



European
Commission

CLOSER TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

EU ASSISTANCE TO THE TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY



THE EU AID PROGRAMME FOR THE TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY



Since its launch in 2006, the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community has brought tangible benefits to the Turkish Cypriots. It has been a catalyst in bringing the Turkish Cypriot community closer to the EU. Have a look at this brochure and you will see some of the numerous activities that have made a difference in the lives of Turkish Cypriots.

The aim of the programme is to assist the Turkish Cypriots to prepare for the reunification of Cyprus which will follow the long-awaited political settlement of the Cyprus issue.

The programme focuses on the social and economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community.

It targets a wide range of beneficiaries such as students, farmers, civil society actors, schools and villages. It supports investments that help align with the EU standards, such as in the environmental sector. It also prepares for the implementation of EU law in a united Cyprus and the economic integration of the island. And most importantly, it helps to build peace and reconciliation between the two communities. I am convinced that the two communities can work together to reunify the island. The aid programme for the Turkish Cypriot community plays an important part in contributing to this historic endeavour.

Štefan Füle
European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

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MOVING AROUND ACROSS EUROPE

LEARNING EUROPE BY LIVING IT

European Union scholarships allow Turkish Cypriot students and teachers to spend up to a year at a university in other Member States. Since 2007, 60 undergraduate students, 317 graduate students and 104 teachers have been given the chance to increase their own knowledge in their chosen field while gaining first-hand experience of the EU through studying and living in another EU Member State. The EU launches a call for applicants each year, and has an annual budget of about €1.5 million.

It is not only students who can benefit from EU support. A programme promoting people-to-people contacts has been bringing Turkish Cypriots closer to the European Union through exchanges, internships and training courses in EU Member States. By mid-2012, €0.76 million have been granted to 15 projects.



Scholarship holders

“Since I believe that the future of Cyprus lies in the EU, I wanted to specialise in the EU and went to the Netherlands to study a master’s programme in European Studies at the University of Leiden. Of the 44 students in my class, 30 were from different European countries, which allowed for broad cultural interaction, and gave me the chance to compare the problems we face here with experience in other countries. While studying, I applied to the European Commission for an internship, was accepted, and started as an intern at the EC Representation in Cyprus.” Ülku Taşseven, student

PREPARING FOR EU STANDARDS AND RULES

GETTING READY FOR BUSINESS AFTER A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT

The European Union has allocated around €20 million to help Turkish Cypriots to adapt to EU legislation over time, and to trade more easily with the rest of the EU.

The “acquis”, the body of EU laws and standards that applies in all EU Member States, is currently suspended in the northern part of Cyprus. But after a comprehensive solution is reached, the acquis will apply across the entire island, and Turkish Cypriots too will be subject to those laws and standards. So the EU programme TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange) is available for the local bodies to help tackle this

major challenge. New standards and rules are being drafted that will, for instance, protect the environment, fight money laundering, guarantee food safety, or modernise farming.

Some Turkish Cypriot products – such as potatoes, citrus fruit or fish – can be traded across the Green Line if they comply with EU health standards. TAIEX experts check these products and provide certificates so that the products can be sold. Since 2006, Turkish Cypriots’ trade across the Green Line has been worth over around €5 million per year.



TAIEX experts in the field

MOVING AROUND AT HOME

MAKING TRAFFIC SAFER

A €2.7 million programme to improve road safety started in 2009. Since the number of accidents and death per million km driven in the northern part of Cyprus is one of the highest in Europe, the programme focused on long-term sustainable impact. It created a coherent structure encompassing all organisations involved in traffic safety, to boost efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, it provided:

- A database and data collection system to improve knowledge of black spots and danger zones, to help reduce the number of accidents;
- Planning to help local communities address current and future mobility needs, including the elimination of three black spots by re-modelling and re-signalling hazardous road sections;
- Improved vehicle inspections, drivers licensing procedures, and training for enforcement personnel;
- An education programme incorporating training sessions and safety awareness campaigns.



BOOSTING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO THE ECONOMY

To make the local economy more competitive, support is being given to developing and diversifying the private sector, and to providing high-quality business services to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Through grant schemes, 34 SME contracts worth €5million have been provided, along with technical assistance and training, to private companies and business associations.

The programme is helping to create safe and healthy working conditions for employees and to increase productivity, employment and investment in the private sector. It is also encouraging the uptake of information and communication technologies (ICT) among SMEs, at the same time supporting the development of a competitive local ICT sector.



HELPING FIRMS TO MEET EU STANDARDS

The local economy is being helped towards greater competitiveness by a programme that supports establishing links between the Turkish Cypriot private sector and the EU market. This has delivered assistance to 62 small and medium enterprises (SME) in complying with quality, environmental and social standards that meet European and recognised international certification processes.

In particular it has increased the capacity of the agricultural sector and agro-based firms to

comply with the plant health and food hygiene standards of the acquis: 60 farmers were helped to obtain EU certification on organic farming. It has developed targeted training modules on EU standards and business-related topics, and has helped 25 companies set up e-commerce platforms.

The programme, with a budget of €3.2 million, ran from 2007 to mid-2011, and was implemented by UNDP Partnership for the Future on behalf of the European Commission.



Honey production project

Thanks to a €24,000 grant, Letife Balci, a small Turkish Cypriot bee farming enterprise, managed to improve the quality of honey production in the northern part of Cyprus.

IMPROVING LIVING STANDARDS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

MORE COMPETITIVE AND RESILIENT RURAL COMMUNITIES

The broad-ranging Rural Development Sector Programme promotes the development of rural areas while protecting the environment and improving the sustainable use of natural resources. So far over €29million has been allocated to concrete projects. Rural development remains a priority for EU support to the Turkish Cypriot com-

munity; it represents the single biggest area of investment under the 2011 programme, in which €7million will be allocated to grant schemes and technical assistance. More information is available on www.tccruraldevelopment.eu



Animal husbandry project

IMPROVING ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Through technical assistance, advisory services have been provided to farmers on all aspects of animal production. Moreover, advisors and farmers have been trained in modern animal husbandry techniques to improve on-farm hygiene and animal health.

Veterinarians have been given further training in the diagnosis of farm animal diseases, and veterinary laboratory services have been modernised with equipment worth €700,000. Campaigns have also raised public awareness about food safety and hygiene, and about disease-transmission from animals to humans.



Milking system modernization project

“Animal husbandry in the Turkish Cypriot community has advanced by ten years thanks to the assistance from the European Union. The EU gave me half the funding I needed for modernising the milking system on my farm.” Yusuf Karamano of Palekythro/Balikesir village, who received EU funding from the Grant Scheme “Improving Agricultural Production” to help modernize his milking system.

MODERN CROP HUSBANDRY

Technical assistance has been provided through training of local experts in good agriculture practices on fruit, vegetables, forage and cereals, including plant propagation and cultivation, irrigation, fertilisation, crop protection, harvesting, and post-harvest management. Farmers have also been offered advice through free training courses and field demonstrations.

Research and development programmes have been linked to on-farm trials, with the introduction of new species and varieties that match local

conditions better. A soil and leaf analysis laboratory in Morphou/Güzelyurt has helped optimise the use of fertilisers.

Irrigation schemes have been improved to maximise the efficiency of water use, including more effective re-use of treated wastewater, and meteorological stations have been installed in Morphou/Güzelyurt and Kontea/Türkmenköy, and upgraded in Limnitis/Yeşilirmak, Galetea/Mehmetçik and Trikomo/Iskele.



New methods are employed by farmers

IMPROVING LIVING STANDARDS

Under two grant schemes for community development projects, 37 applicants have been selected for financial support totalling €10.5 million.

A new grants scheme of around €2.8 million is in the pipeline that will build on the experience acquired in the local community.



Improving mobility for disabled people

“For years we have been advocating mobility, access and transport for disabled citizens. Thanks to the support of the EU, we have been able to realise this in Lisi/Akdoğan, Vatili/Vadili and Pergama/Beyarmudu. Minibuses equipped with EU-supplied wheelchair lifts take disabled residents to physiotherapy and rehabilitation programmes. Ramps and lifts have been installed in public and private spaces, making access easier in homes, and in shops, pharmacies, and public toilets.”

Orkun Bozkurt, President of the Turkish Cypriot Orthopaedic Disabled Association, which received around €330,000 from the Village Initiative Programme under the Community Development scheme.

DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES

CAREER PLANNING AND BUILDING SKILLS FOR BETTER JOBS

The education and training sector is crucial to enhancing human resources development. The EU's Human Resources Development Sector Programme promotes reforms and programmes to attract more people into employment or into setting up businesses, help students, workers and companies adapt, and to lead to investment in human capital. The programme has a budget of over €8 million.

Technical assistance in the education sector in 2008-2011 offered new skills to teachers in primary and secondary schools, through study visits to EU countries and through a focus on modern, student-centred teaching methods. Inspectors were given insights into a more advisory, men-

toring and training role. And a strategy paper for education was developed. In parallel, 72 grants totalling more than €2.5 million were awarded to pre-primary, primary and secondary schools to modernise teaching methods and equipment, under the Schools Initiative for Innovation and Change.

Additionally, Sedat Simavi vocational high school in Nicosia and Dr. Fazıl Küçük vocational high school in Famagusta received new equipment for their automotive workshop, and Atatürk vocational high school could set up a printing workshop with new equipment provided with EU support.



School computer equipment upgrade

“The European Union supported us a lot since the very beginning. Both financially and morally, they gave us great support. They helped us to improve ourselves. For example, when we were selecting our machinery, the choice was ours. They did not interfere and they were very open. They facilitated the procurement of brand new machinery. Both we, the teachers, and our students are lucky to have now such an advanced printing workshop. With the knowledge they acquire here through hands-on training, young people can start working within a month.” Bilal Akbayır, Printing Teacher, Atatürk Vocational High School, which received around €156,000 from the EU under the Human Resources Programme.



Printing equipment upgrade at vocational schools



Creating better job opportunities for Turkish Cypriots was the objective of VETLAM, a three-year €1.3 million project that provided training and retraining for the employed and unemployed, as well as career counselling training for education stakeholders. VETLAM facilitated the establishment of an apprenticeship system and a «job shop» on Kyrenia Avenue in Nicosia that gives job

seekers easy access to vacancies and a cost-free space for companies to display job offers.

In addition, the Human Resources Development Sector Programme supported the upgrading of skills of workers, employees and the unemployed in the northern part of Cyprus. In total 31 grant projects were financed.



VETLAM project workshop

SPEEDING CONNECTIONS BY PHONE AND INTERNET

DEVELOPING TELECOMS INFRASTRUCTURE

This programme aims not only at helping to bring the TurkishCypriot telecommunications sector into line with EU standards, but also at general economic and social development – since telecommunications nowadays plays such a central role in accelerating reforms in other areas too. A budget of €11.8 million covers the four years up to the end of 2012.

One major project is developing a future-proof telecommunications network based on Internet Protocol (IP) – the so-called Next Generation Net-

work – that is increasingly emerging worldwide, capable of integrating internet, telephone and other services in the same infrastructure. To ensure longer-term compatibility, the design is balancing local requirements and the evolution of communication technologies.

Another project is supporting the introduction of EU compliant standards in the telecommunications sector through training and management advice.



Telecommunication devices

REVITALISING THE PLACES WHERE COMMUNITIES LIVE

IMPROVING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Bedestan (UNDP photo)

An €18 million programme is upgrading cultural heritage and the infrastructure in towns and villages in the northern part of Cyprus. The programme is jointly managed with the United Nations Development Programme - Partnership for the Future.

One of the focuses is on the main cities of Nicosia, Famagusta and Kyrenia and their surrounding areas. In Nicosia, the Bedestan Monument (formerly St. Nicholas Church) was renovated and the old municipal market, the Bandabuliya, was restored. In Famagusta and Kyrenia, works included improvement of the promenades.



Opening of Bandabuliya with Commissioner Füle (Olkan Ergüler, UNDP photo)

Upgrading of community facilities in more than a dozen smaller towns and villages has also been supported since 2007. Community buildings are being renovated to accommodate cultural activi-

ties as a contribution to revitalising social life in Kormakitis/Kormacit, Galinoporni/Kaleburnu, Tremetousia/Erdemli, Louroukina/Akincilar or Kalivakia/Kalavaç.



Louroukina/Akincilar before restoration (UNDP photo)



Louroukina/Akincilar after restoration (UNDP photo)

Green Line crossing points have also benefited, with stabilisation and demining works at the Ledra Street crossing in the heart of Nicosia's Venetian-walled old town, and improvements of the access road at the Limnitis/Yeşilirmak crossing in

the northwest, paving the way for the opening of the seventh crossing point across the Green Line. Since 2005, the EU has supported the opening of three crossing points in Cyprus.



Opening of the Limnitis/Yeşilirmak crossing point

IMPROVING WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

CLEAN WATER FOR HEALTHY LIFE

Cyprus suffers from serious water scarcity, and extraction exceeds the rate of natural replenishment. Changing global weather patterns and the threat of more frequent and prolonged droughts could lead to major environmental, social and economic disruption.

It is therefore no coincidence that a substantial share of the EU's aid programme for Turkish Cypriots has been allocated to the water sector. Around €46 million of the aid is focussed on reducing water losses and on wastewater collection and treatment.



Laying new potable water pipes

Reducing losses in transmission and distribution networks by replacing old asbestos and galvanised steel pipes - which in some areas allow two out of every three litres to be lost through leakages. Nicosia, Kioneli/Gönyeli, Kyrenia, Lefka/Lefke and Morphou/Güzelyurt have already benefited.



Waste water treatment plant in Morphou/Güzelyurt

Collecting and treating wastewater in Nicosia, Famagusta and Morphou/Güzelyurt. The aim is to safeguard human health by protecting drinking water aquifers and bathing waters from contamination. Improved treatment will allow wastewater a second life in irrigation, promoting economic activities at the same time.

Over €10 million is supporting preparations for new EU-compliant rules and regulations, training of staff, and awareness-raising about water management – just as important as finance, technology and legislation in protecting water resources in the longer term.

Almost 3,800 households in Nicosia have been given new connections to clean and reliable mains water supply – through more than 80 kilometres of new piping – as a result of EU funding of € 2.6 million. And for the first time in years, these

homes had uninterrupted water supply throughout the winter season 2010/2011. A substantial reduction in losses has been reported, and overall water supply to the northern part of Nicosia has fallen from 0.67 to 0.40 m³/day/consumer meter.

The Morphou/Güzelyurt aquifer is the largest single source of water in the northern part of Cyprus. The wastewater treatment plant built with EU funding of nearly €4 million protects it against contamination from untreated wastewater from the town and surrounding villages.

MANAGING ENERGY

CLEAN AND SUSTAINABLE

An €11.44 million programme on energy efficiency started in 2008. Its principal elements are:

Better monitoring of energy consumption

- Installation of a remote-controlled metering system for about 21,000 consumers.
- Introduction of a multiple tariff system with meters capable of registering the energy consumption at different tariffs.
- Remote metering and meter control facilities, with meters capable of transmitting consumption data.
- Registering not just energy consumed, but also energy that subscribers feed into the grid.

- A laboratory for testing and calibration of meters, to improve accuracy of mechanical and electronic meters, and to decrease losses due to meter error.

Improved customer awareness and satisfaction

- Introducing a customer-care system that provides for flexibility with tariff systems and pricing.
- Awareness-raising about energy efficiency.

Environmental sustainability

A pilot solar energy plant with a capacity of 1.26 MW has been completed by the EU and connected to the grid. Producing completely CO₂ emission-free electricity, it replaces thermal combustion units and serves as a perfect example of solar-power electricity production in Cyprus.



Solar power plant in Filya/Serhatköy

“The solar power plant in Filya/Serhatköy will generate about 1400-1800 megawatt hours per year. But the main benefit is much bigger. This project is increasing diversification and raising awareness about the potential of renewable energy.” Ahmet Dargin, Electrical Engineer, Electricity Department

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

MANAGING THE FUTURE

EU engagement in environmental policy is geared towards rectifying problems of the past and assuring sustainability in the present and future. In the EU's support for the Turkish Cypriot community, the same objectives are reflected in a range of specific programmes.

Capacity building in the environmental sector

This programme, with a budget of €1.1 million, has helped the Turkish Cypriot community to tackle environmental problems that affect the population. Activities include:

- ⇒ The establishment of an air quality monitoring system. The necessary equipment has been supplied and technical assistance has been provided in setting it up and running it.
- ⇒ The upgrade of the IT management system for the environmental sector with appropriate equipment.

Planning the future rehabilitation of the Lefka/Lefke mining area

A budget of €0.9 million for the mining and ore processing sites in Lefka/Lefke helped to develop a plan for eventual rehabilitation of the area and identify the most appropriate solutions and interventions.

Lefka/Lefke, on the north-west shore of the northern part of Cyprus, once boasted the island's largest copper mine and ore deposits. Currently, the mines are idle, but mining activity in the region has caused severe environmental damage, destroying the plant cover, eroding the hills and polluting the nearby shoreline where a small port shipped out the mining product. The EU-funded studies explored water and groundwater pollution, soil contamination, the feasibility of recovery of tailings and ore, and the security and stability of the underground mine at Mavrovouni/Karadağ Madeni. The study provides a sound basis for decision making on rehabilitating the area.



Improving solid waste management

Started in 2007, the €19.2 million programme has led to tangible outcomes, including:

- ⇒ Rehabilitation and closure of the Kato Dikomo/Dikmen dump site, one of the major environmental hotspots in the northern part of Cyprus;
- ⇒ Construction of a state-of-the-art sanitary landfill in Koutsoventis/Güngör;
- ⇒ Construction of a solid waste transfer station in Famagusta;

- ⇒ Implementation of a pilot project for green waste composting;
- ⇒ Installation of a medical waste treatment facility and supply of medical waste collection vehicles and containers;
- ⇒ Supply of mobile construction and demolition waste pre-treatment equipment.

Part of the programme has been devoted to raising public awareness and modernising existing rules and regulation in line with EU standards.



Effective systems for nature protection

A budget of €5.2 million has been provided for planning, creating and managing seven sites with fragile environments: Karpasia/Karpaz, Agias Eirinis/Akdeniz, South Karpasia/South Karpaz Coastal Area, Akanthou/Tatlisu Coastal Area, Kyrenia Mountains, Alakati/Alagadi, and the Famagusta Wetlands.

Since it started in 2008, the programme has so far:

- ➔ Helped develop management plans for the areas which have the potential to be designated as part of the EU's Natura 2000 network following a comprehensive settlement;

- ➔ Begun the establishment of visitor centres in Agias Eirinis/Akdeniz, the Kyrenia Mountains, Alakati/Alagadi and in Karpasia/Karpaz;
- ➔ Set up nature trails in protected areas;
- ➔ Purchased equipment to assist with nature protection.

Training activities have also been organised to upgrade the professional skills of rangers and other experts responsible for nature protection.



HELPING RECONCILIATION AND REMOVING BARRIERS

PEOPLE LIVING TOGETHER



Strengthening the voice of civil society

This €10.4 million programme, started in 2007, has been strengthening Turkish Cypriot civil society, and promoting an environment in which trust, dialogue, co-operation and closer relations can flourish at bi-communal level. It also supports activities that promote the values of democracy, peace and active citizenship.

- ➔ A total of €4.85 million was awarded to 44 civil society organisations for measures related to reconciliation and confidence-building. Projects have ranged from large-scale exercises such as an epidemiology study on cancer in Cyprus to small-scale ideas such as encouraging children to plant oak trees for the future.

- ➔ Support was given to the Committee on Missing Persons, which has a mandate to establish the fate of people declared missing by both communities.
- ➔ The Council of Europe's Academy of Political Studies was promoted. This provides a permanent pan-Cypriot forum of Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot young political leaders and decision makers, aimed at training new generations of decision-makers committed to the values of democracy and tolerance.



Excavation phase (CMP photo)

Committee on Missing Persons

As a result of the violence generated during the events of 1963-64 and 1974, about 2,000 Cypriots were officially reported as missing by both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities to the Committee on Missing Persons. Its primary objective is to enable relatives to recover the remains of their loved ones and arrange for a proper burial, bringing closure to a long anguish and uncertainty. Most Cypriot families have been affected directly or indirectly, and the hope is that

the healing of old wounds will also promote the overall process of reconciliation between both communities. The project is bi-communal, involving teams of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot scientists working side by side at every stage of the exhumation and identification processes. The European Union has donated €6.5 million to this endeavour to date, making it the largest single donor supporting the mandated activities.



Deminer (UNDP photo)

Demining the buffer zone

This programme started in 2004 and was completed in 2011, implemented by UNDP Partnership for the Future, removing most of the land mines in the buffer zone, and helping the establishment of peace and confidence in Cyprus. The €11.5 million programme has also made it possible to resume agricultural activities on farm land that has been cleared, and has enabled the opening of additional

crossing points that increase freedom of movement and trade.

81 minefields have been cleared, most of them in the buffer zone. More than 27,000 landmines have been destroyed and around eleven square kilometres of land have been released and returned to their original use.

More information on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6X5LXGBxY>

OFFERING INFORMATION AND ADVICE

NOTES

HELP WHERE IT IS NEEDED



The EU funds an EU Infopoint for members of the Turkish Cypriot community in Nicosia. Its purpose is to help meet their needs for information about the EU. It is open to the general public as well as companies, civil society organisations, media, academia and the rural community.

In addition to responding to requests for information, it also organises training courses, conferences, seminars, public lectures and debates. It prepares and distributes EU-related information material. It provides computer terminals with internet access for visitors. And it offers expert guidance in research on EU affairs.

The Infopoint also organises cultural and visibility events, with active participation from the community.



A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

For more information visit the Infopoint's website: www.abbilgi.eu

