2$), 20% of them felt that a federation represented the best solution to the Cyprus Problem (compared to 6% of YAS$_1$ respondents).[219]

However, as highlighted above, there was also a much higher increase in the number of both Greek-Cypriots (YAS$_1$: 10%, YAS$_2$: 30%) and Turkish-Cypriots (YAS$_1$: 23%, YAS$_2$: 41%) who felt that a two state option represented the best solution to the Cyprus Problem. For Turkish-Cypriots a rekindling of interest, for what constituted the ideal option of the community, seems easier to understand. However, for the Greek-Cypriots the paradox begs the question: why was there an increase in the number of Greek-Cypriot youth in favour of a two separate state solution?

A possible explanation is that, despite President Christofias' efforts, the growing realisation of the many difficulties involved in achieving a federal type of solution, and the great disagreements as to which precise form such a federal solution would take if it were at all possible, had resulted in the two separate states solution to become, not so much the preferred choice, but, perhaps, the one deemed less risky or more pragmatic/realistic. Interestingly, this time the "I don't know"/"I'm not sure" option was chosen by far

fewer respondents (down from 44 to 21% in the case of Greek-Cypriots, and from 45 to 10% in the case of Turkish-Cypriots). Earlier, it was mentioned that not choosing could have been a sign of fear to leave a known, and hence, safe position, and step forward into an unknown – and possibly risky future. It could equally be said that, by this time, such fears had won the day and seemed to entrench themselves, leading to the attitude "rather than risk our safety, better build a wall between us" – hence the rising popularity of the two state solution.

As in the $YAS_1$, respondents were presented with the same question about the best solution to the political problem but this time with a different set of responses, which avoided the use of technical political terms. Once again, the results showed an increase in the number of young Cypriots who favoured a very loose relation or even the maintenance of separation between the two communities. Specifically, in $YAS_1$, 9% of Greek-Cypriots and 12% of Turkish-Cypriots responding to this question had stated that the best solution

for the Cyprus Problem was "to be next to each other and have as little relationships as possible"; in $YAS_2$, these figures rose to 18% for both communities. As in the case of the above mentioned question, a marked shift in attitude was noted among Greek-Cypriot youth. On a related note, whereas in $YAS_1$, 36% of Greek-Cypriots were in favour of being "as closely united/integrated as possible", in the subsequent survey ($YAS_2$) this figure had dropped to 28%. And while initially 30% of Greek-Cypriots thought it best for "things to stay as they are" ($YAS_1$), this figure rose to 33% in $YAS_2$. In the subsequent focus group discussions, held after the election of President Christofias, young Cypriots expressed the view that the main reasons behind favouring a two state solution had to do with security considerations and, primarily, the worry or fear that, should the two communities be "forced" to live together, conflict and violent confrontations could ensue. Moreover, some youth explained that they would find it difficult to trust members of the other community enough to feel comfortable living together.

**The best solution for the political problem of Cyprus is:**

■ To be as closely united/integrated as possible

■ To be next to each other and have strong positive relationships

■ To be next to each other and have as little relationships as possible

■ Things to stay as they are/other

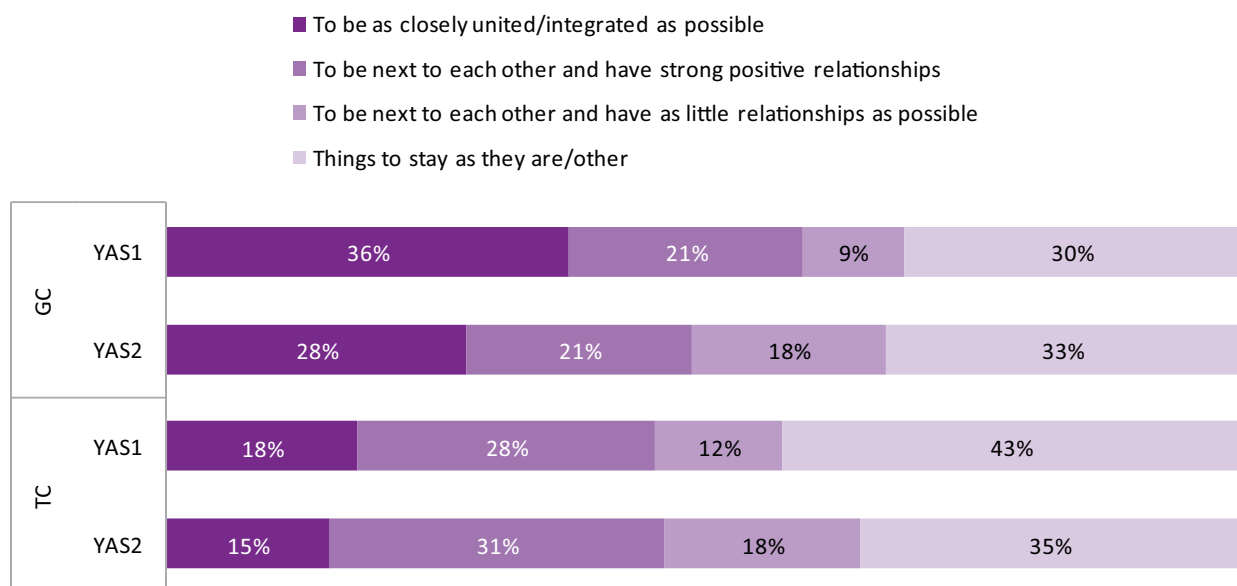| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | YAS1 | 36% | 21% | 9% | 30% |
| | YAS2 | 28% | 21% | 18% | 33% |
| TC | YAS1 | 18% | 28% | 12% | 43% |
| | YAS2 | 15% | 31% | 18% | 35% |

**Table 8.15: Best Solution to the Cyprus Problem – $YAS_1$ versus $YAS_2$ (b)**

*For me it is better to have two separate states. We can visit each other – but if we force people to live together, things become complicated.*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*First of all, I don't believe there is a possibility for a viable solution and I could never live with the Turks* [sic]… *I would not want to have relations with Turkish-Cypriots* […] *I would never want to live with them – call it racism if you wish.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, university graduate, employed as a chemist, single, rural Limassol]**

*To tell the truth, I have some concerns. I don't know if I can trust Greek-Cypriots – I mean either politicians or soldiers. So it is better to live in different regions.*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Some actually pin-pointed that, ever since they were born, they have been living separately from the other ethno-national community, and have thus come to associate 'normality' and safety with such separation:

*I don't want the two communities to come closer together… I mean, from the time that I was born, without having known any Turks,* […] *so many years with the same thing: I know that they are over there and we are over here, and I have lived normally* [despite separation].
**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, early school leaver, employed in a warehouse, engaged, urban Nicosia]**

Cypriot youth participating in the focus groups appeared unable to discuss, in detail, the meaning behind the term federation and what, from a practical standpoint, such a solution would entail. Instead, when discussing the best solution to the Cyprus Problem many chose to speak in general or more vague terms:

*They should find a satisfactory solution for both communities,* [which would enable them to live together] *not one that satisfies only one community.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

*We should not regard the Turks with any prejudice and they should not regard us with any prejudice. We should not be aggressive towards each other…we should all be equal.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Furthermore, young respondents appeared ready to support a federal solution on the provision that certain conditions would be met first:

*With the solution, those who are entitled to some things,* [such as] *their property, they should get them… the* [Turkish-Cypriot] *government should give them back, they should find some solution about the properties.*
**(Greek-Cypriots, 19-24 years old)**

*They should tell us about the missing people and we should tell them as well.*
**(Greek-Cypriots, 19-24 years old)**

Many Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots exhibited a strong degree of similarity in their responses when asked if the renewed efforts towards the reconciliation of the island left them feeling less or more hopeful than before. Close to 25% of Greek-Cypriots and 29% of Turkish-Cypriots stated that they were more hopeful than before; 51% in each community felt the same; 24% and 21%, respectively, were less hopeful that a solution would be reached, despite revived efforts to solve the passive conflict, which they have experienced since birth.

Finally, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they felt that these renewed efforts would indeed result in a solution to the political problem. Close to one third (32%) of Greek-Cypriots and 23% of Turkish-Cypriots believed that the increased efforts would result in a solution to the Cyprus Problem, as opposed to 17% and 60%, respectively, who did not. A similar question was posed in a public opinion survey about building confidence in peace that was conducted with members of both communities in 2008. Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots were polled on their level of hope regarding the new peace process on the island.[220] In this case, 29% of Greek-Cypriots and 53% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents were not at all hopeful of the current negotiations; only 18% and 13%, respectively, were very optimistic. Interestingly, the responses of the younger generation surveyed for the *YAS*, mirror those of the larger population, with young Cypriots displaying slightly more hopefulness.

**Given the recent renewed efforts towards the reconciliation of Cyprus, you feel that:**



GC
TC

32%  23%  17%  60%  52%  17%

There will be a solution to the political problem in Cyprus

There will not be a solution to the political problem in Cyprus

I do not know / I am not sure
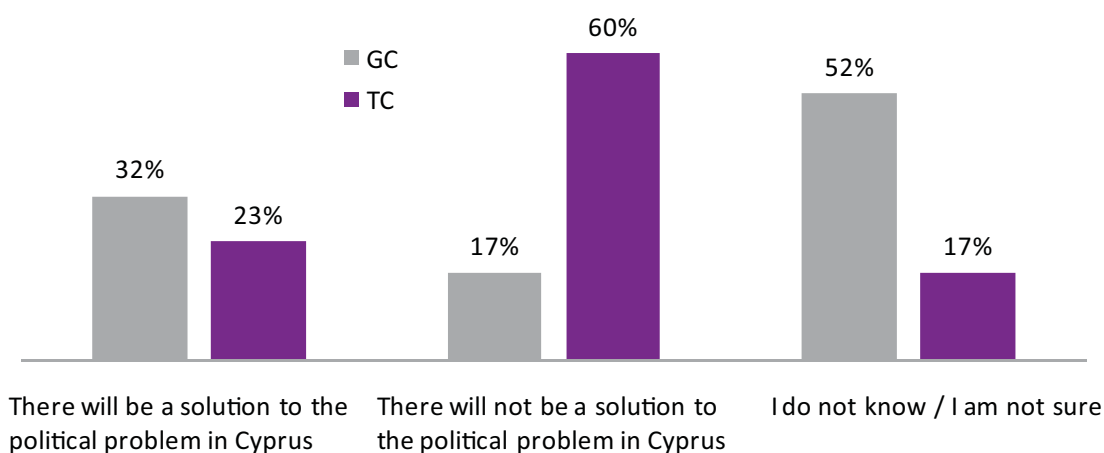
**Table 8.16: Attitudes towards a Potential Political Solution**

The great disparity between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth's views can, once again, be attributed to the dominant narratives in the two communities. The Greek-Cypriot community has always wished that a solution to the Cyprus Problem would result in the reconciliation of the two communities and the reunification of the island. Having entered the EU in 2004, Greek-Cypriots feel that accession has created a new set of possibilities and expectations concerning the Cyprus Problem, whereby the political situation somehow cannot remain unresolved. Turkish-Cypriots, on the other hand, feel as though they were shut out of entry into the EU, as a result of the 2004 referendum outcome, and as such that there is little which could push towards a solution at this stage.

## From Disenchantment and Disempowerment to Optimism and Empowerment

Upon first examination, Cypriot youth from both communities appear to be increasingly in favour of permanent division - of a two state solution. There are several explanations and justifications to such feelings and attitudes: young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots have spent their whole lives apart from one another; the educational systems in each

community have, for the most part, served to drive a mental (and emotional) wedge between the two communities; politicians and the media have relentlessly focused on every, and any, angle of the Cyprus Problem, so much so, that it has become a constant drone in the soundtrack of their lives. In particular, the media in each community, rather than helping bring harmony to the two communities, has largely focused on portraying their own community as the 'victim' of the conflicts, while the members of the other community are depicted *in toto* as the 'aggressors' or 'manipulators'. The different religions and languages, but mostly so the politicisation of culture, and the consequent nationalist discourse, as well as the attachment to or influence of the "mother countries", Greece and Turkey, all help to widen the gap between the Greek-Cypriot community and the Turkish-Cypriot community. In more recent years the rejection of the Annan Plan and the related discourses, which identified certain features or types of federal schemes as acceptable or unacceptable to each community, seem to have increased uncertainties about federation in general.

Young Cypriots like their counterparts in the US, Europe and elsewhere, are struggling to transition from children to adults in a world that is increasingly competitive, challenging and confusing. Their primary concerns lie

in the pursuit of their education, securing decent jobs, socialising with friends and family, and carving out a place in society. Once again, like their counterparts in Europe and other developed countries around the world, young Cypriots are not actively interested in politics or civil society. More than anything, Cypriot youth seem not to be interested in politics because politics in Cyprus has come to be equated with the Cyprus Problem. As a consequence, political participation automatically becomes a complicated affair, given the legal, political and constitutional ramifications of the ethno-national conflict. Moreover, most Cypriot youth feel as though they are not equal players in the public sphere, but rather are assigned subordinate roles via the political parties and their political agendas. Despite their low levels of socio-political participation, young Cypriots are not isolated from the politics of the island; politics and political parties do play a pervasive role in their lives. Due to their strong family ties and social *habitus* Cypriot youth tend to find themselves supporting the same political party and political ideologies as their parents, and perpetuating prevalent or dominant views and values.

Given all of this, and the fact that, thirty-five years later, the Cyprus Problem has yet to be solved, it is no wonder that Cypriot youth appear to have lost faith in the idea of a united island. Nevertheless, despite such feelings of disempowerment, Cypriot youth appear to have a realistic grasp of the existing obstacles to reaching a solution that would allow the two communities to live together peacefully. Given that in today's world, the state represents the political home of citizens, offering them a number of benefits and rights (and primarily security), it is not surprising that Cypriot youth are leaning towards supporting an ethnically homogeneous state where their own community dominates as the way forward. But although more youth seem to be gravitating towards 'safer' options, such as the two state solution, recent developments

– such as the election of a new government in the south, the opening of Ledra Street crossing and the recommencement of negotiations for a peaceful solution to the Cyprus Problem – may still leave a window of opportunity open for a mutually acceptable solution, in the form of a bi-/multi-cultural common home, which will be proof of the ability of Cypriots to move past the barriers that have forced them to live apart.

The voice of Cypriot youth in relation to the Cyprus conflict has, for the most part, been largely muted. Young Cypriots have not been expected to partake in the ongoing negotiations or give their own input for the negotiators' consideration. The case remains that the current generation of Cypriot youth have grown up in a divided island, the partition of which they are in no way responsible for. Still, young Cypriots from the two main communities must live with this division and its consequences. Interestingly, as the following Chapter highlights, more than half of the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed in this study agree that, as young people living on the island, they have a responsibility to assist in finding a peaceful settlement to the Cyprus Problem.

The silver lining here is that young Cypriots can still be provided with the opportunity to play a part in the current peace process. Excluding the youth from this process may prove to be a grave mistake given that, as the future generation who will 'live out' a solution, young Cypriots have a great stake in the outcome of the current negotiations, as well as a large role to play in the implementation of a settlement.

The following Chapter highlights the potential that youth possess as peace builders and as agents of change in their respective communities. Specifically, the Chapter examines the meanings that young Cypriots ascribe to "peace in Cyprus" and their possible contribution to helping bring lasting peace to the island.

# >> CYPRIOT YOUTH AS PEACE BUILDERS AND AGENTS OF CHANGE

*Youth, more than ever, are at the forefront of global social, economic, and political developments"*[221]

At best, researchers and politicians tend to overlook the potential role that youth can play as positive agents of change and key actors in conflict resolution and peace building, viewing them instead as a problem to be solved rather than a "unique power" with vast "untapped potential".[222] Termed by McEvoy-Levy as a "peace building resource"[223], youth – as an active group in society – can play a vital (and perhaps most importantly, a non-violent) role in positively transforming conflict situations and building the foundations for peaceful and democratic societies.[224]

In order to address the potential of youth as peace builders it is necessary to examine briefly the concept of conflict. Conflict is often used synonymously with violence and, as such, bears negative connotations. Additionally, it is generally assumed that violence is the only way to deal with conflict. However as Galtung stresses, conflict is a natural process and a part of life and relationships.[225] Rather than seeing conflict negatively as antagonism or struggle, or as a disagreement between people with different ideas or beliefs, he encourages viewing conflict as a positive force, highlighting differences in peoples' perceptions, interests

and needs, and thereby providing the opportunity for change and growth.

At the heart of any conflict lies one, or more incompatibilities (or perceived incompatibilities) of goals.[226] These incompatibilities are often embedded in attitudes and behaviours, which are often reinforced by history teaching and the mass media. By viewing conflict as *a creator*, and as *natural* and *necessary* for *human* and *social development*, rather than as a destroyer, individuals should seek the opportunity to work through these incompatibilities in a positive, constructive and creative manner.[227]

Peacebuilding has been defined as "the creative and simultaneous political and social processes [involved in] finding transcendent solutions to the root causes of conflicts and efforts to change violent attitudes and behaviour".[228] Peacebuilding activities may cover a gamut of initiatives and actions, from post-war reconstruction to preventative measures. When it comes to peacebuilding, youth are assigned one of three roles – those of victim, perpetrator, or peacebuilder. More often than not, studies relegate youth in conflict situations to victims rather than as relevant positive actors in conflict resolution. [229] McEvoy-Levy points out that youth, "like other civil society actors, […] are less visible in [the] analysis of peace processes than key elites". [230]

Despite the tendency to underestimate the power that young people can have in peacebuilding, Del Felice and Wisler outline five reasons that contribute to youth being a potent peacebuilding resource.[231] Firstly, young people are *more open to change* and so are more open and willing to listen to what others have to say and to experiment with new strategies. Secondly, young people are *future oriented*. The past is inherited as a memory and is passed down through parents and schools. As a result, youth who have not experienced war directly are more easily able to 'forget' the past and move forward. Thirdly, youth are *idealistic* and *innovative*. Driven by their optimism many revolutions have been led by young students and activists. Moreover, young people have at their disposal more time to read, think, get together with peers and develop ideas and alternative solutions to problems. Next, young people are *courageous*; given their limited experiences, youth are more willing and eager to take on new adventures and risks. Finally, young people are *knowledgeable about their peers' realities*; besides experiences of their own, young people spend considerable time interacting with others in their age group, consequently accumulating knowledge, as well as various insights and perspectives.

It is perhaps due to the above characteristics and potentialities that McEvoy-Levy envisions youth to be "at the frontlines of peacebuilding", and proceeds to highlight the importance of youth involvement in peacebuilding.[232] There are many reasons for aiming at the increased inclusion of young people in conflict resolution, peace process and peacebuilding practices: to begin with, young people are active participants in conflict situations, therefore a solution that does not incorporate their views may lead to the reproduction of future violent conflicts; next, the political exclusion of youth may contribute to the weakening of dynamics enhancing their political development and leadership potential; moreover, this exclusion robs adults of important information about war and peace that only youth know.

Finally, the absence of youth in such processes serves to perpetuate the norms of exclusion that work against values believed to support the human rights culture and reconciliation.

McEvoy-Levy concludes by warning that the failure to engage youth in peacebuilding can lead to the danger of creating even larger populations of marginalized youth.[233]

## Cypriot Youth on Peace and Reconciliation

Cypriot youth, like their counterparts around the world, possess the various traits which could make them ideal agents of social change and peace builders. As the new generation, Cypriot youth are imbued with greater levels of creativity, innovativeness, and an orientation towards the future. However, having grown up in a climate of division, which has touched their lives in one way or another, are Cypriot youth able to act as change agents? Do they feel as though they are included in the decision-making processes that shape their life, especially those concerning the current peace process? As approximately one sixth of the island's population, are their views sought out and included in the negotiations which stand to shape the future course of the country and its people? These are questions which the follow-up survey attempted to address as young Cypriots from both communities were asked to share their views on what, they felt, represented a "peaceful Cyprus". Simultaneously, this provided the authors with the opportunity to better examine the role currently played by Cypriot youth in the reconciliation of the two communities.

A first question required the respondents to state whether they thought Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots "cannot live together in peace, so they must be separated". Nearly two-fifths (38%) of young Greek-Cypriots and one quarter of Turkish-Cypriots (26%) felt that the two communities would have no problem living together in peace. That more Greek-Cypriot youth felt this way must be a reflection of the dominant views among Greek-Cypriots, underlining their unwillingness to accept the legitimacy or desirability of the existing status quo. At the other end of the spectrum, approximately a third (31%) of Greek-Cypriots and two fifths (42%) of Turkish-Cypriots agreed that the two communities could not cohabit peacefully and so should

live apart from each other – a significant finding given the current push for a political solution to the conflict. For the Turkish-Cypriots this is not surprising, considering the official nationalist positions dominant for long (and still espoused by the hard liners), according to which cohabitation between the two communities is impossible, as well as the bitterness from the 2004 referendum. The Greek-Cypriot positions are more difficult to explain, since dominant positions hold that the Cypriots had no difficulty in peaceful cohabitation – and that any such problems were caused by outside interests or interventions. YAS findings show that (young) people are not so positive about the possibilities of cohabitation, although the blame is put on the Turkish-Cypriots who are accused of being too extreme in their demands during peace negotiations – rendering separation a more preferable alternative to a "bad solution".

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:**

Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots cannot live together in peace, so they must be separated

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither, Nor ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither, Nor | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | 10% | 27% | 32% | 20% | 11% |
| TC | 9% | 17% | 33% | 26% | 15% |
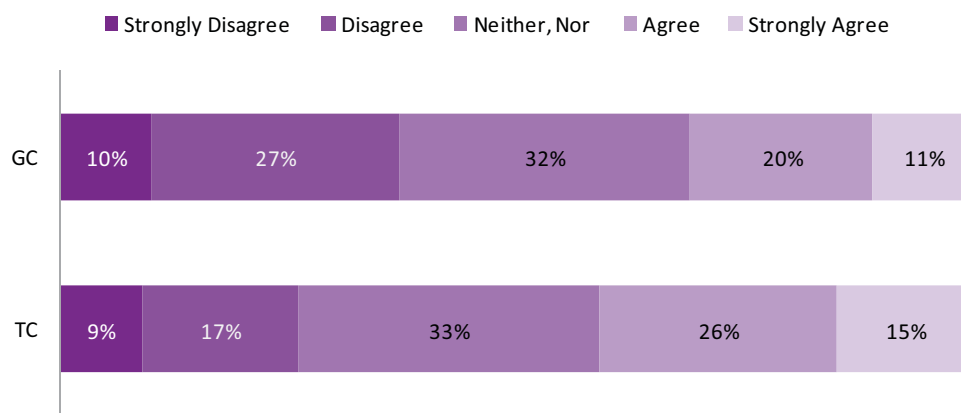
**Table 9.1: Ability of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots to Live in Peace**

Perhaps of equal interest and importance is that one third of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement "Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots cannot live together in peace, so they must be separated".

Given the deep and persistent socialization into a mistrust of the 'ethnic other' this indecision may hide a more positive potential, since once a more constructive climate between the leaders of the two communities is established (or once a solution is arrived at that is backed by the said leaders), then this indecisive middle may turn more positive, and make the difference in creating a social milieu that will encourage tolerance and a readiness for peaceful cohabitation.

| BOX 9.1 | **Cyprus Ranks 52 out of 140 Countries on the Global Peace Index** |
|---|---|

As is the case with "youth", the concept of "peace" is difficult to define – measuring peace is even harder. Nonetheless, in 2007 the Global Peace Index (GPI) was developed by the Institute for Economics and Peace, a global think tank dedicated to research and education on the relationship between economics, business and peace. The GPI offers a snapshot of the relative peacefulness among nations and contributes to an understanding of what factors help create or sustain more peaceful societies. The index is compiled by measuring peacefulness according to 24 indicators such as levels of distrust in other citizens, levels of violent crime, political instability, military expenditure and level of disrespect for human rights. In 2008, Cyprus ranked 52 out of 140 countries most at peace in the GPI, ranking higher than countries such as the US (97), Turkey (115) and Israel (136). Still, Cyprus, followed by Greece, received one of the lowest rankings among other European nations – such as the UK (49), France (36), Germany (14) and Norway (3).

Source: *Global Peace Index: 2008 Methodology, Results and Findings*, Institute for Economics and Peace, Australia, 2008, available at: **www.visionofhumanity.org**

## Cypriot Youth Define "Peace in Cyprus"

Youth who participated in the follow-up survey were asked to define what "a peaceful Cyprus" or "peace in Cyprus" meant to them. Among Greek-Cypriot respondents, the most cited response was "freedom", followed by "everyone co-existing in harmony" and "the departure of Turkish settlers from Cyprus". The most popular definition of a peaceful Cyprus among Turkish-Cypriot respondents was "living together without borders"; also popular among the latter were the "absence of war and conflict" and having "two independent states".

**What does "peace in Cyprus" mean to you?**

| Greek-Cypriots (5 most cited responses) | % |
|---|---|
| Freedom | 21 |
| Everyone co-existing in harmony | 15 |
| The departure of mainland Turks from Cyprus | 13 |
| Peace | 8 |
| Absence of conflict/war | 6 |

| Turkish-Cypriots (5 most cited responses) | % |
|---|---|
| Living together/integration/unification | 27 |
| Absence of conflict/war | 15 |
| Two independent states | 13 |
| High level of living conditions/economic development | 13 |
| Freedom of Cyprus/independence | 10 |

**Table 9.2: Cypriot Youth Define "Peace in Cyprus"**

Focus group discussions offered further insight into the meaning of "peace in Cyprus". Some youth stressed that a "peaceful Cyprus" was one without a dividing line, where social interaction between members of both communities would be the norm:

*To start with, there should be no dividing line; the two communities should be mixed.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

*For me, 'peaceful Cyprus' is living in a democratic country under a common roof and flag.*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*An island without boundaries where there are two different communities living under the same roof, with a common language. I cannot imagine peace with the two communities living separately: Peace is living together.*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*They would be able to come and go as they wished... we would be able to see a Greek-Cypriot chatting with a Turkish-Cypriot in the street... and this would be something normal.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

For some, "peace in Cyprus" meant accepting, but de-politicizing, the differences between the two communities, in order to live together without conflict:

*Peace is to forget nationality, religion and all the other things that separate people. When politicians use these features in order to separate people, troubles begin. When we manage to accept all these features as they are, and do not use them for bad purposes, then we can develop peace without any problem.*
**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

For many, "peace in Cyprus" was defined

negatively, as the absence of trouble or danger, even though they recognised that this is not enough – and that positive peace should be aimed for:

*Peace for me means "no trouble". We had wars in the past; now we have no such kind of wars. But we cannot say that we are living in peace…something could happen between the two communities…both communities are more civilised now, but without real peace the danger is always there. So for me real peace is possible only after a solution.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Many respondents' views of a peaceful Cyprus harked back to the past when both communities still lived together, believing that those days were free of trouble and conflict. Greek-Cypriots, in particular, refer to the "good old times" before violence was to separate the two communities, as the stage of "peaceful co-existence":[234]

*For me, a peaceful Cyprus is what it used to be in the past, before the invasion, when Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots lived peacefully together. My parents told me that they used to keep company with* [Turkish-Cypriots]*… and everything was fine…and then, Turkey got involved.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*When we say "peaceful Cyprus" we mean a situation where everybody lives happily together… Things should be as they used to be before 1974.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Many respondents believed that a truly peaceful future Cyprus depends on having certain conditions. These include reaching a formal settlement to the Cyprus Problem, and putting behind any bitterness regarding past wrongs endured by each community:

*We are* [already] *living in peace in one sense. But this is not real peace: refugees lost their children…they lost their property…both Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots did…we cannot say that these people are living in peace: we have to solve all these problems…*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*We are living under the cease-fire conditions. We need to sign a peace agreement. Our fathers keep telling us their war memories. In order to reach peace, we need to sit and talk about these issues – and then agree that we will not talk about these bad events in a hostile way. Otherwise, all these things will continue.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Others underlined that the removal of all military bases is one of the conditions for achieving a "peaceful Cyprus":

*A peaceful Cyprus is the coexistence of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots with equal rights, and the removal of the Turkish and British bases. This is the ideal.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

Several Turkish-Cypriot youth associated "peace in Cyprus" with economic and social advancement and full membership into the EU; a definition directly influenced by the socio-economic realities faced in the north:

*I do not believe in peace but as a young person I really want peace to be established in order to create better job opportunities, better schooling opportunities, and to become part of the European Union.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

## The Role of Cypriot Youth in Reconciliation

Cypriot youth on either side of the divide are, like most, if not all, young people around the world, navigating and negotiating the gap between childhood and adulthood; a journey which today is increasingly complicated and full of risk. Grown enough not to be regarded as children, yet not mature enough to be treated as adults, young Cypriots felt that, as youth, their opinions and views were not taken into account nor appreciated by older generations – whether within families, schools, or the public sphere. Many complained that all areas of life are controlled by political parties – even youth organisations themselves, which supposedly are there to give free expression to youth voices.

*Young people have an inferior voice. They are treated as second class citizens. This is true. Look at the school: you have to listen to teachers… they are asking you questions…you don't have the right to ask questions, you cannot criticize. Look at families: they criticize you* [but] *you do not have the same rights… So I think that to be young is a disadvantage… I believe that our politicians do not respect young people in our culture.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*One's sense of responsibility is promoted by their family, and mine raised me to feel responsible to my country. However, young people cannot make decisions and bring about drastic changes because even the youth associations which exist are supported either financially or 'ideologically' by some political party, and this deprives* [youth] *of their freedom and of the potential to change things.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, college graduate, employed, single, urban Nicosia]**

More specifically, Cypriot youth felt that they had no role to play in the process of reconciliation:

*I believe there are no* [opportunities for participation] *because adults decide alone* […] *so we do not want to, nor do we have the opportunity* [to participate in the peace resolution process].

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate, employed as policewoman, single, rural Nicosia]**

*I think that the young people have no such right* [to have their views and needs represented in society]. *This means that the young don't feel free to talk about their own ideas or to express themselves in public. No one asks for our ideas.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*Whatever youth might do, if the big powers do not want me to say it, it will definitely not be heard. Ok, it might be heard, but it will not be taken into consideration because the issue here is political and there are huge interests at stake.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 20, high school graduate, soldier, urban Paphos]**

When it came to the matter of reconciliation, young participants were presented with the statement *"young Cypriots have a responsibility to assist in finding a peaceful solution to the Cyprus Problem"*, a significant percentage of Greek-Cypriot youth (69%) either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement. This figure was slightly less among young Turkish-Cypriots, 50% of which "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement. Given the low socio-political participation rates among Cypriot youth noted earlier, it is encouraging that such a large percentage of youth surveyed agree that they are responsible for assisting in reaching a peaceful settlement to the Cyprus Problem. This is testament to the optimism of young people. That only a minute number of youth on either side disagreed that they share responsibility in finding a solution is one of the most optimistic findings of the Report. The issue remains of how to turn this responsible attitude into more concrete positive action.

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement:**

Young Cypriots have a responsibility to help find a peaceful settlement to the Cyprus Problem
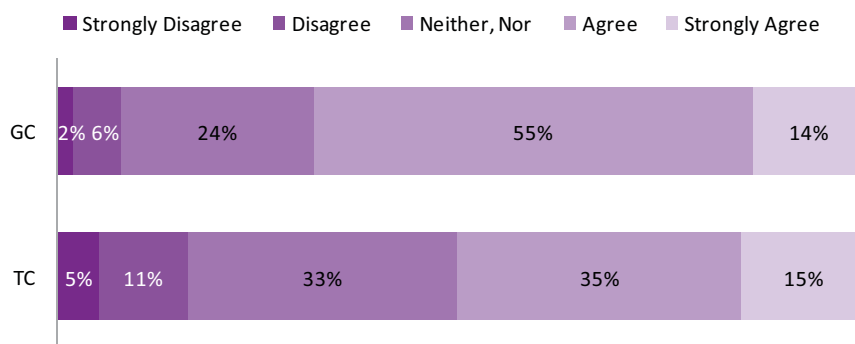


**Table 9.3: Responsibility of Cypriot Youth to Assist in Finding a Peaceful Settlement**

Also of interest is that 24% of Greek-Cypriots and 33% of Turkish-Cypriots neither agreed nor disagreed with the above statement. This undecided group of youth represent a simultaneous opportunity and challenge as they could probably be educated and motivated to assume a more active and responsible role in joining the efforts of finding a peaceful settlement. The fact that these youth are undecided could be attributed to the fact that many young Cypriots have been made to feel as though it is not their social or political responsibility to become actively involved in the peace process.

Further discussion with respondents high-lighted the varying opinions of Cypriot youth as to whether or not they had a role, and a responsibility, to play a part in the reconciliation of the two communities. Some believed that the youth of the island should take a leading role in working towards finding a solution to the political problem, stressing that decisions and actions taken today will directly impact their future:

*Youth should have the leading role in issues concerning Cyprus, because when a move takes place, when something happens, it has a direct impact on youth – and not the 60 year-olds and the 70 year-olds. Therefore, the mentality has to change so that the president does not have to be over 60-65 years old and an MP can be a person of 25-30 years old. So, the young must take initiatives, as they are doing now, and take a leading role in the issues of Cyprus – economic, educational, national etc.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 24, university graduate, lawyer, single, urban Paphos]**

The responses below demonstrate that like youth around the world, young Cypriots see themselves as future oriented and as more open to change than older generations:

*Youth must take the reigns of this place because the old have gone astray* […] *I consider that we have many politicians who are of a very elderly age, they still remember the events of 1974 and before. We have to now get away from this idea, we have to come closer to the Turkish-Cypriots who are* [also] *inhabitants of*

*Cyprus; we live on the same island, so we have to find a solution.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate (pre-primary education), employed at a cooperative bank, engaged, urban Paphos]**

*We are all responsible at this age we're at, because it is us who will make the difference in the future, as long as we maintain positive opinions without preconceptions passed on from previous generations. We must discover our own truth and try to support it, and if we support it properly, with the appropriate beliefs, we will make it.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 23, student, single, urban Nicosia]**

Some respondents, though eager to play a role, noted the limitations that they, as young people, faced:

*Young people are* […] *inadequate in some areas. But, in some other areas there are young people who are really active. I think that in general they could be effective in helping change the way in which people think about bicommunal relations. Still, there are some things that they cannot change, because of their young age and lack of experience.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 18, student]**

Others accepted responsibility but recognised the need to acquire more adequate know-ledge of the issues involved:

*I believe that we all have a share of the responsibility, it's just that, well, we need to learn more about the Cyprus issue. Let's say, for example, we can be more informed, become more active participants in this topic.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate, employed as a bank officer, single, rural Nicosia]**

Still, not all respondents felt this way; some adamantly stressed that young people had no responsibility to contribute to the resolution of the Cyprus Problem, or had neither the desire nor the motivation to do so.

*I think that a solution does not depend on us. Others are involved in it… I am not interested.*

*They can't rely on us for a solution. Even those who have lived through* [the troubles] *and their blood is hot cannot find a solution, so how can we be expected to do this since we are not interested… we have not gone through* [any suffering]*.*

**(Greek-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Several young respondents were put off from actively participating in the reunification process as they felt that, ultimately, the role of politicians and political parties was overpowering, leaving little space for independent initiatives or voices. Others felt overwhelmed by what they considered as the determining interference of foreign powers in local politics and the destiny of Cyprus.

Furthermore, Cypriot youth, on either side, felt that they were not provided with adequate support and opportunities and that, more often than not, their opinions were completely overlooked, or even worse, ignored by the decision makers. Others felt that not only the young, but all Cypriots, are too weak to make a difference as regards a solution:

*I think the future of Cyprus does not depend on us, it depends on others. We come second here, and my opinion is not taken into consideration…*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 18, single, college student [aesthetics], part-time salesperson, urban Nicosia]**

Moreover, young Cypriots felt that the only way for them to be a part of reconciliation efforts was through affiliation with a political party; something which many of them were not interested or willing to do, realising that more often than not, their voice would play second fiddle to the party's political agenda and line.[235]

*How can young people do anything? If you become a member of any* [political] *party, you may have some opportunities. But you know the positions of the existing parties* [they seem too entrenched in their ways]*. So what is left? You cannot shout in the street. We have no possibility of making a contribution. I think this is the same in the south.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

These opinions were reflected in the quantitative responses of the *YAS*. Despite displaying a strong level of agreement that it is the responsibility of young Cypriots to play a supportive role in finding a settlement to the political problem, 62% of Greek-Cypriots and 50% of Turkish-Cypriots "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that young Cypriots are unable to influence the peace process since *politicians do not give them the opportunity* to do so. Moreover, 38% of Greek-Cypriots and a comparable 38% of Turkish-Cypriots "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that, in general, *young Cypriots do not know how to initiate activities which may support inter-communal coexistence and peace building.*

---

**How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

A. Young Cypriots are unable to influence the peace process because politicians do not give them the chance



■ Strongly Disagree  ■ Disagree  ■ Neither, Nor  ■ Agree  ■ Strongly Agree

GC: 1%  11%  26%  49%  13%

TC: 6%  11%  33%  34%  17%
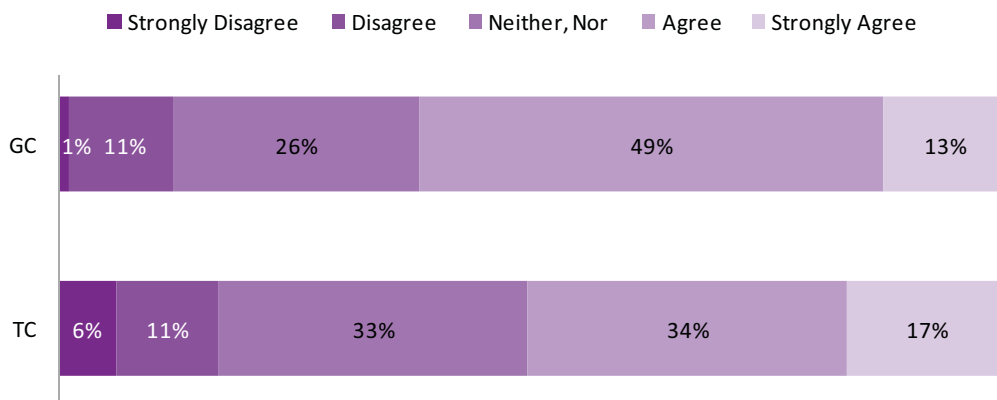
B. Young Cypriots do not know how to initiate activities which would support inter-communal co-existence and peace building

**Legend:** ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither, Nor ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither, Nor | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GC | 4% | 20% | 38% | 34% | 5% |
| TC | 4% | 12% | 46% | 27% | 11% |

**Table 9.4: Cypriot Youth on Their Ability to Influence the Peace Process and Initiate Peace Building Activities**

Thus, while a considerable number of young respondents believe that responsibility towards the future of their country does in fact lie in their hands, the perceived absence of political support is seen to be the main barrier impeding the active participation of Cypriot youth as agents of social change:

*We don't have the opportunity to express our views. Those older than us think we have no experiences* [...] *that we cannot express our opinions on smoking or anything else going on in our country. They just keep us on the margin, saying "What do you know?", and that's why young people are not interested and, generally, we're indifferent as young people.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 16, student, single, rural Nicosia]**

Some young Cypriots simply set different priorities for themselves, such as their employment and leisure-time activities, which left little time for other activities:
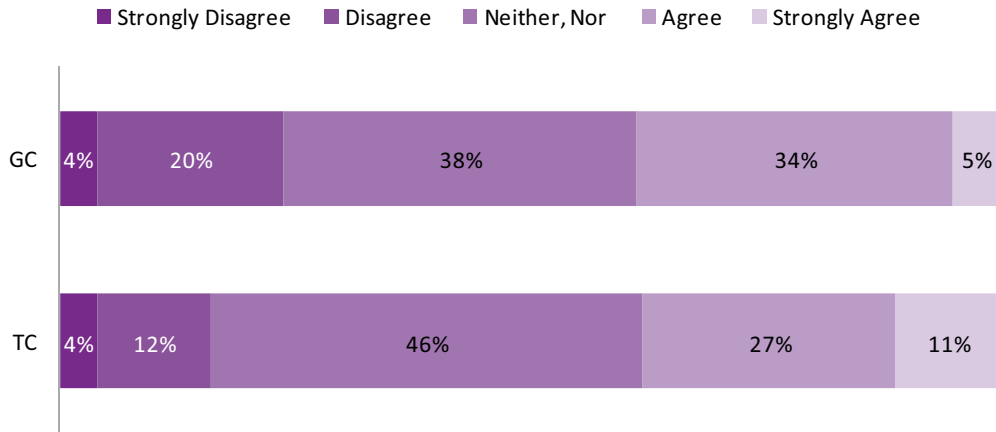
*I'm working...I have only weekends. I try to get together with my friends at weekends. And during these weekends* [...] *I want to have some fun.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Perhaps the most potent force behind their limited participation in reconciliation is that, having lived their entire lives on opposite sides of the division line, with limited or no interaction with members of the other community, many Cypriot youth have come to accept – and even favour – the *status quo*. Some young respondents accused their peers of being indifferent or apathetic to the problems facing the two communities; that the lack of a youth movement was due to the fact that many were content to sit back and enjoy the 'good life' rather than concern themselves with issues relating to the two communities and the country.

*I believe that young people remain completely apathetic. They do not care because they'd like to believe they've found the 'good life'. When, however, at some point something small happens and* [the Turks] *come to attack us, then they will truly understand what's happening... so somebody relatively young has to sit down and get the young people's attention, to explain to them what is going on.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 21, student, single, urban Limassol]**

*I don't think there is some particular effort, at least from the circle I am involved in; they simply allow things to go on as they are. If they should meet a Turkish-Cypriot, they quickly put a label on him; they cannot communicate with him in the same way as they would communicate with a Greek-Cypriot...they do not make any effort to get to know them.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, employed as a secretary, engaged, rural Nicosia]**

| **BOX 9.2** | **Education and Young Peacebuilders: International Perspectives** |

Education systems can have an important role in empowering youth to be peace builders. While every context is unique, there is value in looking at approaches tried in other settings, such as Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine, and the United States. Educators may look to curricular or pedagogical innovations, and non-formal education initiatives, to open up space for youth to develop authentic capacities for building peace.[1]

In Northern Ireland, for example, there has been a recent shift away from an 'Education for Mutual Understanding' approach, which sought to promote intercultural understanding but may have reinforced notions of difference. A **new curriculum** on Local and Global Citizenship (for 11-16 year olds) addresses four key themes in national, European and global contexts: Diversity and Inclusion; Human Rights and Social Responsibility; Equality and Social Justice; and Democracy and Active Participation.[2] This shift emphasizes connectedness, and the existence of multiple, complex identities, beyond the 'two communities' tradition. More attention is also being given to early childhood education for countering stereotypes which emerge around age three.[3]

The **teaching of history** is particularly challenging in divided societies, where morally exclusive historical narratives, and ongoing separation and mistrust, can elicit strong emotional reactions in the classroom. Some Israeli and Palestinian teachers have created a textbook supplement that presents two histories, side-by-side, separated by a space for making notes.[4] The teaching method, encouraged by this format, allows students to critically engage with the material and experience the narratives in dialogue.

Teaching methods that foster youth agency and an ethic of social responsibility – including the desire and confidence to engage in the world and transform conflicts non-violently – are also important. **Inquiry- and project-based pedagogies** focus on real-world issues that are relevant to students' everyday lives, and develop skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and collaborative research.

Service-learning is a pedagogy used in US schools and universities to raise students' critical consciousness of social issues like poverty or inequality.[5] Students in a **service-learning** course participate in an off-campus activity – such as tutoring younger children or collecting oral histories from older residents – that is beneficial to their community. This service activity is discussed during class time and linked to academic readings and reflective writing. There is scope for building these kinds of pedagogies into school exchange visits, perhaps exploring past histories of cooperation or conflict, or to address the contemporary challenges that Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots share.[6]

Students may be more likely to join peacebuilding initiatives that develop employable skills. In Northern Ireland, young people in one organization were able to earn youth work certifications while participating in a community dialogue project.[7] The **non-formal education** sector can engage older youth who do not attend school and those who might be disinterested in 'peace' curricula. Non-formal settings are often more suitable for skills-building and for youth-generated peacebuilding projects.[8]

How these approaches might transfer to the Cyprus context is, of course, for local educators, officials, and young people to decide. But schools could encourage peace action, for example, by allowing students to receive academic credit for involvement in bicommunal youth camps, music festivals, dialogues and education workshops.

A curriculum could be designed around a peace process using youth-friendly versions of key documents. Officials could explore joint community-service models, as one alternative to military service, or develop youth institutions that connect to the formal political process such as Shadow Youth Councils (Northern Ireland) or Youth Parliaments (India). Ideally, there would be shared physical space designated for youth reconciliation activities, and equipped for training, in such areas as the creative arts, web design, video production, peace journalism, peace tourism, or for mounting art installations, history retrospectives, concerts, or other initiatives, that youth themselves conceptualize, design and implement.

*Siobhan McEvoy-Levy*
*Director of the Peace Studies Programme*
*Butler University*

**References**

[1]McEvoy-Levy, Siobhan (ed). 2006. Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and Post-Accord Peacebuilding. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press).

[2]'Learning for Life and Work. Local and Global Citizenship.' Available online: http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/docs/key_stage_3/areas_of_learning/statutory_requirements/ks3_citizenship.pdf Last accessed November 23, 2008.

[3]Connolly, Paul, Alan Smith & Bernie Kelly. 2002. Too Young to Notice? The Cultural and Political Awareness of 3-6 year olds in Northern Ireland. Belfast: Community Relations Council.

[4]Adwan, Sami & Dan Bar-On 2006. 'Sharing History: Palestinian and Israeli Teachers and Pupils Learning Each Other's Narrative.' In McEvoy-Levy, ed. Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and Post-Accord Peacebuilding. University of Notre Dame Press, pp. 217-234.

[5]Crews, Robin J. & Kathleen Maas Weigart (eds.) 1999. Teaching for Justice. Concepts and Models for Service Learning in Peace Studies. American Association for Higher Education (AAEH) Series on Service Learning for the Disciplines.Washington D.C.

[6]But experts recommend caution in transferring such pedagogy without sensitivity to local values and traditions. See Margaret Brabant's chapter on service-learning in the Turkish context in 'Service Learning: An Exportable Pedagogy?' In Stewart, Trae & Nicole Webster (eds). Forthcoming 2009. Problematizing Service-Learning: Critical Reflections for Development and Action. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing (IAP).

[7]McEvoy-Levy. Ibid.

[8]A good example is described in Hammad, Suzanne & Tareq AlBakri. 2007. 'The Story of Popular Achievement: A Model of Youth Civic Engagement in Palestine'. In Mike Baizerman and Doug Magnuson (eds). Work with Youth in Divided and Contested Societies. Rotterdam: Sense. 201-216.

## Empowering Cypriot Youth to Act as Positive Agents of Change

When asked whether or not they desired to play an active role in the reconciliation of the island, approximately half of the respondents (46% of Greek-Cypriots and 55% of Turkish-Cypriots) responded positively; only 17% and 35%, respectively, did not want to be involved.

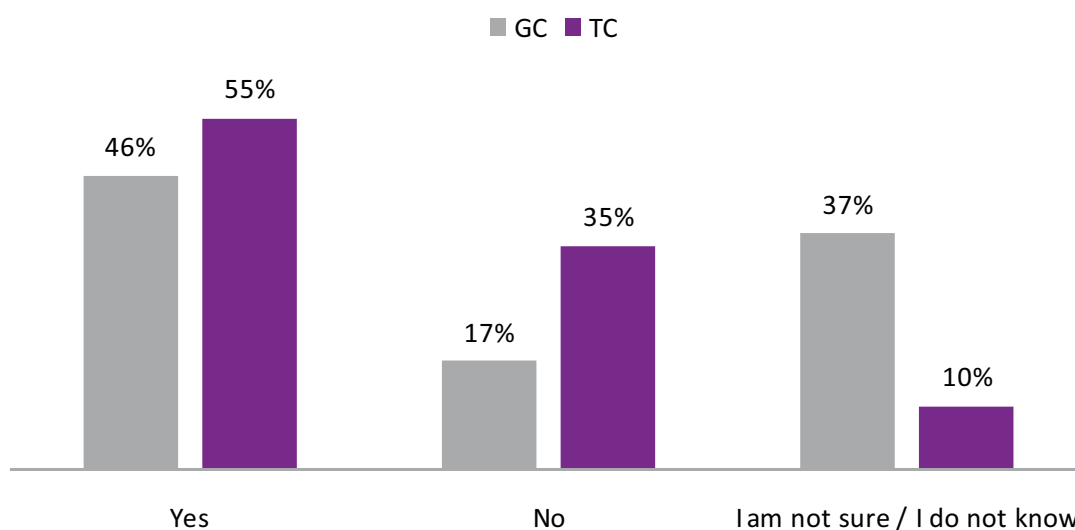**As a young Cypriot, do you want to play an active role in the reconciliation of the island?**



**Table 9.5: Desire of Cypriot Youth to Play a Role in Reconciliation**

Interestingly, among Greek-Cypriots, more than a third (37%) were unsure as to whether or not they should actively involve themselves. This is peculiar considering Greek-Cypriots' wish to be re-united, and belief that they have no qualms regarding Turkish-Cypriots. The reason must relate to the ambivalent state of *rapprochement* within the Greek-Cypriot community. Greek-Cypriot official discourse attempts to maintain a delicate balance between two distinct arguments[236]: the first being that the events of 1974 are a result of an invasion by Turkey, resulting to this day in the military occupation of one third of the island, and the second being that the two main communities were living together in peace (and can still do so) were it not for foreign intervention. In practice, many Greek-Cypriots, who choose to stress the first type of argument tend to consider taking part in bi-communal activities as undermining the just 'cause' of the Greek-Cypriot struggle, giving the wrong messages to the international community as to what constitutes the real 'cause' of the Cyprus Problem – and therefore deem those taking part in such activities as 'traitors'. Obviously, such conflicting messages and negative labels have led to the confusion of young Greek-Cypriots, and their uncertainty as to whether to involve themselves with reconciliation activities.

On the Turkish-Cypriot side, matters are clearer. A large number of youth (35%) seem to adopt the hard-liners' view that Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots simply cannot get along – thus there is no point in trying. However, as already noted, the majority (55%) do not seem to share this view and appear willing to engage in peace building activities with Greek-Cypriots.[237] The fact that more than half of Turkish-Cypriot respondents wish to be a part of the reconciliation process is encouraging given the socio-political conditions which these young persons have grown up in. In addition to growing up in a country divided into two, young Cypriots are exposed to a social milieu which consolidates the social and psychological barriers separating the two communities. Their parents' memories of the past; the educational systems' varied interpretation of the island's history; the mass media's bombardment with comments on developments regarding the Cyprus Problem, and the widespread and deep-rooted influence of politics in almost every facet of their lives have all, in some way, contributed to shaping young Cypriots' views of the other community, as well as of their country.

The past few years have seen several positive steps taken on the path to reconciliation: the opening of check points in 2003; the 2004 accession of Cyprus into the EU (a union that, at its core, stands for the freedom of movement of people, goods, services and capital); the increasing levels of interaction between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots in schools, universities, workplaces and social venues, such as shopping centres, restaurants and clubs; and on April 3, 2008 the historic opening of the Ledra Street crossing and, five months later, the recommencement of peace talks (on September 3, 2008).

Currently underway, negotiations for a peace settlement have largely been touted by political leaders as being a solution of the Cyprus Problem *by the people of Cyprus*. If this is to be the case, then any solution must incorporate the voice of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth who account for approximately one sixth of the total population.

The increased involvement of Cypriot youth in the effort towards reconciliation should be seen as a necessary requisite to reaching a fair and, most importantly, lasting solution. Given that Cypriot youth represent the generation that will implement and in effect 'live out' a potential solution, any agreement, which fails to take into consideration their voice and needs, will not have a strong chance of succeeding. At the same time, policy makers and practitioners face the difficult "challenge of reaching youth who have negative or apathetic views towards the other community and inter-communal contacts" and often find themselves in the position of "preaching to the converted" as young people across the divide show decreasing desire to interact with members from the other community.[238] How

could these negative attitudes change?

Young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots who took part in the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue* *Project* were asked to describe what measures, in their opinion, could contribute to building peace in Cyprus. The four responses most cited by each group are presented below.

| Greek-Cypriots (4 most cited responses) | % |
|---|---|
| Intensive talks | 17 |
| Joint events between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots | 17 |
| Better relationships between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots | 9 |
| By both sides compromising | 9 |

| Turkish-Cypriots (4 most cited responses) | % |
|---|---|
| Sharing common space eg. office, workplace, school | 29 |
| Building trust on both sides | 15 |
| Considering the needs and demands of both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots | 10 |
| Lifting all boundaries in Cyprus | 6 |

**Table 9.6: Peace Building Measures for Cyprus**

Greek-Cypriot youth favoured direct talks between the leaders of the two communities, as well as joint events between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. The latter suggestion is somewhat paradoxical as, over the years, Turkish-Cypriots have made up the larger proportion of people involved in bi-communal events. Turkish-Cypriots, on the other hand, largely supported more practical measures: the sharing of common space, such as schools or the workplace comprises such possibilities.

As the younger generation, Cypriot youth are regarded as "a key conduit to influencing the rest of society", given their ability to reach out to a wide audience including family members, peers and a wider social network (such as teachers and employers), as well as their tendency to radically change their perceptions of stereotypes.[239]

Given this, the survey sought to find out what measures Cypriot youth felt they could bring to the (reconciliation) table. This was done by asking young Cypriots to describe ways in which they themselves could contribute to peace building. Once again, the most cited responses are listed below:

| Greek-Cypriots (5 most cited responses) | % |
|---|---|
| By taking part in joint events with Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots | 41 |
| Through friendships, relationships and social interaction | 11 |
| By getting to know young people from the other community | 8 |
| By forging good relationships with Turkish-Cypriots | 8 |
| Through the coming together of youth/through youth uniting | 8 |

| Turkish-Cypriots (5 most cited responses) | % |
|---|---|
| By sharing common life practices | 36 |
| By taking part in joint events with Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots | 11 |
| By giving young people more of a voice | 11 |
| By providing more opportunities to young people to learn about Greek-Cypriots | 11 |
| More education/training/information about Greek-Cypriot people | 8 |

**Table 9.7: Peace Building Measures by Cypriot Youth**

The most interesting finding is that, in both cases, most Turkish-Cypriots (29% to 36% in the latter two tables above) emphasise the sharing of common spaces or common life practices; this focuses attention on activities to encourage the normalisation of relations between the two communities (such as the sharing of common schools and workplaces).

On the other hand, Greek-Cypriots' preferences are based on the principle that the existing state of affairs is unacceptable – thus, the aim cannot be normalisation, as this would amount to accepting an unjust *fait accompli*. Hence the stress on intensive talks, aiming to change the political status quo; or joint events and improving relationships – all of which are useful in preparing the ground for the post-solution era.

In-depth interviews and focus group discussions with youth from both communities highlighted more specific experiences and suggestions. Young people felt that they could forge meaningful relationships by meeting and working together towards a common goal.

*Something that would encourage them* [is] *to have a single goal. Not to play against each other but to be forced to cooperate.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

*I participated in a couple of initiatives when I was in college. During my first initiative, the organisers asked us to share our experiences… for example, to list the various websites that we visit. I did not find this experience to be*

*useful. Then I attended a bi-communal camp in the south…there we worked on environmental issues. I really liked the second experience because it was a natural process that allowed us to get to know each other in a more suitable way.*
**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 19, university student, Nicosia]**

For many respondents sports activities represented a suitable medium that could allow youth from both communities to work together towards achieving success. This was provided that teams were made up of a combination of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth rather than pitting on group against the other:

[Membership in a sports team] *would be very constructive because when you are participating in a sport, you have to know your team mates.*
**(Greek-Cypriot, 14-18 years old)**

Through such activities, young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots can begin to identify what it is that they have in common with each other and start to break down the barriers that have been put up between them:

*I think that at some point we have to see not only our differences but the things we have in common – that is, we can all play football, we can dance. So with team-building activities we can come closer to one other.*
**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 16, student, single, rural Nicosia]**

| BOX 9.3 | **The Doves Olympic Movement:** |
|---|---|
| | **Utilizing Sport to Build a Culture of Peace and Solidarity** |

It is universally accepted that sport, under certain conditions, can play a very important role in promoting a culture of peace. The U.N. General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution entitled "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideals" at its 54th Session on November 24, 1999. The following extract from the address of Secretary General of the U.N. to the World Conference on Education and Sport for a Culture of Peace sets out clearly the UN views on the matter:

*Be it team competition or individual athletics, sport has long displayed an inspiring ability to overcome national, political, ethnic and cultural differences. Sport, in short, is an instrument of understanding among people. It is a vehicle for education about the world at large. It can be especially powerful in instilling in children and young people universal values such as respect and tolerance.*

Nicos Kartakoulis, University of Nicosia and Chairman of the Cyprus Sports Organisation (KOA), points out that the importance of sports for national development is recognized worldwide, whether as a tool for the development of a healthy population or as an agent of national unity. Since 1999, a number of UN agencies, the International Olympic Committee and a number of national and international sport and humanitarian organisations, stressed the need for utilizing more sport practices as a medium for resolving a number of challenges the youth face globally.

Based on these guidelines, and inspired by the philosophy and the objectives of Olympism, Lyras and colleagues developed the first sport educational initiative that was implemented in Cyprus, named Doves Olympic Movement (DOM). DOM aims to utilise the framework of the philosophy and principles of the Olympic Movement to promote personal development, cross-cultural understanding, global citizenship, and social change.[1&2] The programme was initially designed with the support provided by the Olympic Solidarity and the Cyprus Research Foundation. During the last five years the DOM Project implemented a number of initiatives that were funded by United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Office of Programme Services, and United States Agency for International Development.

Through the project more than 700 Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot youth, as well as 50 instructors from both communities, were brought together in an educationally sound environment in which they developed friendships and created a small community of active citizens with enhanced confidence that they can contribute to the reconciliation process of their island. Since 2005 the Doves Project participants, inspired by the framework of the Olympic Movement, implemented community based initiatives related with the protection of the environment, social inclusion of people with disabilities and underprivileged youth, and the development of active citizens that think, care, and act beyond community and national boundaries.

The DOM research team produced evidence from the field on a number of social and psychological indicators, providing substantial scientific support on the effectiveness of Sport for Development practices. The current political situation in Cyprus places an obstacle as regards to the interaction of Cypriot youth from all communities. Through DOM, the young participants have the opportunity to work together in activities that interest them. The interdisciplinary programme, and the values it promotes, facilitates the participants to foster long-lasting friendships and develop, among others, critical thinking and perspective-taking, while breaking down social and psychological barriers and stereotypes.

*Alexis Lyras*
*Founder and Principal Investigator*
*Doves Olympic Movement*

**References**
[1]Lyras, A. (2007). *Characteristics and Psycho-Social Impacts of an Inter-Ethnic Educational Sport Initiative on Greek and Turkish Cypriot Youth.* Unpublished Dissertation. University of Connecticut, Storrs.
[2]Lyras, A., Yiannakis, A., & Kartakoullis, N. (2005). *Sports as a medium for personal and social Change.* Paper presented at the 13th Congress of the European Association for Sport Management, Newcastle, England.

Several youth stressed that cultural or physical activities were needed rather than academic or desk-based activities; the former holding more appeal to the younger generation. Through these, young Cypriots can come together because of a shared appreciation for some type of music, art, or sport activity and begin to foster friendships.

*I think that the best thing people can do is to have common dance studios, sports auditoriums, discos…we need state-of-the-art facilities that rival those in other countries. In this way, such venues could attract members of both communities.*

**[Turkish-Cypriot, male, 23, employed part-time in a shop, Famagusta]**

*These activities which make us work together more are better than just coming to a conference, sitting down and talking to them. When, however, you do something, which you normally do at your age that you have in common, like going out dancing, going out to hear music […] it may be that his favourite band is your favourite band too. When I went to Ledra Street, there was a band performing on this side, and a band on the other side. They were playing the same music. We could talk to each other; we met new people and realized that we have a lot in common. We all like similar movies, similar music, we both think the same thing, about how people approach the whole problem between the two cultures…*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 17, student, employed part-time as salesperson, single, rural Nicosia]**

The same respondent confides that, realising how separation breeds distance and alienation, some of the youth engaged in peace building activities:

*Try to be together more often – we try to go over there and see them during week-ends, some other weekends they come to see us. But it is hard to be only a few and to try to bring others.*

Another respondent stressed how common activities are important in creating contact between youth from the two communities - and contact itself fosters trust and communication, which, in turn make cohabitation possible:

*One way or another, it depends on us, the new generation. When something is put together, whether dances, or some space for paintings let's say, it should be spiritual stuff – like dance, art, creative things like pottery…what they have in common will help them develop a relationship. So, when centres are created, which promote this Greek-Cypriot/ Turkish-Cypriot relationship, there will be contact, and trust will develop – which is basically what we are missing… We don't trust each other… communication will develop, and so we will find it easier to cohabit…and so a solution will be found. Ok, it is not as easy as I am putting it, but it is a step to bring us closer together.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 24, college graduate, employed as a secretary, engaged, rural Nicosia]**

Other respondents suggested that youth could come together through existing youth organisations in order to campaign for peace:

*This is what we are trying to do through various youth organizations and with Turkish-Cypriots. To transmit the message: "No more you, we can too!" We know many Turkish-Cypriots. When I was in Nicosia, there were times when I met up with them; we discussed the Cyprus Problem and we found some solutions. We can live together with the Turkish-Cypriots, but not with the Turkish settlers.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, female, 23, university graduate (pre-primary education), employed at cooperative bank, engaged, urban Paphos]**

Others still, proposed that Cypriot youth could take to the streets and lead demonstrations for peace in an attempt to exert their influence over politicians and make their voice heard, citing the example of important youth protests, such as May 1968, in France, as well as the 2003-2004 peace demonstrations in the north, in which many Turkish-Cypriot youth participated:

*The young people in France had demonstrations, and at the end of all those demonstrations they forced the government to change their decisions. We can do the same here in Cyprus. As my friend mentioned, this is our future.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Another suggestion, that was expected to provide a basis for contact and had the potential to create lasting friendships, was school visits. Greek-Cypriot respondents suggested that some Turkish-Cypriot youth may be brought in to visit schools in the south, and be given the opportunity to talk and get to know each other.[240]

| BOX 9.4 | Reconciliation and Social Justice Pedagogies Project |
|---|---|

The Reconciliation and Social Justice Pedagogies project, implemented by the Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology (CARDET) focused on creating collaborations among teachers from private and public schools to develop pedagogical materials and practices that promote intercultural education, peace, reconciliation and social justice. The 14-month project began in May 2007 and was completed in July 2008. The main outcomes of the project included conducting a needs assessment and curriculum review analysis, the development and implementation of workshop materials and pedagogical practices that promote reconciliation and social justice pedagogies; workshops addressed to teachers and administrators; various web resources; and an international conference.

**Good practices identified:**
- Reconciliation pedagogies: pedagogical practices centred on promoting reconciliation and social justice among historically-conflicting communities.
- Persona Dolls methodology for younger children to help them to be aware of differences and other cultures. Using the dolls helps the children to understand the feelings and views of others (empathy). It is especially useful when they do not have frequent opportunities to meet people from other contexts or when it is better to tackle some problems indirectly (e.g. bullying etc.)
- Student empowerment through being involved in school and community activities. For instance, students facilitate intercultural workshops and run an inter-faith club. This develops their responsibility, independence, their communication skills and they learn how to express their views and identity.
- Community-based arts and interdisciplinary projects
- Become aware of laws about discrimination and the role of the media
- Web Resources on multiculturalism, social justice and reconciliation
- School exchanges, common projects, team work, cooperative learning
- Using materials from the popular culture to improve the language skills and social consciousness of the children (especially those that are marginalized)

Recent events in Cypriot public and private schools involving attacks on students from 'other' cultures focus attention on what can happen when divisiveness goes unchecked. Such events indicate that security cannot be maintained solely through military and police powers. There also needs to be skilful pedagogical work conducted in social institutions, including schools. This work needs to be aware of the new complexities and provide resources for reconciling ethnic, racial, and religious differences in ways that foster understanding, social justice and co-existence rather than promote fear, anger and revenge.

The achievement of this outcome requires a careful examination of existing pedagogies to support Cypriot youth in feeling empowered to overcome prejudice and negative stereotypes.

*Charalambos Vrasidas,*
*Executive Director*
*CARDET*

Unfortunately, initiatives such as the ones highlighted in this Chapter and proposed by respondents target a small proportion of youth; usually these are English speakers, who can use this third language as a medium of communication, and are often in full support of reunification. As a result, many other youth are marginalised or excluded, specifically those who do not speak English or live in rural areas or outside of the capital.

Furthermore, the physical separation of the two communities makes it nearly impossible for young people to spend substantial time together and can be discouraging even to the most active and enthusiastic of participants:

*Mingling with them is good, we hang out. The problem is that a deeper friendship does not exist, on account of the difficulty of cultivating it; because of the distance and the fact that we are divided. The problem I believe, from Turkish-Cypriot classmates I've had, is that we have them in our lives, at school, we are together, but it is only for a few hours. To meet up afterwards, as you would with a friend, is much harder. We have our lives here; they have their lives and their friends there. There are very few things which we can do jointly.*

**[Greek-Cypriot, male, 19, high school graduate, single, rural Nicosia]**

*I think that we need to work together regularly because frequent interaction will allow us to understand one another – short-term activities are not enough.*

**Turkish-Cypriot, female, 17, college student, Nicosia]**

*I have Greek-Cypriot friends. I met them in the camp. We have very good friendships there. But then we couldn't continue to meet, not because of some bad feelings, but simply because it didn't happen.*

**(Turkish-Cypriots 17-24 years old)**

Many young Cypriots felt that it would be easier for them to build a sustainable peace only after certain progress was achieved by the leaders of the two communities. In their opinion, the existing barriers and challenges continued to hamper the impact of the activities and initiatives organised, and as a result, failed to affect the wider population.

[Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth can come together] *only when the political solution is regulated and resolved. Coming together now is not an easy thing.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

*We could live together without perceiving the other as the enemy. We have to change our minds. If we think of ourselves as a member of the same* [country]*, everything will be easier for us.*

**(Turkish-Cypriot, 19-24 years old)**

Despite limitations, bicommunal activities in the form of summer camps, music and dance festivals, educational workshops and trainings, conferences and dialogue sessions are all seen to have served the higher goal of bringing members of the two communities closer together by enabling all Cypriots, young and old, to discover commonalities, shatter barriers and negative stereotypes and, thereby prepare themselves for living together in a re-united Cyprus.

## Engaging Youth to Work Towards a Peaceful Island

Young Cypriots represent the future of Cyprus. Regardless of the outcome of the ongoing peace negotiations, it is the right and responsibility of both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth to play an active part in working towards a peaceful, tolerant and inclusive existence where they will share the island as neighbours, compatriots and co-citizens, rather than as members of two divided communities. In order for this to be the case, however, Cypriot youth must be sought out and given the opportunity to participate in determining the direction of their future.

According to France, society must recognise that "young people need a stake in the society or community in which they live".[241] He underlines that without providing young people with opportunities to become involved, "many young people will not feel any desire to undertake social responsibilities either to their local or national community".[242] Indeed, Cypriot youth have often been accused of being apathetic and disengaged from society. As things stand, young Cypriots have been conditioned to feel as though they cannot make a difference. Instead of harnessing their energy and optimism, Cypriot youth have been relegated to the part of passive bystanders. As a result Cypriot youth feel as though they are neither included, nor valued by the rest of society.

Cypriot youth also suffer from a lack of knowledge or awareness as to how they might be able to become more engaged in bringing the two communities closer together. Thus, while it is the right of every young person to participate in society and the

decision-making process that can shape their realities, it is the responsibility of adults to encourage the participation of youth. Young Cypriots stand to benefit vastly from greater participation as "participation not only allows a *[young person]* the right to have a voice *[but]* it is equally valuable in enabling *[youth]* to discover the rights of others to have their own very different voices".[243] The inclusion of youth in the peace building process can bestow various beneficial skills to young Cypriots, such as the development of critical reflection and the ability to compare different perspectives. Both of these skills are necessary for engaging in productive dialogue and conflict resolution.

In conclusion, adult actors, be they family members, educators, politicians, civil society activists or religious leaders, would do well to realise that "under the cynical passivity *[of youth]* lies an inherent motivation for wanting to make a difference".[244] As such, they must work together to harness the untapped potential of Cypriot youth across the island and provide them with the chance to make their voice heard, not just vis-à-vis the Cyprus Problem, but in all facets that affect their lives and their collective future. Social change and peace building entail a true collaboration between adults and the young. Adults can provide youth with a safe space in which to participate, and can share their wisdom and experiences with the younger generations. At the same time, adults stand to gain as well, as they are given the opportunity to learn something new through the perspective of youth and the experience of power sharing.

# CONCLUSION: EMPOWERING CYPRIOT YOUTH

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.*

**Margaret Mead**

## Cypriot Youth and Change

This Report has set out to present some of the realities and challenges currently facing Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth. Areas examined include the role of the family, the importance of education and employment, trends pertaining to leisure time activities and health, attitudes towards socio-political participation, concerns relating to the Cyprus Problem and the peacebuilding potential of youth in Cyprus.

The introductory Chapter of this Report pointed out that 'youth' is a socially constructed concept, which varies through history and from society to society. This Report has taken 'youth' to be Cypriots between the ages of 15 and 24. The period constituting 'youth' represents the transition between childhood and adulthood; a journey characterised by the adoption of additional rights and responsibilities. At the same time, Cypriot society has, and continues to undergo crucial transformations as it moves from a traditional to a modern society, which increasingly embraces Western standards and behaviours.

These societal changes are fuelled by the forces of modernisation and globalisation. As members of society, Cypriot youth must navigate the challenges arising from the rapid changes in economy and technology, while attempting to narrow the gap resulting from the more slowly changing values – the so-called 'cultural lag'. Finally, Cypriot youth, having been born during the 1980s and onwards, have lived their whole lives in a politically charged climate of division and separation.

As the leaders of the two communities attempt, once again, to negotiate a peaceful and acceptable resolution to the Cyprus Problem, the role that Cypriot youth may wish to play in determining the future of their island comes into question. In order for Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth to participate in bringing peace to their island, they must first be empowered to develop – through their families, education, civic participation and so on – into knowledgeable, active, healthy, independent and happy citizens.

This is crucial for Cypriot youth to be in a position to direct their attention to the difficult challenge that lies before them – forging a shared future on the island together with the 'other' ethnic community, through tolerance, mutual respect and understanding.

## Family

As outlined in Chapter Two, the family remains at the core of Cypriot society, playing a central role in the lives and development of youth in Cyprus. Cypriot parents continue to place paramount importance on their children's welfare – interpreted as getting a good education, having a good marriage, getting a well rewarded and prestigious job, so as to create and support their own families.

For some decades now, and more so in recent years, the relationship between Cypriot youth and family has been undergoing a transformation, guided by global trends and the shift away from traditional to more contemporary lifestyles. This includes a move away from the concept of arranged marriages and the changing role of women in Cypriot family and society.

Today, the majority of Cypriot youth select their own marriage partners, usually through the modern process of 'dating'. There are nowadays the first signs of Cypriot couples which choose to cohabit with one another often, but not always, after getting engaged. This represents a 'trial' period for young couples and allows them the opportunity to practically understand whether or not their union stands to be a long-lasting one.

Greater numbers of Cypriot women are choosing to pursue higher education, both in Cyprus and abroad, and, later on, their professional careers. While the majority of middle and upper managerial positions, both in the public and private sector, continue to be held by men, Cypriot women are continuously making positive strides towards achieving more equality. A good illustration is Eleni Mavrou, who, in January 2007, became the first elected female Mayor of Nicosia. Nevertheless this is an exception rather than the rule or the common practice. Despite these developments, Cypriot women continue to play a primary role in managing their household and raising their children. Given this, women typically favour positions in education and the public sector, which enable them to better manage the two primary areas of importance in their lives: family and work.

Despite such changes, Cypriot youth in both communities continue to be dependent, to one degree or another, on their families, and more specifically, their parents. Many young Cypriots reside with their parents and leave the familial home only after getting married. Given that young Cypriots are choosing to postpone marriage until a later age – opting to focus on forging a successful career first – this means that Cypriot youth continue to live with their parents until their mid-20s or later. This living arrangement is welcomed by many parents, whose main desire is to continue to nurture their children for as long as possible, through home-cooked meals, free utilities, and so on. In turn, young Cypriots enjoy the comforts of home, without having to concern themselves with the accompanying financial costs. As a result, young Cypriots are able to spend their salaries on other more enjoyable pursuits, such as clothes, mobile phones, and leisure activities. At the same time, these living arrangements enable young Cypriots to save money for their own future.

From another angle, rather than empowering their offspring to live independently, parents encourage and foster the material attachment that develops between them and their children, since this allows them to exert control over their children. Cypriot youth find themselves in the position of *having* to stay living at home with their parents, instead of genuinely *wanting* to. The peak of this dependence comes with marriage, as Cypriot youth come both to expect and to depend on the provision of a dowry from their parents. This parental help, often taking on the form of dowry – or a donation of land or a house (but also extending to subsequent assistance in securing a job, or taking care of the grandchildren), is given by Cypriot parents in order for young couples to effectively start their lives as husband and wife.

Without a doubt, the family unit will continue to play a pivotal role in society and in the lives of young Cypriots. However, as Cypriot youth continue to navigate through the constant and rapid transformation taking place in their country, as well as in the world around them, it becomes necessary for them to forge new relationships with their parents. These new bonds must be created through open

dialogue and trust. Young Cypriots need to be empowered and to become less dependent on their parents and the "golden chains" which bind them to the latter. Simultaneously, Cypriot parents must learn to be less controlling and to gradually give their children the freedom and responsibility to stand on their own feet. This entails supporting their children's life choices, development and independence, not necessarily through monetary support but mostly by moral and emotional support – by encouraging them not to fear to be free.[245] This is not an argument against close relationships between parents and children; rather, it is to support that close relationships must be freely chosen and maintained once family members view them as desirable, supportive and nurturing – and not a result of coercion or material incentives. Furthermore, it is to underline that the family must stop substituting for the state, and that in consolidating itself as a modern democracy, Cyprus must bolster state welfare provisions as its other more advanced European counterparts.

## Education and Employment

Education and employment represent the two domains which Cypriot youth concentrate the greatest proportion of their attention, energy and time towards. In general, Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth are considered to be highly educated individuals. Parents spend a considerable amount of resources and time towards furthering their children's education. Primary and secondary education are practically universal; significant importance is given to tertiary education, with more than three quarters of youth from both communities pursuing their higher education either in Cyprus or abroad (Greece is a popular destination among Greek-Cypriots, as is Turkey among Turkish-Cypriots).

The pursuit of tertiary education is mainly motivated by the desire to equip young Cypriots with the best possible qualifications that will assist them in securing decent employment. Spurred by this, increasing numbers of young Cypriots are pursuing graduate and postgraduate degrees today. Like their parents, young Cypriots place a great deal of importance and emphasis on their education, recognising

that, firstly, a solid education can contribute to professional development and success, and secondly, that the pursuit of knowledge adds to personal development. [246]

In order to get into the best possible tertiary level institutions, Cypriot youth (particularly in the Greek-Cypriot community) spend a great deal of personal time attending private classes. A small majority of these lessons revolve around non-curricular activities such as art, dance and foreign language lessons. However, the majority of private lessons are geared towards preparing students to sit entrance exams for universities in Cyprus and abroad.

Given the strong dependence on private tuition, the educational system is increasingly coming under criticism for being heavily conservative and unfit for preparing youth for the modern world, since it is based on absorbing a lot of knowledge/information, and on "memory learning" rather than "critical learning". In order to better equip future generations with analytical thinking skills, educational institutions need to move away from students' reliance on reproducing knowledge provided by teachers, depending on one textbook, and fostering competitive individualism. A simultaneous move towards promoting the exploration and discovery of knowledge, the use of multiple textbooks and other sources, working together in teams, and so on, must be taken in order to better equip students to compete in an increasingly challenging and competitive world.

Additionally, the education systems in both communities continue to be ethnocentric in nature, steeped in the history of the respective 'motherlands' – Greece and Turkey. Furthermore, the Orthodox religion and Church continue to assume a prominent position within the Greek-Cypriot education curricula. In the spirit of providing the skills for coping in the more open, multicultural environment of today's world, moulded by the forces of globalisation, the educational systems in each community should consider implementing a more appropriate curriculum and methods of study, which take into consideration these important changes in the modern world.

This becomes even more necessary given the changing fabric of Cypriot society which is becoming more multicultural in nature with each passing year. There are increasing numbers of young Cypriots from mixed marriages, as well as children of migrant workers, representing a blend of nationalities, ethnicities, religions and cultures. The educational system must reflect these changes in society and take a leading role in promoting the values of openness to difference, tolerance, cultural diversity and co-existence, and the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means.

Additionally, education providers must invest in the development of new curricula and teaching/learning methods. It is imperative that schools are able to adapt to modern trends in education, such as computer-based learning. In addition to embracing new technologies, the education system must continue to invest in its most important asset – namely teachers. Primary, secondary and tertiary education professionals must continually undergo training sessions so that they may be able to tackle the new opportunities and challenges facing education today.

Having completed their higher education, young Cypriots attempt to find gainful employment afterwards. The unemployment rate among Greek-Cypriot youth is 10.0%; this is among the lowest unemployment rates of youth in the EU. The unemployment rate is higher among Turkish-Cypriot youth (23.8%),[247] reflecting the existing disparity between economic conditions in the north and south of the island. In turn, this economic reality influences the attitudes of young Cypriots towards employment. Greek-Cypriots participating in the *YAS* indicated that, in selecting their current job, the main appeal revolved around "good pay and benefits", followed by a "good working environment". Turkish-Cypriots, on the other hand, chose their current jobs because "it was better than being unemployed".

Both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth agree that the main challenge facing young people and employment is that there are not enough job opportunities available for young people. The vast majority of businesses in

Cyprus are classified as small or medium enterprises (SMEs); the personnel usually consisting of close and/or extended family members and close friends. The limited opportunities for youth employment, paired with the high qualifications earned by Cypriot youth, usually results in young Cypriots accepting employment in positions (and salary scales) that, more often than not, do not match the level of qualifications and skills possessed.

Young Cypriots are encouraged to pursue employment paths that can guarantee to as great an extent as possible, financial and social security. To this end, many favour white collar professions in the fields of business, finance, accounting, engineering and medicine, to name a few. Also, public sector positions are strongly promoted to young Cypriots, who come to view these as coveted positions, given the better financial rewards and benefits (as compared to positions in the private sector). Parents, particularly in the Greek-Cypriot community, are known to "pull strings" in order to secure better positions for their children. This encourages another form of dependency on the part of Cypriot youth.

Both the private and public sectors stand to benefit greatly from the knowledge and skills accumulated by Cypriot youth through their modern education. Today's young Cypriot workforce is equipped with new ideas and concepts, as well as the ability to use the latest modern technologies. As such, they should be regarded as an asset by SMEs and larger organisations as they can contribute new and fresh approaches and help to strengthen businesses and the local economy. Young individuals are able to commit more time and energy to their careers as they have yet to take on other commitments and obligations. Rather than take advantage of this, Cypriot businesses would do well to recognise young employees for their hard work and commitment.

Additionally, in a global labour market that is rapidly evolving, young Cypriots must develop a stronger appreciation for lifelong learning, in order to be able to keep up with global trends and changes. In this way, young Cypriots will be in a better position to compete, in what is quickly becoming, an increasingly competitive

work force. Cypriots believe greatly in the pursuit of academic qualifications rather than pursuing education for its own sake. Today in Europe, and the modern world in general, good education is seen not only as important for employment but as an important political right for self-development and fulfilment. This attitude has yet to be cultivated in Cyprus.

## Leisure Activities and Health

The amount of free time available to Cypriot youth is often dictated by the frequency of their extra-curricular activities. As mentioned in the previous section, a substantial proportion of young Cypriots attend private tuition after school during weekdays and during the weekend. This usually leaves little free time for them to engage in leisure activities, which are in many ways vital for their balanced development. Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth, like their counterparts around the world, are most likely to spend their free time listening to music, watching television and spending time socialising with their friends.

Cypriot youth in both communities are heavy users of the latest ICT; mobile phones, personal computers or laptops, and the Internet are used by more than 90% of them, often on a daily basis. These technologies provide young Cypriots with a gateway to the rest of the world, exerting a global influence on their perceptions and attitudes. Given that these new technologies simultaneously present serious threats, as well as exciting opportunities for Cypriot youth, it is worthwhile to invest in educating them on the potential and the pitfalls of modern technologies. In this way, young Cypriots will be able to utilise new technologies towards enhancing their personal and professional development.

Given that many young Cypriots spend their free time watching television, special effort must be made to develop programmes that appeal to the interests of youth, while simultaneously providing them with useful, informative and educational content. Young Cypriots seem to be highly sociable and to enjoy spending time with their friends. These social interactions play a significant role in the transition from childhood to adulthood as they

offer youth the opportunity to interact with their peers in the absence of their parents or teachers. Cypriot youth need to have access to public spaces where they can safely meet, interact and socialise with their peers.

It is necessary to stress that such social interactions be conducted in a safe atmosphere as young people are more susceptible than adults to negative, and often harmful, influences such as smoking, alcohol consumption and drug use. The human development approach promotes the right of individuals to enjoy a long and healthy life. It is the responsibility of parents, educators and health providers to make sure that the appropriate measures and actions are taken so that young Cypriots can live a long and healthy life.

Data on the health of young Cypriots (especially Turkish-Cypriots) remains limited. However, given the societal changes underway, concern has been growing over the increasing levels of alcohol and drug consumption among Cypriot youth. Once again, educators are called upon to play a vital role in educating Cypriot youth on the harmful effects of smoking, heavy alcohol consumption and drug abuse. Educational and awareness campaigns specifically targeting young Cypriots must be developed and disseminated across the island.

The same applies to road safety and sexual health. Irresponsible driving (speeding or driving under the influence of alcohol) and risky sexual behaviour can potentially harm others in addition to the individual engaging in such behaviour. Sexual education is virtually non-existent in secondary schools in Cyprus and is relegated to general biology lessons. Cypriot youth need to be educated on the practice of safe sex in order to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. This is even more necessary given that, most Cypriots do not feel comfortable discussing such issues with their parents and so rely on friends, and other sources such as the Internet, which can be highly inaccurate and misleading. Information and health centres must make extra efforts to develop material and messages designed especially for young Cypriots. Additionally, young Cypriots

must be informed about the health services and options available to them.

## Socio-political Participation

In general, civil society in Cyprus is weak and continues to be underdeveloped. This applies to both communities on the island. This is mainly attributed to a lack of funds and human resources, which, more often than not, leads to an over-reliance on financial backing from the various political parties.

As a result, membership in civil society organisations usually consists of individuals who support the specific political party lines. Many Cypriots seem to be discouraged from socio-political participation as they feel that, rather than focusing on vital issues such as the environment or helping people in need, the aim of most organisations is to promote the political parties' views and agendas. Additionally, most of the civil society organisations operating on the island are located in urban areas, thereby attracting relatively more affluent individuals, while simultaneously marginalising individuals that live in rural areas.

This was a sentiment expressed by several youth who took part in the $YAS_1$ and in-depth interviews. As is the case among older Cypriots, socio-political participation levels among Cypriot youth are quite low: approximately half of Cypriot youth surveyed indicated that they never participated in any socio-political organisations. One of the primary reasons attributed to their low participation rates is an overall lack of interest in such activities. This is not surprising, given that civic participation – and the value of such participation – have never been widely promoted around the island. Thus, a large proportion of Cypriot youth have not been socialised to actively want to take part in initiatives revolving around civic participation.

Additionally, young Cypriots recognise that civil society organisations are heavily influenced by political parties (and in the case of the south, the Church). This, coupled with their low level of trust in politicians and political groups, is another factor which contributes to their lack of participation. This is especially the case for

youth centres and organisations; the strongest and most active youth organisations are affiliated with, and are supported by, various political parties. Youth attracted to such organisations are usually staunch supporters of these parties. Non-political, autonomous youth organisations are unable to exert much power or influence; as a result, youth not attached to political parties often find themselves without any representation or platform through which they may voice their concerns and ideas.

The $YAS_1$ highlighted that only a small minority Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth (9%) felt that they had the power to influence matters concerning their country. This finding is a clear reflection of the low levels of empowerment currently felt by Cypriot youth. Many young Cypriots across the island believe that there is no place or, worse, no wish for their opinions concerning the development of their country and, by extension, themselves. Several young Cypriots feel that their parents, teachers, and political leaders all display a similar attitude of indifference towards them.

Special measures ought to be taken to increase the level of socio-political participation of Cypriot youth by generating genuine interest and concern in the area of civic concern and duty. For example, the educational systems in both communities could introduce civic education curricula so as to instil in Cypriot youth a greater sense of responsibility towards the sustainable development of their society and country.

Political parties must come to realise that by being too controlling over young people's political affiliations or choices often leads to their alienation from politics. They need to agree self-consciously (firstly, between themselves) to encourage the greater involvement of Cypriot youth with public affairs, even if this participation is autonomous from political parties. For example, there is currently a strong presence of political parties in universities and student politics; after elections for student offices take place, political parties announce the election results as if indicating victories for their own parties. Such practices do not allow much room for autonomous student politics.

## Cypriot Identity, the Cyprus Problem and Inter-communal Interaction

Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth, born after 1974, have grown up in a divided island – those living in Nicosia have been raised in a divided capital – having little or no interaction with members of the other community until recently. The physical barrier, coupled with psychological (such as the perceptions of family members and the history lessons taught in schools) and other barriers (such as politicised language and cultural differences) have deepened the divide and widened the existing gap among Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth.

Identity issues take on greater significance given the political situation in Cyprus. Slightly more than two fifths of the youth surveyed in the $YAS_1$ identify themselves as 'Cypriot' while just under one third view themselves as "equally Cypriot and Greek" or "equally Cypriot and Turkish". Thus, "Cypriot" identity continues to be shaped by ethnic identity. But this emphasis on Cypriot identity is not tantamount to a "civic" identity which encorporates both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. This became apparent when almost 86% of Greek-Cypriots and 55% of Turkish-Cypriots surveyed indicated that when using the word "Cypriot" they were referring exclusively to Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, respectively. As relative newcomers to the EU, it remains to be seen to what extent Cypriot youth will be incorporating the European element into their identity. At this stage, approximately two thirds of the Cypriot youth surveyed agreed that joining the EU represented a positive step for the people of their country. This is in itself an encouraging finding as young Cypriots will increasingly have to adapt to EU ideals, rules and norms governing many areas of their society and lives.

Youth from the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities still have a long way to go in an effort to get to know members of the other community. Inter-communal interactions between members of the two communities remain limited and superficial in nature. Only

27% of Greek-Cypriot and 42% of Turkish-Cypriot youth are open to befriending members of the other community; more worryingly 85% of Greek-Cypriot and 75% of Turkish-Cypriot youth displayed negative feelings towards the idea of a president of Cyprus from the 'other' community.

Young Cypriots have been directly impacted, albeit in different ways, by the frozen conflict experienced on the island for so many years. Greek-Cypriot youth grow up with feelings of collective insecurity, in consequence of the threat from the presence of what is estimated to be more than 35,000 Turkish armed forces stationed in the north of Cyprus. Turkish-Cypriot youth grow up feeling frustrated and isolated as a result of the non-recognition of the administration in the north, which has several repercussions on their lives (for instance, being unable to transfer abroad for their studies since the qualifications earned in the north are only recognised by Turkey). Until 2003, youth from both communities were deprived of free movement around their *entire* country. Although now possible, this movement is restricted as Cypriots must provide some type of personal identification, in the form of an identity card or passport, in order to pass through the check points that lead from one community to the other. For many young Cypriots the barriers resulting from political division represent obstructions to the realisation of the most fundamental human rights.[248] Unless an agreed solution is found to the political problem, Cypriot youth across the island will continue to suffer from such obstacles, which also serve to impede their human development.

## Cypriot Youth and Peacebuilding

Over the years several attempts have been made to reconcile the island and its two communities. All of these have failed. The most recent effort took place in 2004 when on the eve of the Republic of Cyprus' accession into the EU, Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots took part in a simultaneous referendum in order to accept or reject the Annan Plan, which presented a potential solution to the Cyprus Problem. The four years following the referendum found both Greek-Cypriots and

Turkish-Cypriots trying to move on from the disappointment experienced following this outcome, while simultaneously still trying to come to terms with the opening of various crossings in 2003, which have allowed for increased inter-communal interaction. By the spring of 2008, the political climate in each community had changed significantly following the coming to power of new Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot leadership, both of which were in support of renewing efforts towards reaching a lasting solution to the island's political problems. Thus, in September 2008 negotiations began once again, with rekindled hope, given the declared positions of the leaders of the two communities. The international community is supporting the ongoing peace process, with many believing that the people of Cyprus and their leaders must be in charge of the process for it to have any chance of success.

Young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, aged 15 to 24 years old, represent approximately 15.5% of the total population. Thus, if the solution is to come from the Cypriot people, it is essential that young Cypriots – who make up slightly less than one sixth of the population – are actively involved throughout the process. This is all the more important given that today's young Cypriots face the challenge of living out a potential solution and will, inevitably, have to deal with the impacts and repercussions of any solution in the future. The engagement of Cypriot youth in the peace process is necessary during both the pre-settlement and, hopefully, a post-settlement period. As the future leaders, educators and healers of tomorrow, Cypriot youth must be afforded the opportunity and the required support and encouragement to become a driving force in building bridges in order to bring the two communities closer together. Cypriot society as a whole must recognise the value of their youth and the important contribution that they can make as peace builders and agents of change.

Young Cypriots, like youth the world over, possess certain characteristics that enable them to be effective peace builders. Young people are more open to change and, rather than remaining rooted in the past, are future-oriented. Their relative inexperience and, the naiveté that invariably accompanies the period of youth, often translate into greater idealism, innovativeness and courage. Various analysts have suggested that this sense of experimentation and acceptance of change/innovation may be the missing catalyst to finding a solution – which itself may require a considerable 'leap of faith' on the part of the Cypriot people – assuming that a future proposed agreement is based on a bicommunal compromise, respect of human rights and of democratic principles.[249] Given this, young Cypriots, by virtue of their 'youth' may be the ones to take this leap.

Young Cypriots, more than anyone else, are knowledgeable about the realities faced by their peers. As the $YAS_1$ highlighted, Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth, although having grown up separated and segregated from one another, share many of the same aspirations, hopes and fears concerning their future, as well as that of their island. For all the above reasons, practitioners and policy makers, educators and leaders must turn their attention to their youth in order to harness their potential and ability to create and promote a culture of tolerance and peace in Cyprus. The benefits of which might make all the difference in finding a *viable,* and *lasting,* solution to the Cyprus Problem.

## Supporting Greater Engagement of Cypriot Youth in the Future of their Country

The current peace process calls for the Cypriot people to actively participate in an informed, public dialogue on the peace process. Cypriot youth, as key stakeholders in the peace process, obviously must be engaged in such a discourse. To do so, various measures may be necessary in order to motivate young Cypriots from both communities to actively participate in the peace process; these may be implemented through the educational systems, after-school initiatives and new media communications (including radio and television programmes as well as websites designed for Cypriot youth). The significance

of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots sharing an educational space on a daily basis should not be overlooked or downplayed. Educational institutions and educators play an extremely important role by providing young Cypriots with a safe place, which encourages academic and social interaction and, above all, personal growth and development. Universities, in particular, serve as places where "new politics, new norms and new attitudes are shaped", thus "a higher education system which is at peace with the other community is an important precursor to a society and political system that is at peace with the other community". [250]

It is imperative that schools, colleges and universities continue to play a positive role in reunification by promoting principles of multiculturalism and tolerance. This will become even more important in a post-settlement period.

Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth participating in *YAS₁* and the follow-up survey shared their thoughts and ideas as to the role that young Cypriots can play in bringing peace to their island. The societal division experienced throughout their lives has only served to perpetuate negative myths and stereotypes that have been cultivated over the years by the educational system, the mass media and the politicians.

Youth from both communities were in favour of joint activities that brought youth from each community closer together. Bi-communal events and initiatives allow young people to break down existing barriers – real or imagined – between them and begin to develop lasting relationships based on existing similarities and a common future. Sports, music and the environment all serve as areas where young Cypriots can come together for.

Before Cypriot youth can begin to play an active role as active citizens, they need to feel empowered to do so. This falls under the responsibility of parents, educators and leaders; to facilitate and provide youth with a safe, shared environment for communication, learning and growth. As regards the future of the island, the priority must be to promote *sustained interactions* and *relationships* among Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth.

As more and more Cypriot youth begin communicating with one another, and in turn, trusting and learning from one another, the barriers which have kept them apart for most of their lives will slowly begin to fade. As this takes place, Cypriot youth may become key connectors and educators, sharing their opinions and experiences with their social networks: parents and other family members, teachers and friends. Through sustained dialogue and interaction Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth will be able to overcome the barriers keeping them apart, and, together, may be able to start the arduous task of building a shared future based on tolerance and respect for different beliefs, cultures and lifestyles.

# A YOUTH CHARTER FOR CYPRUS

It is clear that the voice of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth should no longer go unheard, or worse, unwelcome. As this Report has highlighted, despite the conditions in which they have grown up with, young Cypriots across the island wish to play an active role in the reunification of their island.

The **Cyprus Youth Charter** is a product of the **Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project**, a bi-communal research study conducted by the University of Nicosia and the Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre (KADEM), among Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth, aged 15 to 24. The Charter was created with input from a team of 12 Greek-Cypriot and 12 Turkish-Cypriot youth, known as the **Youth Advisory Board** and is intended to make the voices of young Cypriots heard throughout the island.

It is hoped that this Charter will serve as a tool to further encourage and strengthen the role played by young Cypriots in the peace process and the future of their country.

## Cyprus Youth Charter

We, the young people from the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities, have jointly considered our lives, problems and concerns, and have come to agree on a number of suggestions, which we wish to propose to our compatriots, as vital for living a full and productive life on the island and for securing our common future.

**We, the youth of Cyprus:**

### Family

» want to build positive relationships with our parents and families through open dialogue and mutual trust

» would like to take part in our families' decisions, especially those concerning our own lives

» would like our parents to support our choices, nurture our development and respect our independence, by encouraging us to make our own decisions, and to freely develop our own views and ideas

### Education

» believe that every young adult should have access to higher education in accordance to the standards set by the EU, without regard to one's social or economic background

» wish to receive a quality, multi-dimensional education that will equip us with analytical and critical thinking skills, and promote creativity, innovativeness and discovery, turning Cyprus into a true 'society of knowledge'

» want to be provided with an education that will enable us to effectively compete in today's increasingly competitive, globalised world.

» desire to be part of an educational system which promotes continuous personal and professional development, investing in new curricula and new teaching/learning methods

» want to be involved in the decision-making and planning of our education – in establishing curricula and school activities, as well as to have input in what we learn in both our core and optional classes

» would like the educational system to reflect changes in society and to take a leading role in fostering the values of openness to difference, tolerance, cultural diversity and co-existence, and the resolution of problems through peaceful means

» may benefit from learning about multiple perspectives of Cypriot history, in the hope of developing a common understanding of the past and a shared concern for the future of the island

## Employment

» support the need for more job opportunities that are designed specifically for and directed towards young graduates and young employees

» believe in the principle of equal pay for equal work; employers should not discriminate against employees on the basis of gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, or disability

» demand to live in a country where meritocracy plays a defining role in our career progress, and where we are given the opportunity to pursue career paths based on the merit of our academic qualifications, capabilities and experiences

» are concerned about the state of the economy and financial matters and, as such, would like to be involved in the decision-making processes related to these

» feel that employers should recognise the value of young employees – namely, their hard work, creativity, innovativeness and commitment; this should be reflected fairly in young employees' remuneration

» believe that the public and private sectors should support young people's entrepreneurship

» encourage and value the pursuit of life-long learning, either through the provision of "on-the-job" or other training opportunities

## Leisure Activities and Health

» wish to see special efforts expended in the development of initiatives and programmes that appeal to our interests, while simultaneously providing us with useful and informative educational content

» require access to public spaces where we can safely meet, interact and socialise with our peers

» place our trust in parents, educators and health providers to make sure that the appropriate measures and actions are taken so that we can live a long and healthy life

» want to remain informed about the health services available to us, as well as benefit from easy access to these

» consider educators as vital in informing us about the harmful effects of smoking, heavy alcohol consumption, drug use and similar high-risk behaviour; consequently, educational/ awareness campaigns specifically targeting young Cypriots must be developed and disseminated across the island

» support gender relations/sex education, so as to practice safe sex in order to safeguard ourselves from sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies

» appreciate the work of community workers, counsellors and health workers and believe that more of these trained professionals should be made available to cater to young people's growing needs

## Independence and Freedom of Speech

» believe every member of society, including the youth, should be able to freely and confidently express their opinion, without fear of discrimination or physical violence

» want our voices to be heard, respected and valued by older members of society

» are capable of accepting responsibility for our actions and, as such, desire to take on greater independence in everything we do

» should be informed of matters which involve us in an objective, non-biased way and should be left to make our own decisions about these without being directed by our teachers and/or families, and without any imposition

» want to be provided with the tools that will aid us to become independent from our parents; these include access to free education, increased job opportunities and fair and realistic housing terms

## Socio-political Participation

» would like to be actively involved in civil society activities and initiatives which help bring positive changes to society

» feel we should be considered and accepted as substantial contributors to the public sphere and civil society of Cyprus; as such, we fully support mechanisms which would allow us to take part in political decisions at all levels

» consider that socio-political participation of the young should not be overtaken by political parties and not be used to recruit political party supporters

» need to be clearly represented or provided with platforms through which we can voice our collective concerns and ideas; this may be achieved through youth organisations that are not dominated by political parties and rigid ideologies, but rather function autonomously and are run by, and for, youth

» believe internship and/or volunteerism services or community services should be made available and accessible to all and should be further encouraged by the schools and parents

» recognise the need for alternative service to the army, for those who object to compulsory military service and prefer to offer social service

» feel that the educational curriculum should support the teaching of 'active citizenship', which implies concern with and active participation in common affairs

» support the development of Cypriot youth as concerned global citizens, aware of the issues affecting the world as a whole, and the EU and Cyprus in particular

## Peace and Reconciliation

» are strong believers in peace and in the peaceful resolution of conflicts

» abhor violence and wish to cultivate a culture of dialogue and peaceful co-existence

» wish to see foreign armies withdraw from Cyprus, and support the increased demilitarisation of the island

» support ridding ourselves from any form of prejudice which has penetrated into our lives and consciousness regarding the 'other', and wish to nurture the common bonds between us

» must be afforded the opportunity and the required support and encouragement to become a driving force in building bridges between members of the two communities

» believe a solution should be reached between, and by, those who are directly involved and impacted by the problem; we, therefore, strongly support a solution for the Cypriots, by the Cypriots, free from external intervention or impositions

» promote the use of modern technologies as reconciliation tools that would allow us to learn more about each other (such as Internet blogs, chat sites and social networks and online videos)

» recognise the positive role schools, universities, religious institutions and the media can play in the reconciliation/reunification process, by promoting principles of multiculturalism, tolerance and mutual respect

» encourage and value citizens' organisations, initiatives and events which bring the two communities together (including concerts, cultural festivals, youth camps and so on)

» support the promotion of a strong, common, over-arching Cypriot civic identity and recognise that the term 'Cypriot' refers to both Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots

» believe that we should learn from the past so as not to repeat the same mistakes in the future

» support the creation of an all-inclusive Cypriot society and youth that is 'united in diversity', accepting and respectful of other cultures and open to change

# ANNEX I:
# Quantitative And Qualitative Methodology

## Cyprus Youth Report

As part of the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project*, the University of Nicosia and the Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre (KADEM) conducted an island-wide study designed to examine the attitudes and perceptions of Cypriot youth. The primary goal of the study was to explore and understand the values and belief systems of young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, aged 15 to 24 years old. The research team sought to gather comparable data pertaining to young Cypriots from both communities, covering a wide range of topics, which are of interest in the present, but which would also support the examination of changing trends through future longitudinal studies.

In order to achieve the aims of the study, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized, resulting in the administration of a structured survey and a series of one-on-one in-depth interviews. The University of Nicosia and KADEM followed the same methodology and the implementation of each project stage was conducted in parallel. The results from the survey are presented throughout the Report, along with quotes and analysis based on the in-depth interviews. Additional resources utilized include, among others, data and information available from the public statistical services of Cyprus, academic journal articles, international and local reports, as well as newspaper articles.

## Youth Aspiration Survey Questionnaire

The *Youth Aspiration Survey (YAS$_1$)* was developed by the University of Nicosia and KADEM in cooperation with UNDP-ACT. A structured questionnaire consisting of 81 closed, structured questions was designed. The questionnaire allowed for the simultaneous collection of information relevant to both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth living across both sides of the divide. In addition to obtaining general information about the participants, the survey attempted to obtain information about the respondents' families; their views on education and work; their perceptions of the participation of youth in society; their attitude towards their country and the European Union; interaction with individuals from the other community; and observations concerning leisure time activities, religion and health.

## Survey Implementation and Methodology

The survey was translated into Greek and Turkish in order to be administered to young people from the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities respectively. The survey was pilot tested on 20 Greek-Cypriots and 20 Turkish-Cypriots, selected randomly, in Nicosia; testing was conducted by individuals closely involved in the preparation of the questionnaire. After analyzing the results of the piloting process, minor modifications were made to the questionnaire in order to give it is final form.

The survey was conducted by the University of Nicosia and KADEM through face-to-face inter-views with young Cypriots, between the ages of 15 and 24, using a proportionate stratified random sampling method. This sampling method entailed identifying individuals in the population according to a series of relevant criteria previously agreed upon; namely, place of residence (including both urban and rural areas), gender and age. Through proportionate sampling the number of participants selected from each stratum (i.e. gender, place of residence) was proportionately represented according to its size in the real population. Consequently, in the

south of Cyprus, the territory was divided into 5 districts, consisting of the towns of Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca, Famagusta and Paphos. Similarly, in the north, the territory was broken down into 5 districts, made up of the towns of Nicosia, Famagusta, Kyrenia, Morfou and Trikomo. Each town was subsequently divided into urban and rural areas that were split into smaller sub-areas, from which a number of suburbs and villages were chosen.

In order to ensure random sampling, suburbs and villages were selected randomly, as were the streets, which served as starting points for the interviewers. For example, in villages, the street selected as the starting point was directly opposite the belfry of the village church (in the south) and the minaret of the village mosque (in the north). The survey was administered to a total of 1,612 young Cypriots (801 Greek-Cypriots and 811 Turkish-Cypriots) between November 2007 and March 2008. This sample size ensured a statistical error of ± 3.45.

All respondents were assured of their anonymity and their details were kept confidential. The interviewers were instructed to acquire as many clear and complete answers from respondents as possible. As a quality-control measure, approximately half of the respondents (who had provided interviewers with their contact details) were contacted later to verify that they had been interviewed. Each variable in the questionnaire was assigned a unique code and all completed questionnaires were inputted into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), which was used for the statistical analysis of the data.

## In-depth Interviews

In addition to the survey, 60 in-depth interviews were conducted with 30 Greek-Cypriots and 30 Turkish-Cypriots, selected randomly, between the ages of 15 and 24. These interviews offered deeper insight into some of the important issues addressed in the survey. Particularly, the in-depth interviews allowed the research team to probe deeper into the attitudes and beliefs of young Cypriots, while simultaneously permitting respondents to elaborate on their thoughts and opinions. Additionally, various underlying concerns, conflicts and contradictions were brought to light.

The duration of the interviews ranged from 40 to 50 minutes. The interviews, conducted in Greek and Turkish, were digitally recorded and later fully transcribed.

## Follow-up Survey

Due to significant developments, that occurred shortly after the administering of the $YAS_1$, among which included the election of a new Greek-Cypriot government (late February), the opening of the historical Ledra Street checkpoint (early April) and a renewed effort towards finding a settlement to the long-standing political problem on the island, it was deemed necessary to conduct a follow-up survey.

The motives behind this were twofold: A follow-up survey $(YAS_2)$ was important in order to gauge whether or not these developments affected the initial results and, if this proved to be the case, to examine the impact of these changes. Thus, a follow-up survey was devised in July 2008 during which the University of Nicosia and KADEM conducted a telephone survey with 803 respondents of the initial survey; including 396 Greek-Cypriots and 407 Turkish-Cypriots.

Consisting of a mixture of closed and open-ended questions, the follow-up survey supplemented the data already collected through the $YAS_1$ and in-depth interviews. Additionally, respondents were presented with questions relating to the potential role played by young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots in the process of reconciliation of the island.

## Participatory Action Research and Interpretative Reproduction

An innovative feature of the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project* is the use of two modern research techniques: Participatory Action Research and Interpretive Reproduction. In recent years, Participatory Action Research (PAR) has emerged as a significant methodology for intervention, development and change within communities and groups. Utilized by several international development agencies, university programmes and local community organisations, the PAR approach focuses closely on research participants and their own views and evaluations, as opposed to traditional "extractive" research methods, in which experts visit a community, study their subjects and then take away their data to produce their analyses.

In essence, PAR involves all relevant parties actively examining the current reality, as experienced by the players, with the aim of instigating change and improvement where possible. PAR aims to actively co-research, together with those needing assistance, and is a genuinely democratic and non-coercive process, whereby the players that require help also determine the purpose and outcomes of their own inquiry.[251]

Similarly, Interpretative Reproduction is a research method focusing on *research with* youth as opposed to *research on* youth. The term interpretative captures the *innovative* and *creative* aspects of the youth's participation in society; (as opposed to being passive recipients of society's norms and values) it focuses on how youth create and participate in their own unique peer cultures. The term reproduction captures the idea that youth do not simply internalise society and culture; they are active contributors to *cultural production* and *change*.[252]

In the case of the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project*, the participants in question are Cypriot youth, aged 15 to 24, from both the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities. In order to successfully practice PAR and Interpretive Reproduction, and to actively involve Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth in all aspects of the project, including the survey design and the analysis of the findings, a *Youth Advisory Board (YAB)* was created. Through the members of the *YAB*, the power to initiate and to implement change was shared between the research subjects and the research experts.[253]

## The Youth Advisory Board

As a significant element of the *Cyprus Youth Dialogue Project*, the *YAB* consisted of 12 Greek-Cypriots and 12 Turkish-Cypriots, ranging from 15 to 24 years old. Playing a supportive role, the Youth Advisory Board assisted the research team in the development of the $YAS_1$ and, later, in the interpretation of its results.

The 24 individuals making up the *YAB* were selected through a two-phase selection process. Through a public announcement, young Cypriots from both communities were invited to participate in the project by completing a two-part application form available in English, Greek and Turkish. Applicants were short listed based on a predefined list of criteria; those short listed were called to attend a short interview conducted by two members of the research team. The research team attempted to bring together a balanced and representative group of young Cypriots that would lend their voice to the project. As a result, the final *YAB* consisted of approximately equal numbers of males and females, of varying ages, living in both rural and urban areas across the country (Nicosia, Limassol, Paphos, Kyrenia and Famagusta). Members of the *YAB* came from different social and educational backgrounds.

Furthermore, the *YAB* also included a young Greek-Cypriot carrying out his military service and an Armenian who represented one of the religious minorities on the island.

# Youth Advisory Board Workshops

The *Youth Advisory Board* convened for three, one-day workshops, which took place between July 2007 and October 2008. The workshops were held at the Ledra Palace Hotel in Nicosia. Located within the buffer zone, between the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot checkpoints, Ledra Palace has played a significant role in the modern history of Cyprus as it became host to negotiations between the two sides, and served the bicommunal movement through various social gatherings and initiatives. Since most Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots do not speak the language of the other community, the English language was used as the common medium of communication between the members of the *YAB* during the workshops; members of the research team were available throughout the workshops to assist with Greek and Turkish translation when required.

Held in July 2007, the first workshop kicked off with a series of ice-breaking activities, which provided the opportunity for members of the *YAB* to meet and become better acquainted with one another. This was followed by a group activity that called on the *YAB* members to identify key issues which they felt affected young people living in Cyprus today. Several matters of concern highlighted were common to both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth; among these were the military service, the environment, the rising drug problem, employment (or lack thereof) and frustrations related to family.

Next, the *YAB* was presented with a working draft of the $YAS_1$ questionnaire and small groups of 4 or 5 individuals were formed; each led by a member of the research team. Each group spent some time going through the questions making up one or two sections of the questionnaire, discussing the merits and demerits of the issues addressed. Facilitated by the research team, the groups were encouraged to express their thoughts and opinions regarding the choice of questions, as well as the phrasing of each question. They were also invited to suggest additional questions that could be incorporated into the questionnaire. The workshop concluded with a group discussion whereby each group presented the main points identified during their smaller discussions. The findings from this process were used to revise the questionnaire so as to include some of the insights and suggestions presented by the *YAB*. Subsequent drafts of the questionnaire were sent to the *YAB* via electronic mail for additional feedback before the questionnaire was finalised for pilot testing.

The second workshop took place in July 2008, with the *YAB* reconvening in order to analyse and interpret the findings of the $YAS_1$. The main results of the survey were presented in the form of a PowerPoint presentation that showcased the similarities and differences in the views, attitudes and beliefs of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth. Members of the *YAB* were encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions at any point during the presentation. The presentation was followed by a general discussion of the findings. The views and interpretations shared by the *YAB* were incorporated as a feature of this Report.

The third, and final, workshop took place in December 2008. Members of the *YAB* assembled together to assist the research team in the creation of the Cyprus Youth Charter. Prior to the workshop, members of the *YAB* were requested to send in their ideas and suggestions for the Charter, which were compiled to form a working draft of the Charter. To introduce the workshop, the *YAB* was given a short PowerPoint presentation, which summarised the main findings of the initial survey, $YAS_1$, as well as those of the follow-up survey, $YAS_2$. This was followed by a brainstorming activity with *YAB* members putting down further ideas for the Charter on small post-it notes. These notes were displayed on a board and the members spent time categorising the ideas, highlighting some, while discarding others. The final activity of the workshop involved going through the draft of the Charter, where each member was given the opportunity to comment on the content of the document. The *YAB*, together with the research

team, went through each point, editing the text where they saw fit.

After the workshop, the new draft of the Charter was revised by the research team, in order to ensure that the language and written-style of the text was correct and consistent throughout. The end result reflects the values, concerns and hopes of young people from the two larger communities of Cyprus, and it is meant to convey young people's views to other Cypriots and to the wider world.

# ANNEX II:
## Demographic Information on the *Youth Aspiration Survey (YAS₁) Sample*

| Gender | Greek-Cypriots (%) | Turkish-Cypriots (%) | Total Sample (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 44.8 | 51.7 | 48.3 |
| Female | 55.2 | 48.3 | 51.7 |

Distribution of the Sample by Gender

| Age | Greek-Cypriots (%) | Turkish-Cypriots (%) | Total Sample (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15-18 | 43.0 | 28.6 | 35.7 |
| 19-21 | 28.4 | 33.8 | 31.1 |
| 22-24 | 28.6 | 37.6 | 33.2 |

Distribution of the Sample by Age

| Marital Status | Greek-Cypriots (%) | Turkish-Cypriots (%) | Total Sample (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Single | 92.1 | 79.0 | 85.5 |
| Engaged | 3.9 | 9.6 | 6.8 |
| Married | 3.6 | 10.2 | 7.0 |
| Widowed | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Divorced | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Cohabiting with partner | 0.1 | 1.0 | 0.6 |
| Other | 0.1 | 0 | 0.1 |

Distribution of the Sample by Marital Status

| City/Town | Greek-Cypriots (%) |
|-----------|:---:|
| Nicosia | 41.6 |
| Limassol | 27.0 |
| Larnaca | 16.9 |
| Famagusta | 5.5 |
| Paphos | 9.0 |

| City/Town | Total Sample (%) |
|-----------|:---:|
| Nicosia | 37.1 |
| Famagusta | 24.8 |
| Kyrenia | 17.9 |
| Morfou | 11.2 |
| Trikomo | 9.0 |

Distribution of the Sample by Place of Residence

| Area | Greek-Cypriots (%) | Turkish-Cypriots (%) | Total Sample (%) |
|------|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| Urban | 65.9 | 46.0 | 55.5 |
| Rural | 34.1 | 54.0 | 44.5 |

Distribution of the Sample by Area of Residence

| Life Status | Greek-Cypriots (%) | Turkish-Cypriots (%) | Total Sample (%) |
|-------------|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| High School Student | 36.6 | 20.3 | 28.4 |
| Soldier | 5.4 | 1.1 | 3.3 |
| College/University Student | 33.8 | 47.3 | 40.6 |
| Employed | 21.3 | 21.5 | 21.4 |
| Unemployed/Seeking Employment | 2.1 | 6.8 | 4.5 |
| Housewife | 0.4 | 3.0 | 1.7 |
| Other | 0.4 | 0 | 0.2 |

Distribution of the Sample by Life Status

# NOTES ⟩⟩

The use of "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" or "TRNC" sources in this Report does not imply any sort of recognition of the "TRNC", "TRNC" institutions or agencies.

## OVERVIEW

[I] For the purpose of the present study, the UN Youth Programme definition of youth has been adopted, so that the terms "Cypriot youth" or "young Cypriots" refer to individuals between 15 to 24 years of age.

[II] Figures for the number of Turkish-Cypriot youth residing on the island differ according to the statistical source accessed: while Greek-Cypriot sources estimate that there are approximately 14,000 Turkish-Cypriot youth, Turkish-Cypriot sources indicate that this figure is closer to 27,000.

[III] A few months before the completion of this study, the left-wing government that had introduced these reforms lost the elections (2009), and the new nationalist party in power quickly did away with these changes.

## PREFACE

[1] Translated into Greek and Turkish, the survey instrument was pilot tested on Cypriot youth in both communities and minor amendments were made before arriving at the final version of the questionnaire.

[2] Corsaro 2005.

[3] Ibid.

[4] For a more detailed account of the methodology used and a description of the $YAS_1$ sample, see Annex I and Annex II, respectively.

## CHAPTER ONE

[5] It should be noted that a certain degree of ambiguity exists as regards the Human Development Index (HDI) for Cyprus – specifically, whether or not the HDI refers to the areas under the control of the Republic of Cyprus and those that are not. Further examination showed that the statistics and indicators used to calculate the HDI for Cyprus did not indicate whether or not they referred to the entire island or not. It is most likely that the indicators used to measure the HDI refer only to the area under the control of the Republic of Cyprus. Therefore, the HDI for Cyprus may not accurately depict the HDI for the entire island.

[6] Human Development Report 2007/2008, Country Fact Sheets: Cyprus.

[7] See Human Development Report Website.

[8] The duration of military service is one year for Turkish-Cypriots and two years for Greek-Cypriots.

[9] Gillis 1981.

[10] Koulaidis and Dimopoulos 2006.

[11] "Youth and Conflict: A Toolkit for Intervention".

[12] UNDP Kosovo 2006.

[13] "Youth Policy in Cyprus", p. 18.

[14] Bourdieu 1993, p. 94.

[15] Ibid., p. 94.

[16] Coles 1995. This is in accordance with Friedman's (1977) definition of youth as a group of people who have reached the end of puberty but have not yet acquired the full rights and obligations of adults. Among these rights and obligations is marriage, entering the workforce and starting a family.

[17] Furlong and Cartmel 1997, p. 7.

[18] Ibid., p. 7.

[19] Koulaides and Dimopoulos 2006.

[20] The exact number of Turkish-Cypriots in recent years has been a matter of intense dispute (see endnote 22 below). While the Cyprus Statistical Service estimates that the number of Turkish-Cypriots is around 89,000, according to Turkish-Cypriot sources there are 126,000 Turkish-Cypriots in the northern part of the island [Census 2006].

[21] Statistical Service (2007) 'Demographic Report'. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, established in 1960, these minority communities had to choose to side with either of the two larger communities (Greek-Cypriot or Turkish-Cypriot); all opted to align themselves with the Greek-Cypriot community.

[22] According to Faiz (2008), estimates of the number of settlers from Turkey vary considerably and range from 70,000 to 172,000.

23  Statistical Service (2007) 'Demographic Report'.

24  Trimiklintiotis and Demetriou 2005.

25  Census 2006.

26  The events of 1974 are viewed differently by the two communities: Greek-Cypriots view this as an "invasion" by Turkey, while Turkish-Cypriots regard this as a "peace operation".

27  The Treaty was set up by the Zurich-London Agreements and signed in 1960, along with the Constitution. It named Britain, Greece and Turkey as guarantor powers of the Republic, extending them the right to take action if necessary to re-establish 'the state of affairs' created by the Treaty.

28  The "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", or "TRNC", is not recognised by the United Nations or UN member states (except Turkey) and as a result it is accepted practice that any reference to this be placed in quotation marks.

29  Several longitudinal studies focusing on young Greek-Cypriots have been conducted by the Research and Development Centre – Intercollege, on behalf of the Youth Organisation of Cyprus. These include 'Leisure Activities and Social Attitudes of Cypriot Youth' (1996), 'Changing Youth Attitudes in Cyprus' (2002) and, most recently, the 'Study of Leisure Time, Employment, Relationships, Perceptions and Problems of Cypriot Youth' (2007).

30  Statistical Service (2007) 'Demographic Report'. Unless otherwise stated, the statistics cited in this Report refer to the government controlled areas of the Republic of Cyprus. Where possible information relating to the north is also included.

31  Statistical Year Book 2006.

32  Statistical Service (2007) 'Demographic Report'.

33  Economic and Social Indicators 2006.

34  Figures for the number of Turkish-Cypriot youth, aged 15 to 24, vary according to the source accessed [Statistical Service (2007) 'Demographic Report', from the Greek-Cypriot community and the Census, 2006, from the Turkish-Cypriot community].

35  Statistical Service (2007) 'Demographic Report'.

36  Hamilton et al 2004, p. 1.

37  Cargo et al 2003, p.S66.

38  Ibid., p. S77

39  Finn and Checkoway 1998, p. 335.

## CHAPTER TWO

40  Attalides 1981.

41  Markides et al 1978; Peristiany 1965.

42  Yeshilada 1989.

43  Ibid.

44  Loizos 1975.

45  Argyrou 1996.

46  For additional information about the modern Greek-Cypriot family, see Peristianis et al 2004b.

47  For additional discussion on the practice of 'dowry' see 'Leisure Activities and Social Attitudes of Cypriot Youth' (1996), 'Changing Youth Attitudes in Cyprus' (2002) and the 'Study of Leisure Time, Employment, Relationships, Perceptions and Problems of Cypriot Youth' (2007), a series of longitudinal studies focusing on Greek-Cypriot youth, conducted by the Research and Development Centre – Intercollege, on behalf of the Youth Organisation of Cyprus.

48  Statistical Service (2007) 'Demographic Report'.

49  Figures for the year 2005, "Statistical Year Book 2006".

50  Figures for the year 2006, "Statistical Year Book 2006".

51  Statistical Service (2007) 'Demographic Report'.

52  Figures for the year 2005, "Statistical Year Book 2006".

53  Argyrou 1996.

54  In the event of failed marriage or the loss of employment, many Cypriots (especially women) have the option to, and often do, return to stay with their parents/family until they remarry or find another job.

55  Peristianis and Kokkinou 2008.

56  Bourdieu 1977.

57  See studies cited in endnote 47.

58  'Study of Leisure Time, Employment, Relationships, Perceptions and Problems of Cypriot Youth' 2007.

## CHAPTER THREE

59  'Youth Policy in Cyprus' 2007.

60  Ibid.

61  Furlong and Cartmel 1997, p. 11.

62  Lucey 1996.

63  According to the 2008 Human Development Index (HDI) for Cyprus, the adult literacy rate, for individuals who are 15 years old and over, is 97.7% and the gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education is 77.6%.

64  Among respondents of the $YAS_1$, carried out as part of the present study, 47% of Greek-Cypriots and 41% of Turkish-Cypriots were attending or had completed their secondary education; 44% of Greek-Cypriots and 47% of Turkish-Cypriots were either working towards completing or had completed their tertiary education at the undergraduate level; a further 4% of Greek-Cypriots and 3% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents were pursuing or had completed their post graduate education.

65  Statistical Service (2006) 'Statistics of Education 2005/2006'.

66  "Economic and Social Indicators 2006".

67  Approximately 86% of Greek-Cypriots attend public schools while the remaining 14% study at private schools; similarly, 91% of Turkish-Cypriots study at public schools with the remaining 9% attend private schools. Statistical Service (2006) 'Statistics of Education 2005/2006'.

68  Statistical Service (2006) 'Statistics of Education 2005/2006'.

69  Statistics 2007.

70  Approximately one third of the Greek-Cypriot youth sampled was studying, or had completed their studies abroad (34%). In accordance with local trends, Greece was the most popular choice among respondents who chose to pursue their education abroad (25%), followed by Great Britain (7%). A vast majority of Turkish-Cypriot youth (97%) surveyed were either studying, or had completed their studies in Cyprus. Only 3% of respondents had travelled abroad for their education, the majority of which (88%) travelled to Turkey. The average number of Turkish-Cypriot youth who travel abroad is higher than this. Given that the $YAS_1$ was conducted from November 2007 until March 2008, Turkish-Cypriots who were studying abroad were not available to take part in the survey.

71   Prior to receiving university status, the institutions operated under the respective names of Intercollege (est. in 1980), Frederick Institute of Technology (est. in 1965), and Cyprus College (est. in 1961).

72  These are: Girne American University (est. in 1985), Near East University (est. in 1988), and Cyprus International University (est. in 1997). The Ataturk Teacher College, which specialises in the training of teachers, was established in 1937 and continues to operate today.

73  Statistics 2007.

74  Inglehart 1997.

75  Turtiainen et al 2007, p. 490.

76  Generally, there is one school counsellor in each secondary school in the south and north that are available to offer students advice regarding their future academic and professional prospects.

77  Papadakis 2008a.

78  Ibid.

79  Vural 2008. In 2009, the nationalists regained power in the north and reintroduced the older curricula.

80  Evripidou 2008.

81  Papadakis 2008a.

82  Barton and Levstik 2004.

83  "EU Enlargement: No love lost", The Economist, 29 May 2008.

84  Statistical Service (2006) 'Statistics of Education 2005/2006'.

85  Schneider 2000.

86  Print 2007, p. 330.

87  Hart 1992, p. 37.

## CHAPTER FOUR

88  Canny 2002.

89  Statistical Service (2008) 'Labour Force Survey 2007'.

90  Ibid.

91  Attalides 1979.

92  Scott 2005.

93  "Economic and Social Indicators 2006".

94  Statistical Year Book (2006)

95  Statistical Year Book (2007)

96  Statistical Service (2006) 'The Statistical Portrait of Women in Cyprus'.

97  The private sector at large does not adhere to this law.

98  Statistical Service (2006) 'The Statistical Portrait of Women in Cyprus'.

99  See Billig 1996.

100  Isengard 2003.

101  This has been changing in the last decades though – as a result of greater youth unemployment, there has been an increase in the number of young people who continue to live with their parents due to financial reasons.

102  France 1998.

## CHAPTER FIVE

103  Abrams 1961.

104  Miles 1995.

105  Kellner 1992.

106  Pappasavva 1991.

107  Ibid.

108  Matthews 2001b.

109  France 1998.

110  Laursen 2005.

111  KADEM – Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre 2007a.

112  Statistical Services (2007) 'Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Usage Survey in Households and by Individuals'.

113  KADEM – Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre 2008.

114  Initially launched in 2004 as a social network for college and university students, today Facebook attracts users from all around the world and in May 2008 registered 123.9 million unique visitors. McCarthy 2008.

115  Mandel and Qazilbash 2005.

116  'Youth Policy in Cyprus' 2007.

117  Saoulli 2008.

118  Interestingly, Greeks are the highest consumers of tobacco with 42% of those surveyed indicating that they currently smoke! See European Commission 2007b.

119  Kyrou 2008.

120  Christophi et al 2008.

121  Ibid.

122  Ibid.

123  Cyprus Barometer 2007. In May 2003, the member countries of WHO adopted a tobacco control treaty, the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) that reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standard of health. Cyprus signed the WHO FCTC agreement on 24 May, 2004 and ratified its consent to the treaty on October 26, 2005 [available at http://www.who.int/fctc/signatories_parties/en/index.html].

124  Bjarnason et al 2003.

125  European Commission 2007a.

126  'SKIAGRAFISI' 2008.

127  Ibid.

128  European Commission 2008.

129  Bahceli 2007.

130  Statistical Service (2007) 'Transport Statistics 2007'.

131  Theodoulou 2008.

132 'Road Safety' 2003.

133 Theodoulou 2008.

134 KADEM – Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre 2007b.

135 Savva et al 2002 and 2008.

136 KADEM – Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre 2007c.

137 In his highly influential book, *Ways of Seeing* (1972), John Berger proposes that women continue to be judged by society based on how men view them: men *gaze* and women are gazed at by men. Decades later, the images of women portrayed in media advertisements continue to promote an image based on patriarchal, male-dominated views of the world.

138 Hadjigeorgiou et al 2004.

139 'Youth Policy in Cyprus' 2007.

140 Francoeur and Noonan (eds.) 2001.

141 Georgiou and Veresies 1990 and 1991.

142 In the Greek-Cypriot community, the most vocal opponent of the introduction of sexual education in schools has been the Orthodox Church.

143 This percentage is much lower than those witnessed in Spain (23%), the UK (43%) and Sweden (56%) [Eurostat, 2003]. Figures for Cyprus provided by the Statistical Service. (2007). 'Demographic Report'.

144 Cyprus Youth Board 2005a, p. 164.

145 These drugs are said to be purchased through the Internet, from the north or through private doctors. See Saoulli 2009.

146 Peristiany 1965.

147 Philaretou et al (2006) explain that the concept of a single homosexual identity or a separate homosexual community is fairly new among the Greek-Cypriot community. According to the authors, there is a marked distinction made when it comes to the type of homosexual behaviour that men, in particular, engage in. The passive homosexual is viewed by society as being "not only immoral but mentally deficient as well" (p. 12), while the 'active' homosexual man, who adopts the "male" role, is not seen in such a negative light – as the latter is seen as preserving his status, power and masculinity.

148 Ministry of Health, Republic of Cyprus, National AIDS Programme.

149 European Commission 2006.

150 It is possible that this difference may be a result of young Turkish-Cypriots not being knowledgeable about the two health conditions.

151 Cyprus Environmental Stakeholder Forum and AKTI Project and Research Centre (2008).

152 While 45% of 18-29 year old Greek-Cypriots had heard of the term 'sustainable development', this percentage dropped to 37% for those aged 50 or over. On the other hand, 21% of Turkish-Cypriots aged 50 or over knew of the term compared to 17% of those aged 18 to 29.

153 European Social Survey 2006.

154 Cyprus Youth Board 2005b.

**CHAPTER SIX**

155 Furlong and Cartmel, 1997.

156 Roberts and Parsell 1990, quoted in Furlong and Cartmel 1997.

157 Bhaynani 1991.

158 Park 1996.

159 Carle and Hammer 2003.

160 Carle 2000.

161 CIVICUS 2005.

162 Affluence may influence political awareness and participation in several ways: a) more wealth may mean more available time to devote outside work; b) more skills linked to education (and class background) result in greater 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu); c) the less affluent tend to spend more time with kin, friends and associates. They also tend to face an even greater problem with lack of funding for NGOs and hence are usually more involved with political parties/trade unions.

163 CIVICUS 2005.

164 These findings coincide with an earlier study of British youth who indicated that they had neither the time, nor the inclination to participate in socio-political actions. See Ellis 2004.

165  Print 2007.

166  Data from the European Social Survey refer to Greek-Cypriot youth only as Turkish-Cypriot youth were not included in the survey sample.

167  Yet in times of crisis, such distant, yet collective concerns may acquire immense importance, and lead to massive, heated reactions.

168  In fact, not one of the Greek-Cypriot respondents, and only a very small number of Turkish-Cypriots (3.1%), indicated that they trusted politicians "very much".

169  To illustrate, in the 'Study of Leisure Time, Employment, Relationships, Perceptions and Problems of Cypriot Youth' (2007), a minute 7% of young Greek-Cypriot males stated that they usually performed household chores themselves (compared to 93% of Greek-Cypriot females who undertook household chores themselves) indicating that little or no work was expected of young boys.

170  Finn and Checkoway 1998.

171  Hancock 1994, p. 142.

172  Hart 1992.

173  Ibid., p. 5.

174  Print 2007.

175  Finn and Checkoway 1998.

176  France 1998.

177  Ibid., pp. 108-110.

178  Hart 1992.

179  Ibid.

180  Matthews 2001a.

181  Cervone and Cushman 2002.

182  O'Donaghue et al 2002.

183  Ibid.

184  Marshall 1950, p. 25, quoted in Smith et al 2005.

185  Print 2007.

### CHAPTER SEVEN

186  Wallace and Kovatcheva 1998.

187  Peristianis 2000.

188  Most Cypriots tend to associate the Middle East region with backwardness and underdevelopment, and hold certain prejudices about the people of the region, perceived to be uncivilised and ruled by traditions and passions. On the other hand, western societies are perceived to be developed, progressive, civilized and modern ruled by reason and science. For more on western prejudices towards the Middle East, see Said 1978.

189  Greek-Cypriots tend to consider themselves as belonging to the West – since they see their roots as traceable to the ancient Greek civilisation, the cradle of the West; but they view Turkish-Cypriots to be associated with the East, due to their relation to the Turks, descendants of primitive Asiatic tribes. It is perhaps in reaction to such a perceived association that Turkish-Cypriots more strongly deny any identity with the Middle East: a smaller percentage of Turkish-Cypriots, compared to Greek-Cypriots, selected the Middle East as their first preference for what most characterises Cypriots.

190  More specifically, 14% of Turkish-Cypriots identify themselves as solely 'Turkish' and 4% of Greek-Cypriots as 'Greek'. It should be noted, however, that part of the reason accounting for the larger Turkish-Cypriot proportion must relate to the fact that a number of respondents' parents were born in Turkey.

191  The distinction between 'civic' and 'ethnic' identities is very much accepted and widespread in the social sciences. Anthony Smith defines ethnic identity as one which forms when an ethnic group or community share certain characteristics such as a common name, a myth of common ancestry, shared memories, a common culture and a link with a historic territory or homeland (that it may or may not currently occupy). Civic identity focuses on a historic territory where a people have lived together (and which thus acts as a repository of historic memories) in a shared community, resting on the legal-political equality of its members, and a common civic culture and ideology (Smith 1991). See also Smith 1994 [1986].

192  The total population consists approximately of 76% Greek-Cypriots and 14% Turkish-Cypriots.

193  Peristianis 2000.

194  For an account of such a denial of connection to one's "mother country" and/ or national identity, see Peristianis 2006a.

195  European Commission 2007c.

[196] European Commission 2007d.

[197] It is interesting to note that fewer than 18% of Greek-Cypriots and 29.2% of Turkish-Cypriots either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they knew "enough about how the EU works"; 35.3% and 34.9%, respectively, "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" that this was the case. Similarly, 34.8% of Greek-Cypriots and 32.3% of Turkish-Cypriots "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed" that sufficient information about the EU was provided by television, radio and the printed press.

[198] Peristianis and Charalambous 2003.

[199] Furnivall 1948, pp. 304-308.

[200] Young Cypriots who wish to spend time with members from the other community must pass (by car or on foot) through Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriot checkpoints controlled by the authorities of each community, showing their identification cards or passports. Given the time of day, individuals may have to spend considerable time waiting in queue. The situation is worse for individuals who do not reside in Nicosia, as they have to travel many kilometres to the capital, in order to be able to cross the Green Line into the northern or southern parts of the island. For example, a young Greek-Cypriot from Paphos who wishes to visit a Turkish-Cypriot friend in Kyrenia would have to drive for approximately two hours to Nicosia, pass through the checkpoints and drive a further 30 minutes before reaching Kyrenia.

[201] Ellis 2004.

[202] Radhakrishnan 2009.

[203] Laursen 2005, p. 138.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

[204] A follow-up survey ($YAS_2$) was conducted in July 2008 as a result of certain development that occurred after the administering of the initial survey ($YAS_1$).

[205] Although those directly displaced were less than 49-50%, many others lost land they may have owned, second homes, inheritance property, and so on.

[206] As a result of the violence generated during the inter-communal fighting and in the tragic events of 1974, a total of 502 Turkish-Cypriots and 1493 Greek-Cypriots were officially reported as missing by both communities to the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus (CMP). The CMP was established in April 1981, by agreement between the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities, under the auspices of the United Nations. The mandate of the Committee is to establish the fate of missing persons. To date, the remains of 530 individuals have been exhumed from different burial sites located across the island; the remains of 150 individuals have been identified and returned to their families. See Committee for Missing Persons Fact Sheet 2009.

[207] Specifically, while 24% of respondents living in Paphos indicated that the division of the island had had a negative socio-political impact on their lives, this figure was considerably higher among those residing in Nicosia (61%).

[208] Partition was seen by Greek-Cypriots to be the long-time aim of Turkish-Cypriots (in reaction to the Greek-Cypriots' aim of *Enosis*/union with Greece and, subsequently, of a unitary state with minority rights for Turkish-Cypriots). Whereas Turkish-Cypriots, as the minority population, weary of the dominance of Greek-Cypriots (implied in the Greek-Cypriot aim of union or unitary state), feel that separation is vital to their integrity and safety.

[209] See Elazar 1987.

[210] For the distinction between majoritarian and consociational democracy, see Lijphart 1977. For the distinction between corporate and liberal models of consociational democracy, see O'Malley and Craig 2002.

[211] For the non-application of ethnic principles in the American model of federation see Elazar 1987. For the Belgian model's difficulties see Deprez and Vos 1998.

[212] On the "spirit" of federation see Franck 1968 and Elazar 1987.

[213] UNDP-ACT 2008a.

[214] Quotes which appear in this format originate from a UNDP-ACT 2008a report on youth in the two communities, thereby accounting for the difference in style. This report is based on a series of focus group discussions conducted with Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth separately in July 2008. The results of the report are utilised in this Chapter as well as the following one.

[215] Presently there are approximately 38,000-40,000 Turkish armed forces and approximately 4,000-5,000 Turkish-Cypriot armed forces in the north.

[216] On the other hand, slightly more than 61% of Turkish-Cypriot respondents (compared to 26% of Greek-Cypriots) did not feel that the new Greek-Cypriot government had increased efforts towards finding a solution; 46% of Greek-Cypriots (compared to 12% of Turkish-Cypriots) indicated that they were "not sure" or "did not know" whether or not efforts towards reconciliation had been stepped up.

[217] Demetriou 2007.

[218] A bi-communal study on the "Level of Trust between the Two Communities in Cyprus", conducted in September 2008, found that only 17% of Greek-Cypriots and 30% of Turkish-Cypriots above the age of 18 had crossed the Ledra Street crossing since its opening in April. Thus it appears as though the Ledra Street crossing is more attractive to younger Cypriots such as those surveyed in $YAS_2$. Various factors may account for the higher percentage of youth crossing from the Ledra Street check point, such as the fact that they can cross on foot, and that the young tend to be more prone to exploring new territories, especially if the latter are commercial ones. See UNDP-ACT 2008b.

219 In *YAS*$_1$, 9% of Turkish-Cypriot youth indicated that a federal solution represented the best solution to the Cyprus Problem. This figure fell to 4% in the follow-up survey (*YAS*$_2$).

220 Kaymak et al 2009.

## CHAPTER NINE

221 UN Social Development Division 1998.

222 Del Felice and Wisler 2007.

223 McEvoy-Levy 2001.

224 Del Felice and Wisler 2007.

225 Galtung et al 2000.

226 Figure 8.1 in Chapter 8 depicts the incompatibilities of political goals in Cyprus.

227 Galtung et al 2000.

228 Del Felice and Wisler 2007.

229 Ibid.

230 McEvoy-Levy 2001.

231 Del Felice and Wisler 2007.

232 McEvoy-Levy 2001.

233 Ibid.

234 See Papadakis; see also Kyrris (1977) and Attalides (1979).

235 A striking 74% of young Greek-Cypriots and 47% of Turkish-Cypriots responding to the *YAS*$_1$ either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that "information on the Cyprus Problem is manipulated by politicians for their own interest".

236 Billig 1996.

237 This, however, does not mean that they share the Greek-Cypriot aim of wanting to re-integrate Cyprus, much as it was before 1974. Rather, most Turkish-Cypriots want the two communities to remain separate, in two distinct territorial zones, while managing to be good neighbours, living peacefully side by side.

238 UNDP-ACT 2007.

239 Ibid.

240 UNDP-ACT 2008a.

241 France 1998, p. 109.

242 Ibid., p. 110.

243 Hart 1992, p. 35.

244 Stoneman 2002, p. 222.

## CHAPTER TEN

245 See Fromm 2001.

246 A good marriage, successful career and high social standing are also important to Cypriot parents' self esteem.

247 These figures have increased with the recent economic crises.

248 Nearly two thirds of Greek-Cypriot youth (65%) and 36% of Turkish-Cypriot youth surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that "the division of the island makes it impossible for everybody to exercise his/her human rights"; more than two thirds of Turkish-Cypriots (43%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (compared to 28% of Greek-Cypriots).

249 Peristianis et al. 2004.

250 Kaymak et al 2009, p. 60.

## ANNEX I

251 Wadsworth 1998.

252 Corsaro 2005.

253 Pratt and Loizos 1992.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrams, M. (1961). The Teenage Consumer. London: London Press Exchange.

Argyrou, V. (1996). Tradition and Modernity in the Mediterranean. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Attalides, M. A. (1979). Cyprus: Nationalism and International Politics. Edinburgh: Q Press.

Attalides, M. A. (1981). Social Change and Urbanization in Cyprus: A Study of Nicosia. Nicosia, Cyprus: Social Research Centre.

Bahceli, S. (2007). "North comes to terms with growing drug problem". Cyprus Mail, 5 August [archive article available at: http://www.cyprus-mail.com/news/].

Barton, K. & Levstik, L. (2004). Teaching History for the Common Good. New Jersey: Routledge.

Berger, J. (1972). Ways of Seeing. UK: Penguin.

Bhavnani, K. (1991). Talking Politics: A Psychological Framing for Views from Youth in Britain. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Billig, M. (1996). Arguing and Thinking. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bjarnason, T. et al. (2003). 'Alcohol Culture, Family Structure and Adolescent Alcohol Use: Multilevel Modelling on Frequency of Heavy Drinking among 15-16 Year Old Students in 11 European Countries', Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 64 (2), pp. 200-208.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1993). Sociology in Question. London: Sage.

Canny, A. (2002). 'Flexible Labour? The Growth of Student Employment in the UK', Journal of Education and Work, 15 (3), pp. 277-301.

Cargo, M. et al. (2003). 'Empowerment as Fostering Positive Youth Development and Citizenship', American Journal of Health Behaviour, 27 (1), pp. S66-S79.

Carle, J. (2000). 'Political Activity in the Context of Youth Unemployment. Experiences from Young People in Six Northern European Countries', YOUNG. Nordic Journal of Youth Research, 8 (4), pp. 16-39.

Carle, J. & Hammer, T. (2003). 'Method and Research Design', in T. Hammer (ed) Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion in Europe, Bristol: The Policy Press, pp. 193-205.

Census (2006). State Planning Organisation, "TRNC".

Cervone, B. & Cushman, K. (2002). 'Moving Youth Participation into the Classroom: Students as Allies', New Directions for Youth Development, (96), pp. 83-100.

'Changing Youth Attitudes in Cyprus' (in Greek). (2002). Research study conducted by the Research and Development Centre – Intercollege, on behalf of the Youth Organisation of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Christophi, C. A. et al. (2008). 'Prevalence and Social Environment of Cigarette Smoking in Cypriot Youth', BMC Public Health, 2 (8), pp. 190.

CIVICUS: Civil Society Index Report for Cyprus (2005). 'An Assessment of Civil Society in Cyprus: A Map for the Future', an international action-research project coordinated by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, conducted by the Management Centre of the Mediterranean in collaboration with Intercollege.

Coles, B. (1995). Youth and Social Policy. London: University College London.

Committee for Missing Persons (CMP) Fact Sheet (April 2009) [available at: http://www.cmp-cyprus.org/media/attachments/CMP/CMP%20docs/CMP%20Fact%20Sheets/CMP_Fact_Sheet__Apr09.pdf].

Corsaro, W. A. (2005). The Sociology of Childhood. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge.

Cyprus Barometer (2007). Marfin Laiki Bank, Survey conducted by RAI Consultants Public Ltd. [available at: https://www.laiki.com/web/w3sr.nsf/Lookup/CYBarometer07.pdf/$file/CYBarometer07.pdf].

Cyprus Environmental Stakeholder Forum and AKTI Project and Research Centre (2008). 'Perceptions on Sustainable Development and Climate Change in Cyprus', quantitative survey conducted by RAI Consultants Public Ltd. In cooperation with UNDP-ACT, December 2008, Cyprus.

Cyprus Youth Board. (2005a). Review of the Cyprus Youth Policy: Cyprus National Report.

Cyprus Youth Board. (2005b). Review of the Cyprus Youth Policy: Cyprus National Report. Supplement A: Programs of Ministries and Semi-governmental Organisations Related to Youth.

Del Felice, C. & Wisler, A. 'The Unexplored Power and Potential of Youth as Peace-builders', Journal of Peace Conflict & Development, 11, November 2007.

Demetriou, O. (2007). 'Freedom Square: The Unspoken Re-Unification of a Divided City', Hagar: Studies in Culture, Polity and Identities, 7 (1), pp. 55-77.

Deprez, K. & Vos, L. (eds.). (1998). Nationalism in Belgium: Shifting Identities, 1780-1995. London-New York: Macmillan / St. Martin's Press.

Economic and Social Indicators (2006), State Planning Organisation, "TRNC".

Elazar, D. (1987). Exploring Federalism. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Ellis, S. J. (2004). 'Young People and Political Action: Who is Taking Responsibility for Positive Social Change?', Journal of Youth Studies, 7 (1), pp. 89-102.

European Commission. (2006). 'AIDS Prevention', Special Eurobarometer Survey, 240, February 2006 [available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_publication/eb_aids_en.pdf].

European Commission (2007a). 'Attitudes towards Alcohol', Special Eurobarometer Survey, 272b, March 2007 [available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/alcohol/documents/ebs272_en.pdf].

European Commission. (2007b). 'Attitudes of Europeans towards Tobacco', Special Eurobarometer 272c, May 2007 [available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/Documents/ebs272c_en.pdf].

European Commission (2007c). 'Public Opinion in the European Union', National Report, Executive Summary, Cyprus (Areas under the control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus), Standard Eurobarometer 68, Autumn 2007 [available at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb68/eb68_cy_exec.pdf].

European Commission (2007d). 'Public Opinion in the European Union', National Report, Executive Summary, Cyprus Turkish-Cypriot Community, Standard Eurobarometer 68, Autumn 2007 [available at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb68/eb68_cytcc_exec.pdf].

European Commission. (2008). 'Young People and Drugs among 15-24 year olds: Analytical Report', Flash Eurobarometer, No. 233, May 2008 [available at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_233_en.pdf].

'EU Enlargement: No love lost', The Economist, 29 May 2008 [available at: http://www.economist.com/specialreports/displaystory.cfm?story_id=11436638].

European Social Survey (2006), ESS Data, Round 3 [available at: http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/].

Evripidou, S. (2008). 'Fighting Inertia in Our Schools', Cyprus Mail, 6 July [archive article available at: http://www.cyprus-mail.com/news/].

Faiz, M. (2008). 'Demographic Changes in the North', presentation given on 5 November 2008 within the framework of the Citizens' Free University, University of Nicosia, Cyprus.

Felice, C. D. & Wisler, A. (2007). 'The Unexplored Power and Potential of Youth as Peacebuilders', Journal of Peace Conflict & Development, (11), pp. 1-29.

Finn, J. L. & Checkoway, B. (1998). 'Young People as Competent Community Builders: A Challenge to Social Work', Social Work, 43 (4), pp. 335-345.

France, A. (1998). ''Why should we care?': Young People, Citizenship and Questions of Social Responsibility', Journal of Youth Studies, 1 (1), pp. 97-111.

Francoeur, R. T. & Noonan, R. J. (eds.). (2001). The International Encyclopedia of Sexuality. IV, New York, USA: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Franck, T.  (ed.). (1968). Why Federations Fail: An Enquiry into the Requisites for a Successful Federation. New York: New York University Press.

Friedman, F. G. (1977). Youth and Society Studies in Contemporary Europe. England: Macmillan Press.

Fromm, E. (2001). The Fear of Freedom. (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Furlong, A. & Cartmel, F. (1997). Young People and Social Change: Individualisation and Risk in Late Modernity. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Furnivall, J. S. (1948). Colonial Policy and Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Galtung, J., Jacobsen, C. G. & Brand-Jacobsen, K. F. (2000). Searching for Peace: The Road to Transcend. London, UK: Pluto Press.

Georgiou, G. J. & Veresies, K. 1990. AIDS Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs, and Practices (KABP) Pilot Study Undertaken in Cyprus: Preliminary Report. Geneva: World Health Organization (WHO), in Francoeur & Noonan (eds.). (2001). The International Encyclopedia of Sexuality.

Georgiou, G. J. & Veresies, K. 1991. AIDS Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs, and Practices (KABP) Study of Cypriot Schoolchildren in Cyprus. Geneva: World Health Organization (WHO), in Francoeur & Noonan (eds.). (2001). The International Encyclopedia of Sexuality.

Gillis, J. R. (1981). Youth and History: Tradition and Change in European Age Relations, 1770-Present. New York: Academic Press.

Hadjigeorgiou, H. et al. (2004). 'Eating Disorders in Children-Teenagers between 10-18 years of age in Cyprus' [in Greek], in Cyprus Youth Board (2005a). Review of the Cyprus Youth Policy: Cyprus National Report.

Hamilton, S. F., Hamilton, M. A., & Pittman, K. (2004). 'Principles for Youth Development', in S. F. Hamilton & M. A. Hamilton (eds.). The Youth Development Handbook: Coming of Age in American Communities. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 3-23.

Hancock, M. (1994). 'Collaboration for Youth Development: Youth Action Programming', National Civic Review, 83 (2), pp. 139.

Hart, R. A. (1992). Child's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship. Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre.

Human Development Report Website [available at: http://hdr.undp.org/en/].

Human Development Report 2007/2008, Country Fact Sheets: Cyprus
[available at: http://hdrstats.undp.org/2008/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_CYP.html].

Inglehart, R. (1997). Modernization and Postmodernisation: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Isengard, B. (2003). 'Youth Unemployment: Individual Risk Factors and Institutional Determinants. A Case Study of Germany and the United Kingdom', Journal of Youth Studies, 6 (4), pp. 357-376.

KADEM – Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre (2007a), Statistics from a Survey on Television Viewership in Turkish-Cypriot community.

KADEM – Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre (2007b), Statistics from a Survey on Traffic Accidents in Turkish-Cypriot community.

KADEM – Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre (2007c), Statistics from a Survey on Overweight and Obesity in Turkish-Cypriot community.

KADEM – Cyprus Social and Economic Research Centre (2008), Statistics from a Survey on ICT Usage in Turkish-Cypriot community.

Karekla, M. et al. (2009). 'Smoking Prevalence and Tobacco Exposure among Adolescents in Cyprus', European Journal of Public Health, 19, pp. 655-661.

Kaymak, E., Lordos, A. & Tocci, N. (2009). Building Confidence in Peace. Centre for European Policy Studies.

Kellner, D. (1992). 'Popular Culture and the Construction of Postmodern Identity'. in S. Lash & J. Friedman (eds.), Modernity and Identity. Oxford: Blackwell.

Koulaidis, V. & Dimopoulos, K. (eds.). (2006). Greek Youth: Views of Fragmentation. Athens: Metaixmio.

Kyrou, N. (2008). 'Living by Nathalie Kyrou', Cyprus Mail, April 13 [archive article available at: http://www.cyprus-mail.com/news/].

Kyrris, C. (1977). Peaceful Coexistence in Cyprus under British Rule (1878-1959) and after Independence: An Outline. Nicosia: Public Information Office, Republic of Cyprus.

Laursen, E. K. (2005). 'Building Positive Peer Cultures', Reclaiming Children and Youth, 14 (3), pp. 137-142.

'Leisure Activities and Social Attitudes of Cypriot Youth' (in Greek). (1996). Research study conducted by the Research and Development Centre – Intercollege, on behalf of the Youth Organisation of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Lijphart, A. (1977). Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration. New Haven-London: Yale University Press.

Loizos, P. (1975). 'Changes in Property Transfer among Greek Cypriot Villagers', Man, New Series, 10 (4), pp. 503-523, in R. T. Francoeur & R. J. Noonan (eds.) (2001). The International Encyclopedia of Sexuality, IV, New York, USA: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Lucey, H. (1996). 'Transitions to Womanhood: Constructions of Success and Failure for Middle and Working Class Young Women', Conference Paper, University of Glasgow, British Youth Research: The New Agenda, 26-28 January.

Mandel, L. A. & Qazilbash, J. (2005). 'Youth voices as change agents: Moving beyond the medical model in school-based health centre practice', Journal of School Health, 75 (7), pp. 239-242.

Marfin Laiki Bank, 'Cyprus Barometer 2007', prepared by RAI Consultants Public Ltd. [available at: https://www.laiki.com/web/w3sr.nsf/Lookup/CYBarometer07.pdf/$file/CYBarometer07.pdf].

Markides, C. (2005). 'Trying to halve road accidents', Cyprus Mail, October 26.

Markides, K. E., Nikita N., & Rangou, E. (1978). Lysi: Social Change in a Cypriot Village. Nicosia, Cyprus: Social Research Centre.

Marshall, T. H. (1950). Citizenship and Social Change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Matthews, H. (2001a). 'Citizenship, Youth Councils and Young People's Participation', Journal of Youth Studies, 4 (3), pp. 299-318.

Matthews, H. (2001b). 'Participatory Structures and the Youth of Today: Engaging Those Who Are Hardest to Reach', Ethics, Place & Environment, 4 (2), pp. 153-159.

McCarthy, C. (2008). 'ComScore: Facebook is Beating MySpace Worldwide'. CNET, 20 June [available at: http://news.cnet.com/8301-13577_3-9973826-36.html?hhTest=1].

McEvoy-Levy, S. (2001). 'Youth as Social and Political Agents: Issues in Post-Settlement Peace Building', Occasional Paper 21 OP2. Kroc Institute.

Miles, S. (1995). 'Pleasure or Pressure: Consumption and Youth Identity in the Contemporary British Shopping Centre', Conference Paper, University of Leicester, British Sociological Association, 10-13 April.

Ministry of Health, Republic of Cyprus, National AIDS Programme [available at: http://www.moh.gov.cy/moh/moh.nsf/All/2EABFB2BB47FDA22C2256E4400328C7B/$file/HIV_AIDS%20WORLDWIDE03_ENG.pdf?OpenElement].

Nikodimou, S. (2008). 'Our Streets have become battle fields' [in Greek], Entos kai Extos ton Teixon, February 2008, (1), p. 10.

O'Donaghue, J. L., Kirshner, B., & McLaughlin, M. (2002). 'Introduction: Moving Youth Participation Forward', New Directions for Youth Development, Winter (96), pp. 15-26.

O' Malley, B. & Craig, I. (2002). The Cyprus Conspiracy. London: I.B Tauris.

Papadakis, Y. (2008a). History Education in Divided Cyprus: A Comparison of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot Schoolbooks on the 'History of Cyprus, PRIO Report, 2/2008, Nicosia, Cyprus: PRIO Cyprus Centre.

Papadakis, Y. (2008b). 'Narrative, Memory and History Education in Divided Cyprus: A Comparison of Schoolbooks on the "History of Cyprus"', History & Memory, 20 (2), pp. 128–148.

Pappasavva, E. (1991). Cyprus: A Profile of Youth in Conditions of Social Change, Thesis presented at the University of Bradford for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Bradford, UK.

Park, A. (1996). 'Teenagers and Their Politics', in R. Jowell, J. Curtice, A. Park, et al (eds.). British Social Attitudes Survey. 12th Report. Dartmouth: Aldershot.

Perceptions on Sustainable Development and Climate Change in Cyprus. (2008). Report produced by RAI Consultants Public Ltd, for the Cyprus Environmental Stakeholder Forum (CESF) and AKTI Project and Research Centre, with the cooperation of UNDP-ACT, December 2008, Cyprus.

Peristianis, N. (2000). 'Boundaries and the Politics of Identity', in Y. Ioannou, F. Métral & M. Yon (eds.), Chypre et la Mediterranee Orientale. Lyon: University of Lyon / University of Cyprus, pp. 185-195.

Peristianis, N. (2006a). 'Cypriot Nationalism, Dual Identity and Politics', in Y. Papadakis, N. Peristianis & G. Welz (eds.), Divided Cyprus: Modernity, History and an Island in Conflict. Indiana: Indiana University Press, pp. 100-120.

Peristianis, N. (2006b). 'The Rise of the Left and of the Intra-Ethnic Conflict', in H. Faustmann & N. Peristianis (eds.), Britain in Cyprus: Colonialism and Post-Colonialism, 1878-2006. Mannheim and Mohnesee: Bibliopolis.

Peristianis, N. & Charalambous, N. (2003). 'Urban Space, Social and Ethnic Identity', Mediterranée: Ruptures et Continuites. University of Lyon / University of Cyprus: Lyon.

Peristianis, N. & Kokkinou, K. (2008). 'Single-Parent Families in Cyprus', The Cyprus Review, Spring 20 (1), pp. 35-55.

Peristianis, N. et al. (2004a). 'Bi-communal Perceptions of the Annan Plan' (in Greek). Research and Development Centre – Intercollege, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Peristianis, N. et al. (2004b). 'The State of the Family in Contemporary Cyprus' (in Greek). Research and Development Centre – Intercollege, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Peristiany, J. G. (1965). 'Honour and Shame in a Cypriot Highland Village', in J. G. Persitiany, (ed.), Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Philaretou, A. G., Phellas, C. N., & Karayianni, S. S. (2006). Sexual Interactions: The Social Construction of Atypical Sexual Behaviours. Universal Publishers: Boca Raton, Florida.

Pratt, B. & Loizos, P. (1992). Choosing Research Methods: Data Collection for Development Workers. Ofxam.

Print, M. (2007). 'Citizenship Education and Youth Participation in Democracy', British Journal of Educational Studies, 55 (3), pp. 325-345.

Radhakrishnan, N. (2009). 'Gandhian Perspectives on Intercultural Dialogue of Conflict Reduction and Sustainable Development', lecture given at the University of Nicosia, 4 February 2009, within the framework of a lecture series on Rethinking International and Intercultural Dialogue (organised by the Leventis Dialogue Chair of the University of Nicosia and PRIO Centre Cyprus).

'Road safety: The Commission wants to save 20,000 lives a year on European roads', Brussels, 4 June 2003 [available at: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety_library/rsap/ip_2003_0797_en.pdf].

Roberts, K. & Parsell, G. (1990) 'The political orientations, interests and activities of Britain's 16 to 18 year olds in the late 1980s', ESRC 16-19 Initiative Occasional Papers, No. 26. London: City University.

Said, E. W. (1978). Orientalism. USA: Vintage Books.

Saoulli, A. (2008). 'Smoking kills 1.2 Europeans a year', Cyprus Mail, June 3 [archive article available at: http://www.cyprus-mail.com/news/].

Saoulli, A. (2009). 'No One Ever Prosecuted for Performing Illegal Abortions', Cyprus Mail, February 12 [archive article available at: http://www.cyprus-mail.com/news/].

Savva, S. C. et al. (2002). 'Obesity in Children and Adolescents in Cyprus, Prevalence and Predisposing Factors', International Journal of Obesity and Related Metabolic Disorder, 26 (8), pp. 1036-1045.

Savva, S. C. et al. (2008). 'Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity among 11-year old Children in Cyprus. 1997-2003', International Journal of Pediatric Obesity, 3 (3), pp. 186-192.

Schneider, J. (2000). 'The Increased Financial Dependency of Young People on their Parents', Journal of Youth Studies, 3 (1), pp. 5-20.

Scott, J. (2005). 'Reconfiguring Paradise in Cyprus', The Cyprus Review, 17 (1), pp. 37-58.

SKIAGRAFISI, 18, April 2008, published by the Cyprus Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction.

Smith, A. (1991). National Identity. Reno: University of Nevada Press.

Smith, A. (1994 [1986]). The Ethnic Origins of Nations. Oxford: Blackwell.

Smith, N. et al. (2005). 'Young People are Real Citizens: Towards an Inclusionary Understanding of Citizenship', Journal of Youth Studies, 8 (4), pp. 425-443.

Statistics (2007). Universities' Registration Office, Ministry of Education and Culture, "TRNC".

Statistics (2008). Universities' Registration Office, Ministry of Education and Culture, "TRNC".

Statistical Service. (2007). 'Criminal Statistics 2005', Criminal Statistics, Series I, Report No. 32, Nicosia: Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus.

Statistical Service. (2007). 'Demographic Report', Population Statistics, Series II, Report No. 44, Nicosia: Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus.

Statistical Service (2007) 'Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Usage Survey in Households and by Individuals', Nicosia, November 2008.

Statistical Service. (2006). 'Labour Force Survey 2006', Labour Statistics, Series IV, Report No. 5, Nicosia: Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus.

Statistical Service (2008) 'Labour Force Survey 2007', Labour Statistics, Series IV, Report No. 6, Nicosia: Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus.

Statistical Service. (2006). 'Statistics of Education 2005/2006', Educational Statistics, Series I, Report No. 38, Nicosia: Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus.

Statistical Service. (2006). 'The Statistical Portrait of Women in Cyprus', Social Statistics, Series I, Report No. 1, Nicosia: Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus.

Statistical Service. (2007). 'Transport Statistics 2007', Transport Statistics, Series II, Report No. 23, Nicosia: Printing Office of Republic of Cyprus.

Statistical Year Book (2006), State Planning Organisation, "TRNC".

Statistical Year Book (2007), State Planning Organisation, "TRNC".

Stoneman, D. (2002). 'The Role of Youth Programming in the Development of Civic Engagement', Applied Developmental Science, 6 (4), pp. 221-226.

'Study of Leisure Time, Employment, Relationships, Perceptions and Problems of Cypriot Youth' (in Greek). (2007). Research study conducted by the Research and Development Centre – Intercollege, on behalf of the Youth Organisation of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Theodoulou, J. (2008). 'Most crash victims are under 25', Cyprus Mail, April 16.

Trimiklintiotis, N. & Demetriou, C. (2005). 'Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Cyprus', Country Report prepared for the European Research Project POLITIS
[available at: http://www.politis-europe.uni-oldenburg.de/download/Cyprus.pdf.

Turtiainen, P., Karvonen, S., & Rahkonen, O. (2007). 'All in the Family? The Structure and Meaning of Family Life among Young People', Journal of Youth Studies, 10 (4), pp. 477-493.

UN Social Development Division (1998). 'UN Statistical Charts and Indicators on the Situation of Youth (1980-1995)', New York, USA: UN.

UNDP-ACT (2007). 'Youth and Peace Building:  A Programme Review', November 2007, Nicosia, Cyprus.

UNDP-ACT (2008a). 'Qualitative Research Study among the Youth of the Two Communities in Cyprus', conducted by RAI Consultants Public Ltd. August 2008, Nicosia, Cyprus.

UNDP-ACT (2008b). 'Level of Trust between the Two Communities in Cyprus. Phase III', report on a quantitative household survey conducted by RAI Consultants Public Ltd. September 2008, Nicosia, Cyprus.

UNDP Kosovo (2006). 'Youth: A New Generation for a New Kosovo', Human Development Report, Prishtina, Kosovo.

Vural, Y. (2008). 'Redefining Identity: A Step towards a United Federal Cyprus', presentation given at a panel discussion on 'The Battle of the History Textbooks', within the framework of the Citizens' Free University, University of Nicosia, Cyprus, 6 November.

Wadsworth, Y. (1998). 'What is Participatory Action Research?', Action Research International, Paper 2, available at: http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/p-ywadsworth98.html.

Wallace, C. & Kovatcheva, S. (1998). Youth in Society: The Construction and Deconstruction of Youth in East and West Europe. London: Macmillans.

World Health Organisation. 'WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control' [available at: http://www.who.int/fctc/signatories_parties/en/index.html].

Yeshilada, B. (1989). 'Social Progress and Political Development in the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus"', The Cyprus Review, 1 (2), pp. 91-112.

'Youth and Conflict: A Toolkit for Intervention' [available at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/conflict/publications/docs/CMM_Youth_and_Conflict_Toolkit_April_2005.pdf].

'Youth Policy in Cyprus'. (2007). Conclusions of the Council of Europe International Review. Strasbourg Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.

# CYPRUS HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2009

Young Cypriots are at a crossroads. Amid political uncertainty they are struggling with their transition from children to adults in a world that is increasingly competitive, challenging and confusing. Their pursuit of education, decent jobs, friends and relationships is taking place against the background noise of the Cyprus Problem.

This first Human Development Report for Cyprus attempts to explore key human development dynamics in Cypriot society by focusing on one of the most critical stakeholders in the future of the island, namely youth. More specifically the Report attempts to bring to the fore the voices of young Cypriots through a research study, which, for the first time, maps the aspirations of youth in both the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot communities.

Largely based on the results of the comprehensive, island-wide Youth Aspiration Survey administered to over 1,600 young Cypriots across the island, the Report examines the aspirations and perceptions of youth in a variety of areas, including relationships with their families, and choices on education, work and leisure activities. It also explores attitudes towards national identity and the European Union, the interaction with individuals from the other community and young peoples' opinions on religion, health and building peace in Cyprus. To this end, the Report offers valuable insight into the attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of young Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots residing on the island today. Moreover, the Report explores the socio-economic and political features of young people's lives through the prism of youth empowerment and responsibility and analyses how these two factors affect the development of young Cypriots.

The Report concludes that ultimately youth development needs to be geared towards ensuring that all young people have the tools and skills to thrive in the communities and countries in which they live. While it is the responsibility of parents, educators, civil society, the media and the leaders of both communities to empower Cypriot youth, young Cypriots themselves must be active in seeking out and making full use of the available opportunities for empowerment.