

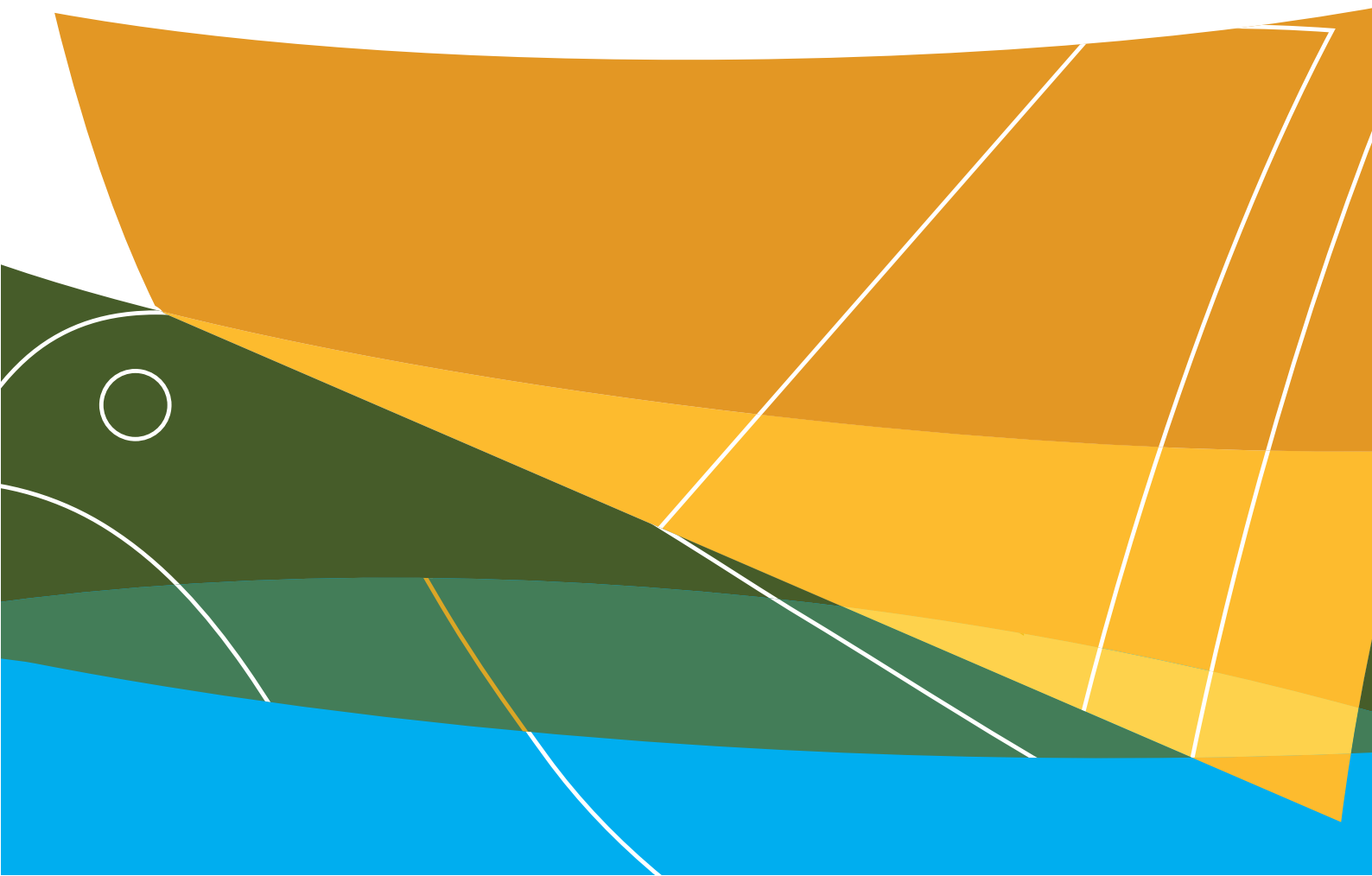


EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

The Committee of the Regions and the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union



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EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

Europeans are experiencing difficult times. The financial crisis, which has turned into an economic and social crisis, is a real challenge for us all. The European Union is working hard to restore growth and create jobs. At the same time, it is promoting measures to restore confidence, by consolidating national budgets and adopting policy initiatives that look to the future. Adequate leverage funding must be guaranteed through the Union's budget to stimulate quality growth on the ground. Today, the EU budget represents a unique resource for solidarity and job creation, since it is geared towards the achievement of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Within the EU budget, economic, social and territorial cohesion policy remains a crucial lever for a credible exit strategy to get Europe out of the crisis and steer our continent towards a sustainable future. Regional and local authorities will continue to stimulate sustainable growth and jobs if the European funds provided by the EU budget continue to benefit all Europeans and support the implementation of the 2020 strategy. During the negotiations for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, which will be held under the presidency of Cyprus, we will act as the mouthpiece for the interests of Europe's regions and cities.

The Europe 2020 strategy will only be successful if implemented in partnership with local and regional authorities. EU regions and cities have a pivotal and catalytic role when it comes to making the necessary investments happen whilst implementing Europe 2020's flagship initiatives on the ground. The work of local and regional authorities over the coming months will therefore contribute to the efforts made by the European Commission and the Member States in shaping a "Growth Pact". The Committee of the Regions will facilitate the exchange of best practices through its "Europe 2020 platform". We will propose improvements to the strategy to better respond to the needs of regional and local authorities. We believe that the conclusion of "Territorial Pacts" to implement the objectives of the EU's strategy for growth in partnership whilst creating greater synergies between public budgets at all levels is an asset that Member States must seize at all cost.

Closely linked to these future actions on growth and competitiveness is the need to reinforce European integration. Observing the principles of subsidiarity and multi-level governance, it must be our joint aim to work for a "Better Europe" and guaranteeing the close involvement of regional and local authorities in EU decision making.

Despite the economic situation, Europe's local and regional authorities continue to be responsible for measures relating to social welfare and assistance, education, facilitating access to the labour market, housing, health, and tackling financial exclusion: they therefore count on national and European funds to deliver results and achieve common goals. The surveys carried out by the CoR's Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform show that local and regional authorities continue to carry out numerous projects to get people back into work, often through the use of innovative solutions and the proposal of initiatives aimed at boosting the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. Cyprus is a good example when it comes to enabling local authorities to play an active role in implementing the strategy's flagship goals, such as reducing the poverty rate, increasing employment and providing better standards of living for all citizens. The project "Raising Public Awareness Regarding the Inclusion of Roma People in Cypriot Society" is one such tool.

Finally, I would like to reiterate my wish for the continuation of the dialogue of the two Cyprus communities, and the promotion of inter-communal initiatives. Results such as the opening of crossing points on the island and, in particular, in the city of Nicosia have been welcomed by the Committee of the Regions in the past and will always be encouraged as tangible steps forward.

Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso

President of the Committee of the Regions



Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso

President of the Committee of the Regions



02 Message from the President of the Republic of Cyprus



Demetris Christofias
H.E. President of the
Republic of Cyprus

“Together, towards a Better Europe”

Cyprus will soon be at the helm of the rotating presidency of the European Union for the first time since its accession in 2004. For us, this is a great honour and at the same time a great challenge; it is a unique opportunity for Cyprus to make a lasting contribution towards European integration, while, also, enhancing its image as a credible and responsible EU member and partner.

The Cyprus Presidency will work *towards a Better Europe*, highlighting the fundamental principle of solidarity, by promoting social cohesion, effectiveness and growth in the Union.

It goes without saying that this principle of solidarity is unequivocally connected to the substance of the EU's cohesion policy. It is essential to continue supporting this policy in the context of the next programming period. In this regard, the Cyprus Presidency of the Council will work closely with the Committee of the Regions. After all, there is a common, a shared aim: it is about diminishing employment, social and territorial disparities across the whole of the EU.

As far as the key priority areas of the Cyprus Presidency are concerned, the greatest focus will be on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for the years 2014-2020. Our Presidency, in cooperation with the President of the European Council, will work tirelessly to finalise the negotiations and to achieve the consensus needed in the European Council.

In light of the ongoing economic and financial crisis, the Cyprus Presidency will focus on implementing the new enhanced framework of economic governance, as well as the financial services framework. Special emphasis will be given to initiatives provided for by the Single Market Act, with a view to strengthening the internal market and working towards increasing growth and employment opportunities, especially for young people.

One of the basic objectives of the Cyprus Presidency is the establishment of the Common European Asylum System by the end of 2012, in accordance with the timetable set by the European Council which is necessary in light of developments across Europe's borders that affect the sensitive issues of immigration and asylum. We will also be promoting the new legal framework for the protection of personal data.

The Cyprus Presidency aims to place the citizen, solidarity and social cohesion at the heart of its agenda. We consider it imperative to bring Europe closer to its citizens and improve people's living condition and quality of life.

The Cyprus Presidency will put emphasis on youth employment by working towards decreasing the rising unemployment rates of the young in the entire Union. In this respect, the Presidency will promote the *Europe 2020 targets*, including all initiatives that will ease the effects of the severe austerity measures taken to tackle the consequences of the economic and financial crisis.

Cyprus, being an island maritime state, realizes the potentials of Europe's oceans and seas for the EU economy, sustainability and prosperity as well as the need for a genuine strategic approach to Europe's maritime affairs and coastal areas. To this end, the Cyprus Presidency will aim to reenergize the *Integrated Maritime Policy*, which is an important tool in maximizing the sustainable development, economic growth and social cohesion of Member States and in meeting the objectives of “Europe 2020 Strategy”. Besides, we will focus on

the development of the Trans-European Networks of transport, telecommunications and energy, as well as promote green growth, research and innovation.

In view of enhancing Europe's role in the world, the enlargement process is a priority. The Cyprus Presidency of the Council is firmly committed to taking this process forward on the basis of agreed principles and conclusions. It reinforces peace, democracy and stability in Europe and allows the EU to be better positioned to address global challenges.

Furthermore, in light of the political developments in our neighbouring Mediterranean countries, we aim to promote the Southern Dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy while ensuring progress on the Union's development aid commitments.

Last but not least, it is my firm belief that in these uncertain times, in these economically and socially difficult times, it is essential that member states work together and stand united in their diversity, exhausting all possible means to take the EU forward. Together we can make Europe a better place in which to live and thrive. Undoubtedly, it is a duty we owe to the founding fathers of the European Union but most importantly, a duty we owe to the young and the coming generations of Europeans; our children and our grandchildren. The future of our Europe: together, all of us, united in solidarity, we must bring back hope to every single citizen. Together, we can make it a *Better Europe*.

Demetris Christofias

H.E. President of the Republic of Cyprus



03 Editorial by the Minister of Interior of the Republic of Cyprus



Eleni Mavrou
Minister of Interior

Cyprus is taking over the Presidency at a most challenging time, when the economic crisis has imposed a demanding environment in which EU values need to be upheld. The core of Cyprus Presidency efforts will be built on fostering growth, enhancing social cohesion and improving the quality of life of citizens.

Regional policy is probably the best expression of the EU's solidarity towards less developed regions, through the concentration of funds in areas and sectors where they can make the most difference, supporting job creation, competitiveness, economic growth, improved quality of life and sustainable development. EU Cohesion policy aims to reduce the significant economic, social and territorial disparities that still exist between Europe's regions and supports, in this way, its large single market.

Cohesion Policy has a significant role to play in the effort to transform territorial diversity within the EU into an asset, through an integrated and place-based approach and by fully incorporating its territorial dimension, as established in the Lisbon Treaty. Such a development policy is of utmost importance for Cyprus, being a small island Member State at the periphery of the Union which experiences unique natural permanent constraints. Therefore, the Cohesion Policy dossier is of high priority for the Cyprus Presidency.

Ongoing global economic developments and the negative consequences for European societies, call for a long term strategic response from the EU, in order to achieve sustainable socioeconomic development and growth. Enhancing solidarity and social cohesion in the European Union is, therefore, a priority for the Cyprus Presidency. The future growth, competitiveness and social cohesion of Europe are reliant on European and national policies which address demographic challenges in order to minimize poverty, the impact of the global economic crisis on the most vulnerable parts of our European societies and social exclusion and to promote sustainable employment for those who are most affected by the economic crisis.

Social cohesion is a key dimension of the Europe 2020 Strategy and its enhancement is crucial for economic recovery, and for the social inclusion of the most vulnerable social groups. Therefore, the Presidency will attach particular attention to the need to strengthen social cohesion and to the work on child well-being and poverty. The Cyprus Presidency will also carry on intensive work on the Union's priority to create more and better jobs, upgrade skills and promote job opportunities, especially for youth.

The success of the Europe 2020 Strategy is dependent on society's involvement as a whole. Based on this premise, the Cyprus Presidency will work towards ensuring the active participation of social partners and civil society in the implementation of the Strategy, especially as regards the targets on employment, poverty and social exclusion.

Current harsh economic realities, combined with Europe's demographic challenges, emphasize the need to further utilize the developmental prospective of migration, by promoting a comprehensive EU migration policy, based on common admission procedures and the fair treatment of third-country nationals. To this end, the development of an EU legal framework on migration can contribute to the future prosperity of, both, the EU and of the countries of origin of the migrants. The proposed Directives on legal migration will contribute to the development and growth of the European economies, through ensuring necessary labour skills for selected economic sectors. The effective implementation of the migration policy and its objectives can only be achieved through the availability of financial

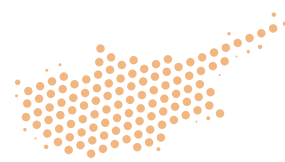
tools. Therefore, the Cyprus Presidency will make every effort to conclude discussions on the legislative proposals for the relevant funds included in the new Multi-annual Financial Framework 2014-2020.

Successful integration is the key for maximizing the benefits of immigration both for the receiving societies and for migrants themselves in terms of economic development and social cohesion. In light of this, the Presidency will work towards enhancing cooperation between MS and other relevant stakeholders, with the goal to make better use of the benefits of integration with the active involvement of local and regional governance. In this respect, one should see efforts as a joint responsibility of all levels of governance and recognize the leading role of local and regional authorities in shaping and implementing the national integration policies. Integration takes place at the local and regional level with the active involvement of the civil society.

Cyprus will act as a truly fair and honest broker, contributing in every possible way to a better Europe, based on the main principles and values of a united Europe.

Eleni Mavrou

Minister of Interior



04 Why a Committee of the Regions?

**Brussels headquarters of the
Committee of the Regions**
(the Jacques Delors building)



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The three main decision-making institutions in the EU are the European Parliament, which represents the EU's citizens and is directly elected by them, the Council of the European Union, which represents the individual Member States, and the European Commission, which upholds the interests of the Union as a whole.

However, local and regional authorities are responsible for implementing the vast majority of the decisions taken at European level - around two-thirds of EU legislation is put into practice at sub-national level.

That is why the Committee of the Regions (CoR) was set up in 1994, to give local and regional authorities the opportunity to express a view on the substance of EU legislative proposals at the drafting stage in order to adapt them more closely to citizens' needs.

The European treaties stipulate that the Committee of the Regions must be consulted whenever proposals are made in areas likely to have repercussions at local or regional level. In practice, this means that the Committee of the Regions is consulted on most European legislation.

The Maastricht Treaty (1992) laid down five areas for mandatory consultation: economic and social cohesion, trans-European networks, health, education and culture. The Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) added a further five areas: employment policy, social policy, the environment, vocational training and transport.

Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the CoR has acquired new powers, both in the area of territorial cohesion and in terms of monitoring the subsidiarity principle. The CoR now has a greater consultative role to play, and also new leverage for implementing multilevel governance. The European Parliament, the Commission and the Council must now consult the Committee of the Regions when making laws in any area with a regional impact. And the Committee's opinions now cover several new policy areas, including energy and climate change.

However, all three institutions may also consult the CoR outside these areas if they see local or regional implications in their work. The Committee of the Regions can also put its



priorities onto the European Union's agenda by issuing own-initiative opinions and drafting reports on subjects of interest to it. But the CoR's involvement does not stop once it has issued its opinion on a Commission proposal. The CoR also has the right to question the Commission, Parliament and Council if they fail to take on board its viewpoint. In extreme cases, the CoR also has the right to go to the European Court of Justice if it believes it has not been correctly consulted.

■ How does the Committee of the Regions work?

The Committee of the Regions is made up of 344 members and the same number of alternates. These members are appointed by the Member States for a renewable five year term. They must hold elected office or be politically accountable to an elected assembly. For this reason, members who cease to hold such office, automatically lose their seat on the Committee of the Regions. Each country chooses its members in its own way, with the proviso that members must reflect a political and geographical balance and be taken from both regional and local levels. The CoR members elect their own president – currently Mr RAMÓN LUIS VALCÁRCEL SISO from the Murcia Region in Spain.

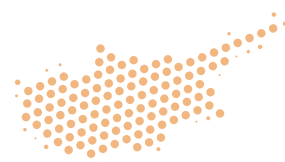
The CoR's work is split between six specialised commissions:

- Territorial Cohesion Policy (COTER)
- Economic and Social Policy (ECOS)
- Environment, Climate change and Energy (ENVE)
- Culture, Education and Research (EDUC)
- Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX)
- Natural Resources (NAT)

The commissions, which are made up of CoR members, draw up draft opinions on legislative proposals submitted by the European Commission, the Council or the European Parliament. The draft is then voted on during one of the six plenary sessions that take place each year. It is only adopted if it receives a majority of votes cast.

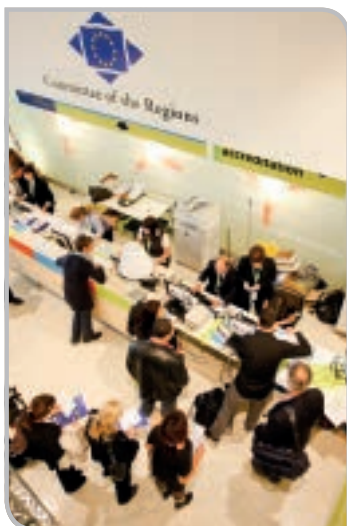


Four political groups are represented at the Committee of the Regions: the European People's Party (EPP), the Party of European Socialists (PES), the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) and the European Alliance (EA).



04 *Why a Committee of the Regions?*

The work of the Committee of the Regions, a truly political assembly, is based on three fundamental principles:



- The subsidiarity principle: this principle requires that decisions be taken at the level of government that best serves the public interest. The European Union must not pursue initiatives that would be better carried out by national, regional or local authorities..
- The proximity principle: all levels of government must work as transparently as possible and as closely as possible with the public so that citizens know who is responsible for what and how they can make their views known.
- The partnership principle: European, national, regional and local authorities must work together throughout the decision-making process.

■ **Bringing the European Union closer to its citizens**

While much of the CoR's work lies in its involvement in the legislative process, its role does not stop there. The CoR members live and work on a day-to-day basis in their regions and cities as regional presidents, mayors or local councillors. This enables them to stay in touch with the concerns of the people they represent, which puts them in a position to bring these views to the heart of the European system when they come to Brussels for CoR meetings.

■ **CoR's commitment to the peace process**

On 7th October 2008, the Committee of the Regions decided to designate one of its reception areas as "Open Ledra Street", as a permanent recognition of the efforts of both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities of Cyprus to work for a sustainable and peaceful solution to the Cypriot problem. A replica of the Open Ledra street name plaque offered to the city of Nicosia by the CoR is on display in the UN controlled buffer zone on the real Ledra Street.



05 Cypriot Delegation to the Committee of the Regions



Cypriot CoR members from all regions and all political groups gather into a national delegation at the CoR. The Cypriot delegation consists of 6 members and an equivalent number of alternates. The current distribution of seats, both for members and alternates, is as follows:

Cypriot delegation	Members	Alternates
Dimoi (Municipalities)	4	4
Kinotites (Communities)	2	2

Cypriot CoR members are local representatives with an electoral mandate at home. They are appointed members of the CoR for a five-year term by the Council of the EU at the proposal of the national government.

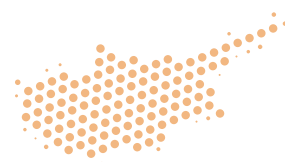
Their role is twofold:

- to raise the concerns of their regions and local authorities at EU level
- to keep their citizens informed about the EU developments.

Nomination procedure

The Minister of the Interior selects the Cypriot CoR delegation after consultation with the Union of Cyprus Municipalities and the Union of Cyprus Communities. Geographical and political criteria are taken into account as well as the type of local authority represented.

The national government takes a decision on the basis of the proposed list of members and submits it to the Council of Ministers of the EU, which appoints CoR members.



Members



GEORGIIOU Georgios

Mayor of Kato Polemidia

NI

Head of the Cypriot delegation

As a delegation we are closely involved in the activities of the Committee of the Regions, and try to ensure that our citizens and authorities are well informed about developments in Europe and the opportunities these bring them. Alongside this, we aim to promote Cyprus in the heart of Europe and highlight the problems faced by Cyprus since the occupation. We also regard it as our duty to establish close and fruitful ties between Europe and its citizens.



KATTIRTZI Christodoulos Costa

President of Kato Zodia Community Council

EPP

"The assumption of the EU Council Presidency by the Republic of Cyprus represents a historic challenge for the country, being both a small country and a recent Member State, with no experience of such weighty affairs. Cyprus must do everything it can to ensure that the EU operates effectively as a force for progress, peace, stability and prosperity on the international stage, while providing conditions of justice and equality between its citizens."



LOUKAIDOU Eleni

Municipal Councillor of Nicosia

EPP

On the occasion of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union by my country, the Republic of Cyprus, during the second half of 2012, I take the opportunity to express some of my thoughts on the future of the European Union. "What is needed first and foremost is to cultivate a European identity, THE PREREQUISITE for forming and maintaining this structure we call the European Union. This must be achieved by the various peoples that call Europe their home. And the answer to the cohesion problem facing the EU is to give the public a voice and a chance to participate properly, supporting local and regional government as much as possible. The people of the EU must be free to decide on their own daily affairs. The central state must decentralise and play a supervisory and coordinating role. If the EU wants to continue to play an important role on the world stage and not play second fiddle to other powers, it must move decisively in this direction without further ado. Its people will be behind it. As of course will we, the members of the CoR, working to make sure that ordinary people are at the forefront."



MICHAIL Evyenios

President of the Omodos Community Council

NI

"Being in the Committee of the Regions gives local authorities a chance to express their views at the heart of Europe on a variety of important issues. The basic principles underpinning it - subsidiarity, proximity and partnership - find their full expression."



PITTAS Charalambos

Mayor of Morphou

NI

"I see the Committee of the Regions of the European Union as bridging the communication gap between the EU's Member States and, above all, its local and regional authorities. I would like to believe that the purpose of my contribution and that of all the members is to make our vision of a Europe founded on justice, democracy, prosperity and dignity, a reality for the people and Member States of the EU."



■ Alternates



CHATZITTOFIS Kyriakos

Mayor of Agios Athanasios

NI

"I welcome the opportunity this publication has given me as a member of the Committee of the Regions to express my satisfaction with the work done by this European Union body. More specifically, I have been part of this institution, sitting on the ENVE (Environment, Climate Change and Energy) and EDUC (Education, Youth, Culture and Research) commissions, without fail, since 2004, when Cyprus joined the European Union. I have contributed significantly in the area of the environment and also on education and youth, as these issues are always of central relevance to society. In the Committee of the Regions, we have compared and exchanged useful experiences and information that I believe can help to improve quality of life for the local communities we serve."



HADJIKAKOU Costas

Municipal Councillor of Famagusta

EPP

"After five years' involvement in the work of the Committee of the Regions, I am very pleased to see the progress that has been made regarding recognition of the role of local and regional authorities and the influence we now have on European policy. Indeed, it is a particular honour to be responsible for representing one's country. Although the Cypriot Delegation represents a very small country that is remote from the rest of the European Union, the challenges are the same as for the other national delegations, or perhaps greater, as we want to get fully to grips with and make a real input on the issues that concern us, draw lessons from the best practice of other Member States, and make the best and most creative contribution we can to the goal of European integration."



YIANGOU Dimos

President of Ayia Eirini (Kerinia) Community Council

EPP

"The Committee of the Regions creates channels of communication and experience-sharing between Member States' regions, cities and municipalities, and brings the various concerns of ordinary citizens into the European decision-making process.

By taking part in the Committee of the Regions, local and regional government representatives become the European Union's ambassadors to local communities and municipalities, informing the public about Community policies. Personally speaking, my work at the Committee of the Regions has given me an opportunity to gain experience of the structure and workings of the European Union as a European citizen and to contribute to my country's development and the further strengthening of its ties with the EU."

The procedure for the appointing the new Cypriot members was ongoing when this brochure went to print.



06 Cypriot members at work



Georgios GEORGIU
Mayor of Kato Polemidia

My main goal as head of the Cypriot delegation is to help our team become more and more actively involved in the activities of the Committee of the Regions. Over the past years our delegation has had the opportunity to host two seminars combined with meetings of the ENVE and CIVEX commissions. These events took place in Larnaca and Nicosia respectively. Both were very successful, in terms of members' attendance but also of participation of local organisations and representatives, and also their promotion in national media.

It is now generally accepted that Cyprus is taking over the reins of Europe at a particularly difficult time, given the unfavourable economic and social conditions. It is also a greater challenge for a small nation to take up this leading role within the European Union for the first time in its history. This does not make us any less capable or any more ambitious, but simply drives us on towards the objective we have set for our presidency, to work towards a Europe of solidarity and peace that can give hope to its peoples and contribute to development, employment, prosperity and social cohesion.

We, the Cypriot Delegation at the CoR, are both willing and able to work to bring these objectives closer to reality for our fellow citizens – and we are convinced that the same is true of all the national delegations. It is our responsibility to be alert to our people's needs and ensure their voice is heard in the EU, but it is also our duty to seek out the best ways of working together to respond to questions that can no longer be avoided and that clearly have no precedent. Migration, unemployment, poverty and social exclusion, environmental conservation, research and innovation are all issues that cannot be dealt with in isolation, but that demand cooperation, creativity and ambitious development projects.

This state of affairs leaves no room for carelessness or mistakes: what is needed is systematic work and careful policies that, above all, provide concrete proof of concern for our fellow citizens and their quality of life. The Europe 2020 strategy has provided an ideal launch pad for seeking real results in these sectors; objectives on a drawing board are one thing, but tangible, real results in the form of economic, social and territorial cohesion are a completely different thing.

I personally think that during these six months we should focus closely on developing a European migration and asylum policy, and I am delighted to see that this is one of the Cyprus presidency's priorities. As I have proposed, the Bureau meeting to be held in Nicosia on 7 September will certainly focus on this issue. Neighbourhood Policy and the Integrated Maritime Policy for the EU mean that we will now be able to tackle the burning issues of our time at European level too and find the best solutions for development and progress.

As the Head of the Cypriot Delegation, I have had the opportunity to get to know and to work with many local and regional representatives, and come to realise what diversity means in practice. Over the many years that we have been working here, however, this has not prevented us from coming up with successful results, devising actions and initiatives, and pursuing the best policies for our fellow citizens. We must not allow ourselves to be disheartened by the difficulties but rather should all set our sights on a "Better Europe" (the Cyprus presidency slogan).

During its Presidency of the Council of the EU, the Republic of Cyprus will work towards a better and more effective Europe, a Europe closer to its citizens and to the world, enhancing sustainable growth, social, territorial and economic cohesion, based on the principle of solidarity.

Among the many and important priorities, all affecting in one way or another local and regional authorities, I think the policy on cohesion, the common asylum system, immigration, job creation, climate change, culture, youth and sports are most important for my municipality, the municipality of Nicosia, but also for the local and regional level in general because they can improve the quality of life and promote sustainable development.

Cyprus is a small island country with an ancient history and culture. Its geographical location (between Europe, Asia and Africa) has made it a source of strife between various superpowers down the ages. That is why I consider the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the European family to be so precious. Since its entry in 2004, Cyprus, like all Member States, has become part of Europe's institutional set-up and is where it belongs.

I am honoured and fortunate to be a permanent member of our delegation. I belong to the European Peoples Party group and I am one of its vice-presidents. I sit on the CIVEX and COTER commissions and I am a member of ARLEM, where I am part of the ECOTER commission. For me, CoR membership means a constant flow of information, knowledge and contrasting cultures, and, above all, a fascinating experience of the European political life.

Immediately after being appointed to the CoR, I took on the own-initiative opinion on city diplomacy. Living in a country that has known conquest and conflict, and that is also in close proximity with the Near East and its many problems, I drafted this opinion with particular awareness and interest, referring to familiar circumstances, and I am happy to say that the opinion was approved unanimously. City diplomacy is something I really believe in. Bringing peoples closer together by means of cooperation and mutual support in areas relating to everyday life generates an energy that is immediately infectious.

At the Open Days that followed, I spoke on the subject at a seminar and invited the two persons who were using city diplomacy long before the term was coined as such. It was a Greek Cypriot, Lellos Demetriades and a Turkish Cypriot Mustafa Akinci, who, despite the difficulties of a divided capital city, Nicosia, sat down together, away from the media glare and drew up first a sewage system for the whole city and, following that, the Nicosia Master Plan with the aim of securing urban planning that will not pose problems once the city is reunited.

In June 2011, as a member of the CIVEX commission, on behalf of our delegation and the Union of Cyprus Municipalities, I organised the commission's external meeting and a seminar on "The role of local and regional authorities in promoting European citizenship". The event was a great success with unprecedented attendance and we are expecting the same in September 2012 when the CoR Bureau will be returning to Nicosia as the Republic of Cyprus takes over the presidency of the Council of the EU.

To round off, I would like to say once more that the CoR is the institution that represents the future of the EU, that is local and regional government, and I am delighted to be a part of it.



Eleni LOUKAIDOU
Municipal Councillor of Nicosia



07 The decentralized Cypriot authority model

■ Local Authorities

There are two types of local authorities, Municipalities and Communities, which are governed by separate laws. In principle, Municipalities constitute the form of local government in urban and tourist centres while communities mainly constitute the local structure in rural areas.

■ Municipalities

There are 39 Municipalities in Cyprus. The establishment and operation of these Municipalities is governed by the Municipal Law, approved in October 1985 (N. 111/85) to replace existing legislation. The Law provided for the establishment of new municipalities. According to this Law, any Community may become a Municipality by local referendum, subject to the

approval of the Council of Ministers, provided it has either a population of more than 5.000, or has the economic resources to function as a municipality. Based on the above provisions of the Law, referenda took place in Cyprus during July 2011, which declared six new Municipalities. The new Municipalities were established officially on October 21st, 2011, by Decrees of the Minister of Interior, thus raising the number of Municipalities in Cyprus from 33 to 39.



Nicosia Town Hall

Among the 39 Cypriot Municipalities, 9 are under Turkish occupation since 1974 as a result of the seizure of 37% of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey, following the 1974 military invasion. Since that date, these nine municipalities are displaced: They continue to maintain their legal status, although their mayors and councils have temporarily been displaced

to the government-controlled area, as have the majority of their constituents. When local elections are held in Cyprus, the inhabitants of the displaced municipalities vote for their Municipality of origin and once for their new place of residence (one of the Municipalities or Communities in the government-controlled areas).

The corporate structure of municipalities is defined by the 1985 Comprehensive Law. Mayors are elected directly by the citizens on a separate ballot, for a term of five years and are the executive authority of the Municipalities. The Mayor represents the Municipality, in a court of Law and before any state authority, and presides over all Council meetings, Administrative Committee meetings and any other municipal committee. The Mayor executes the Council's decisions and heads all municipal services which he/she directs and supervises.

Municipal Councils, which are the policy-making bodies of the Municipalities, are elected directly by the citizens for a term of five years, but separately from the Mayor. The Council appoints the members of the Administrative Committee. The latter's duties include the preparation of the Municipality's budgets and annual financial statements, the provision of assistance and advice to the Mayor in the execution of his/her duties, coordination of the work of other committees appointed by the Council and the carrying out of any other

duties entrusted to it by the Council or the Mayor. The Council may also set up ad-hoc or standing committees which have an advisory role.

The principal positions and offices in a municipality are also specified in the relevant legislation and these are the positions of the Municipal Secretary, the Municipal Engineer, the Treasurer and the Health Officer. Additional positions may be created where a need arises.

According to the Law, the main responsibilities of municipalities are the construction and maintenance of streets and street lighting, the collection, disposal and treatment of waste, the protection and improvement of the environment and the good appearance of the municipal areas, the construction, development and maintenance of municipal gardens and parks and the protection of public health. The Municipal Council has the authority to promote, depending on its finances, a vast range of activities and events including the arts, education, sport and social services. In addition to the Municipalities Law, there are several laws giving Municipalities important powers other than those already mentioned. Such laws are the Streets and Buildings Regulation Law, the Town Planning Law, the Civil Marriages Law and the Sewerage Systems Law.

The main sources of revenue for municipalities are municipal taxes, fees and duties (professional tax, immovable property tax, hotel accommodation tax, fees for issuing permits and licences, fees for refuse collection, fines, etc.), as well as state subsidies. Taxes, duties and fees represent a major source of revenue, while state grants and subsidies amount to a significant percentage of the income. The central government, however, usually finances major infrastructure projects undertaken by the municipalities, but this is dependent very much on each individual project. The yearly budgets of the municipalities are submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval and their accounts are audited annually by the Auditor General of the Republic. Municipal loans also need to be approved by the Council of Ministers.

All Cypriot Municipalities are members of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities (<http://www.ucm.org.cy/>), which is the main association of Local Authorities in Cyprus. Its core functions are to contribute to the development of local government autonomy, as well as to act as spokesman of local government interests vis-a-vis the central government and other national institutions. It also takes an active stand in the relations between Cyprus and the European Union.



Aqueduct Kamares © Cyprus Tourism Organisation



■ Communities

The operation of the Communities, as well as the functions of the Presidents and the Councils of the Communities, are governed by the provisions of the Communities Law, which was enacted in 1999. In every Community there is a Council, which has the responsibility for the running of all the local affairs of the Community. The Councils of the Communities and

the Councils of Clusters of Communities (since there are cases where Communities are grouped together) number 350 in the government-controlled areas, and represent approximately 30% of the population and cover 80% of the territory of Cyprus.

The 135 Community Councils in the areas of the Republic of Cyprus which are under Turkey military occupation since 1974 cannot apply the powers and competences of the Communities Law, but they maintain their legal status as recognized Community Councils until a solution of the Cyprus problem that would allow them to exercise their power and competences in situ.

The Councils of the Communities consist of elected members, the number of which varies depending on the number of registered voters and serve for a period of five years. The Councils are headed by the President of the Community, who

is elected also, for a period of five years. The President holds a special place in the Community because of the nature of his functions, which include the convening of the meetings of the Councils, the responsibility for the execution of the Councils' decisions, the representation of the Councils and the enforcement of Law and Order in the area of the Communities.

The Central Government through the District Administrations, provides support and assistance to the Councils for the fulfilment and promotion of their objectives and aims. The Councils have limited economic resources, which basically come from taxes imposed on the basis of the provisions of the Communities Law, water supply, fines, fees for the issue of licences, garbage collection charges and also state grants which, particularly in the case of development works, amount in several cases to 95%.

The Union of Cyprus Communities (<http://www.ekk.org.cy/>) was established in 1990 by a decision taken at a joint meeting of the District Unions of Communities of Nicosia, Limassol, Pafos, Larnaka and free Famagusta. The aims of the Union are the defence and promotion of the Members' powers, interests, rights and privileges and generally, of the independence and self-sufficiency of the Local Authorities, the permanent and on an organised basis cooperation and exchange of views between them, achievement of common targets, collection of data and information useful for the cooperation of the Communities and the expression of opinions to any Authority (including the Government and the House of Representatives) or person, and claiming from the state matters aiming at the development and expansion of the Local Self-Government institution.



Pafos © Cyprus Tourism Organisation

■ District Administration

For the purpose of administration, Cyprus is divided into six districts. Each district is headed by a District Officer who is a senior civil servant appointed by the Government as its local representative. The District Officer is the chief coordinator and liaison for the activities of all Ministries in the District and is accountable to the Ministry of Interior. The District Officers are not elected by local or regional authorities, but are part of the civil service.



Kourion Theatre © F. Cappellari



Prepared by Lands and Surveys Department, Ministry of Interior, Kypros 2012 © STATE COPYRIGHT RESERVED

08 EU-funded projects in Cyprus

The efficient and effective utilization of the EU Funds allocated to Cyprus, has been one of the main priorities of the country since its accession to the EU in May 2004. The goal of fully absorbing and effectively utilizing the funding made available to Cyprus for the programming period 2004-2006, amounting to €113 m, was successfully accomplished and added value to the development policy of the country by implementing well-designed and targeted measures.

The efficient and effective use of the Structural and the Cohesion Funds continues to be one of the main priorities of the Cypriot Government during the current programming period 2007-2013, with an increased allocation of Cohesion Policy funds to the country, amounting to €640 m. These funds co-finance two Operational Programmes, contributing to the objectives of Convergence and Competitiveness and Employment, namely the "Sustainable Development and Competitiveness" and the "Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion" programmes, while a small part of these funds is allocated to

the European Territorial Cooperation programmes (e.g. Cross border cooperation with Greece, Transnational Co-operation with Mediterranean Countries).

With an allocation of around €307 m, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) provides funding mainly for infrastructure projects and supports private investment towards the enhancement of competitiveness. More specifically, ERDF resources in Cyprus are mostly spent on local development actions for the revitalization of urban and rural areas, investments in SMEs through grant schemes or financial engineering instruments (i.e. JEREMIE), research and innovation, information and communication technologies etc. The European Social Fund (ESF) provides funding to projects aimed at increasing employment and strengthening human capital, through the contribution of approximately €120 m to activities promoting education, training, social integration of disadvantaged people, combating discrimination in the labour market, and capacity building in public administration. Finally, with an allocation



1

MANAGEMENT OF SOLID WASTE, KOSHI (2004-2006)

- PUBLIC EXPENDITURE: € 46,6m
- CONTRIBUTION OF THE COHESION FUND: €28,7m
- IMPLEMENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

The Unit for Integrated Management of Solid Household Waste, constructed in Koshi, manages and treats solid waste of households and hotel units using the latest technology methods. The project was co-financed by the Cohesion Fund during the 2004–2006 programming period. The Unit covers the needs of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts and has contributed significantly to the protection of the environment and the upgrading of public health in the area.

<http://www.moi.gov.cy>



EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

of €213 m, the Cohesion Fund co-finance infrastructure projects, including major ones, in the sectors of environment, transport and energy.

In order to ensure the smooth implementation of the co-financed programmes there is a continuous and close monitoring, by both the Managing Authority and the Intermediary Bodies, on the progress of the projects approved and implemented by the

Beneficiaries, that enables the timely identification and addressing of bottlenecks and other problems. The common system and procedures followed also contribute towards this direction.

The country can demonstrate some significant projects co-financed by the EU Cohesion Policy funds, during the current and previous programming period, such as:



2

RENOVATION OF THE PATTICHIO MUNICIPALITY THEATRE, LIMASSOL (2007-2013)

- PUBLIC EXPENDITURE: € 4,8m
- CO-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
- IMPLEMENTED BY LIMASSOL MUNICIPALITY

With the contribution of the European Regional Development Fund in the framework of the 2007–2013 programming period, the Pattichio Municipality Theatre is currently under renovation aiming at becoming a modern theatre which will benefit the citizens and visitors of the city and contribute to the upgrading of the socio-cultural activity of the district of Limassol.

<http://www.limassolmunicipal.com.cy>

3

ROUNDBABOUT AT AYIOS ATHANASIOS (2004-2006)

- PUBLIC EXPENDITURE: € 41,5m
- CONTRIBUTION OF THE COHESION FUND: €25,3m
- IMPLEMENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

The Upgrading of the Roundabouts of Ayios Athanasios and Germasoyia contributed significantly to the decongestion of the traffic in the northeast area of Limassol, assisting the smooth and uninterrupted circulation between the cities of Nicosia and Paphos, as well as facilitating the access to the Limassol Port and Paphos Airport. The project was co-financed by the Cohesion Fund during the programming period 2004–2006.

<http://www.mcw.gov.cy>



4

LIMASSOL PORT (2007-2013)

- PUBLIC EXPENDITURE: €25,3m
- CO-FINANCED BY THE COHESION FUND
- IMPLEMENTED BY THE CYPRUS PORT AUTHORITY

The upgrading of the competitiveness and the efficiency of the Limassol Port in order to respond to the technological developments in the port industry and consequently to enhance the role of Cyprus as the gateway of the European Union to the South-Eastern Mediterranean area, is pursued through the implementation of the project Upgrading of Limassol Port, which is co-financed by the Cohesion Fund in the 2007–2013 programming period. The upgrading of the port includes the deepening, stabilisation and expansion of its platforms in order to accommodate ships of third and fourth generation.

<http://www.cpa.gov.cy>



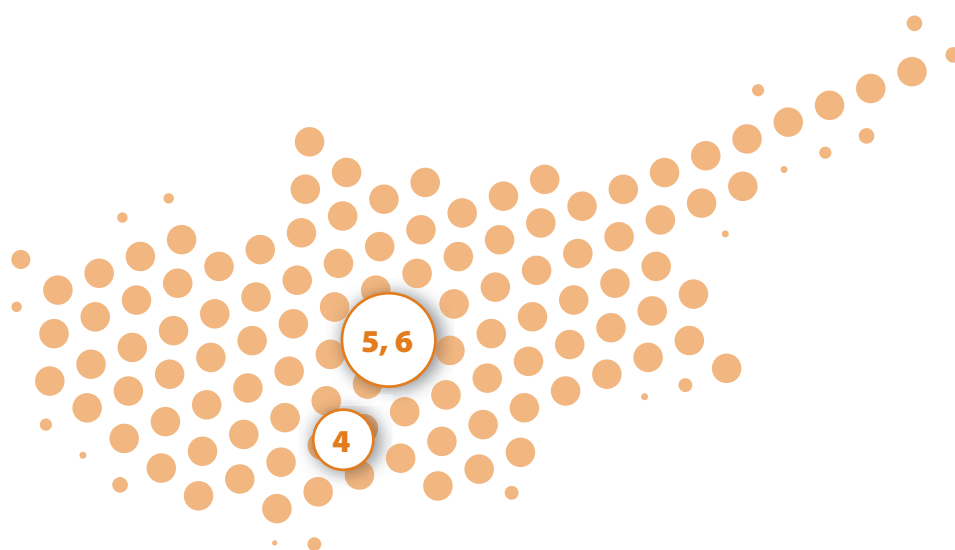
5

IMPROVEMENT OF THE EMPLOYABILITY OF THE UNEMPLOYED (2007-2013)

- BUDGET: €8m
- CO-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND
- IMPLEMENTED BY THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The project **Improvement of the Employability of the Unemployed** is co-financed by the European Social Fund in the framework of the 2007–2013 programming period. Within the context of the project, opportunities for participating in training programmes are offered to the unemployed. The programmes include trainings in basic knowledge and skills in the fields of computer literacy, English language and secretarial skills, in accordance with the needs of the labour market. Moreover, work experience programmes are offered in appropriate enterprises.

<http://www.hrdauth.org.cy>



6

LOCAL CYPRIOT AUTHORITIES PROMOTING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP



Following the submission of three project proposals by the Union of Cyprus Municipalities in the framework of the "Europe for Citizens" programme, the EU co-financed three projects in Cyprus. All three, within Action 1: Measure 2.2 Support measures of the programme.



The project had a duration of 12 months, starting from the 4th January 2010 and the partners were: the Union of Cyprus Municipalities (UCM), the Vereniging van Vlaamse Steden en Gemeenten (VVSG) – Belgium and the Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Prefecture Chios (TEDK CHIOS) – Greece. Its aim was to try and solve the problems that Cypriot Municipalities used to face when developing twinning projects. To do so, the methodology used in Flanders has been applied: it is the citizens themselves that voluntarily prepare and run twinings. DECISIVE, therefore, focused on developing voluntarism and transferring knowhow from Flanders to Cyprus and Chios, through training sessions in Cyprus and Belgium. For more info:

<http://www.ucm.org.cy/Project-DECISIVE,5,75,English>



The project had a duration of 12 months, starting from the 3rd January 2011 and the partners were: the Union of Cyprus Municipalities (UCM) and the Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Prefecture Chios (TEDK CHIOS) – Greece. The project offered better access to European networks of towns and better projects to the citizens of two peripheral insular areas of the European south. The project gathered to a comprehensive guide (edited in Greek) all information material (guides, websites, bibliography, best practices...) on twinning, in order to provide practical answers to local actors and citizens seeking to work on Town Twinning. The project also gave the possibility to Twinning stakeholders from the two partners, not only to learn from each other's experiences, but to physically work within each other's premises, in order to better understand each other's processes. For more info:

<http://www.ucm.org.cy/Project-SUSTAIN,6,75,English>



The project has a duration of 12 months, starting from the 9th January 2012 and the partners are the Union of Cyprus Municipalities (UCM) and the Assembly of European Regions (AER). Local and regional authorities around Europe will be trained to set thematic priorities for projects, formulate their ideas, find partners and target their actions. 15 comprehensive thematic guides (on education and youth, culture and media, employment and social affairs, research and development, industry and enterprises, external relations and development, commerce, energy, environment, transport, public health and consumer protection, justice and home affairs, information technology, agriculture and fisheries) will be produced in English and in Greek. Two training sessions (one in Cyprus and one in Brussels) will teach local and regional practitioners how to use the provided material and how to better finance their actions. For more info:

<http://www.proi3t.eu>

7

THE AGIA NAPA AQUEDUCT



- BUDGET: €588 800
- CO-FINANCED 50% BY THE EUROPEAN UNION FUND FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND 50% BY NATIONAL SOURCES

The structure we see today is an alteration of the original Roman aqueduct, which occurred during the Frankish period, around the same time the monastery was built. The main water source can be found somewhere on the north-eastern hills of Agia Napa. The original visible route of the channel was marked by a barrel-shaped structure at the location 'Mana tou Nerou', locally known as the 'House of the Greeks'. From that point on the aqueduct ran all the way to the monastery following natural bedrock contours. Its builders exploited the principles of gravity in order to deliver water to the Monastery. At two locations, along its route, monolithic troughs which were incorporated in the channel, acted as settling chambers in order to collect heavy impurities. At the same time these intercepting chambers facilitated the smooth running of water at the start of each curve. There were also facilities for watering livestock and leading water streams towards the fields. At one particular location the aqueduct was intersected by a deep stream. A massive wall of dressed stones was built to bridge the gap; its height varied from one to twelve meters. An opening, shaped like a pointed arch, was left for the stream water to flow through to the sea. There on, the aqueduct wound down towards the monastery; where at a deep point before the monastic buildings, it was supported on a wall. Then it ran parallel to the north outer wall of the cells and after passing under the Private House it entered the courtyard. The water streamed through a fountain mask, shaped like a boar's head. From there it was conveyed under the courtyard and the southern buildings of the monastery and finally stored in a large reservoir, built under Cyprus's oldest and largest sycamore tree. Another pipeline within the courtyard supplied water to a sculptured fountain. A photograph taken in 1887/8, shows three women filling jars inside the monastery, a fact attesting that the aqueduct was in use at least until that time. In 1996 large-scale conservation work was undertaken by the Department of Antiquities with the financial support of the Municipality of Agia Napa. In September 2006 the project was incorporated in the European initiative 'INTERREG IIIA GREECE-CYPRUS', a fact that led to the resumption of excavation and conservation works, which continued through 2007. The excavations undertaken by the Department of Antiquities resulted in the recovery of the remaining part of the aqueduct.

7



8

REDESIGN OF ELEFTERIA SQUARE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

- **TIME FRAME:** February 2012-February 2014
- **TOTAL ANTICIPATED COST:** € 24 950 000
- **FUNDING:** Republic of Cyprus, European Union and Nicosia Municipality
- **NICOSIA MUNICIPALITY LOAN FROM THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENT BANK**

The focal point in the capital for political rallies and demonstrations, for cultural events and social activities, which continues to be the most important link between the historic centre and the contemporary city, a bridge over the moat of the Venetian Walls. The main objectives of the project are:

- to maintain and upgrade Eleftheria Square's role as a prominent, attractive and welcoming landmark and a central meeting point.
- to allow the new square to serve as a link between the historic city within the walls and the contemporary urban centre outside the walls
- to establish compatibility between functionality and aesthetics, in order to create central area where people can interact, enjoy and stroll or hold public events and celebrations
- to highlight the distinctive features of the Square and harmoniously blend the historic infrastructure of the area with its contemporary urban function.



9

WATERFRONT – MULTIFUNCTIONAL SEASIDE PARK

- **TIME FRAME:** 2010-2012
- **TOTAL COST:** € 19 m.
- **CO-FINANCED BY THE ERDF AND INCLUDED IN THE 2007-2013 PROGRAMMING PERIOD, UNDER THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME, WHOSE PRIORITIES INCLUDE THE REGENERATION OF COASTAL AND RURAL AREAS.**

When the new Olympion Coast project was launched in 2006, it was as though Limassol had rediscovered its lost identity as a seaside town. Up until then, the seafront had been virtually unused and forgotten.

Today, the Olympion Coast is humming with life and is one of the main areas where the people of Limassol, as well as its thousands of visitors, can stroll, exercise and relax.

Restoration of the waterfront is based on new development specifications dating from 2002 and the Limassol centre renovation plan with its provisions and policy measures, as well as the new demands and needs of the area's users. The intention was to link the waterfront both functionally and conceptually with the rest of the town, through various access routes to and re-landscaping of the seafront, restoring the functional connection between city and sea that had been lost for years. Thus certain functions are being preserved and enhanced, without neglecting the more general planning principles for the town as a whole.

The plans for development of the waterfront and the seaside park provide for: new parking areas, a bicycle path linking the Olympion Coast with the old port and beyond, a practical and visual link with the main axes north of the coast road, to re-establish the functional relationship and symbolic connection between Limassol town centre and the sea, a small open-air amphitheatre for themed events and entertainment and additional play areas and a skateboard park.

The improvement project obviously also takes account of ongoing improvements to existing structures such as fountains, sculptures, green spaces created by various businesses and, of course, provisions to ensure access for all.

10

OPEN-AIR FOLK ART (TRADITIONAL CRAFTS) MUSEUM IN DHERYNIA

- **ELIGIBLE COSTS:** € 1 040 000
- **RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2007-2013:** € 346 666.67
- **REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS:** € 346 666.67
- **MUNICIPALITY OF DHERYNIA:** € 346 666.67

The purpose of the project is to make a contribution in the sphere of education and information on local customs and practices, to consolidate traditions and to improve local people's quality of life by organising events on various matters of interest while also improving their economic resources. In addition, the project is expected to promote social, economic and territorial cohesion in the wider rural area, maintain population levels and create new jobs.

The project includes exhibition areas/rooms displaying traditional crafts, such as carpentry, joinery, shoemaking, dressmaking, smithing/ironmongery, building/bricklaying, hairdressing, stone masonry, fishing, market gardening, etc.

Traditional objects will be displayed in the semi-open-air exhibition areas, for instance carts, a harvesting machine, a threshing machine and other threshing tools, boats, millstones, stone troughs, etc.

12

11

11

DAY CARE CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY

- **IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:** 1 November 2007 – 30 November 2008. The project is on going.
- **FUNDING:** 50% from the European Social Fund and close to 50% from national funds under measure 1.4: "Expansion and improvement of care services for children, the elderly, the disabled and other dependants".

This centre was set up as part of a joint venture by the Municipality of Nicosia and the Multifunctional Municipal Foundation of Nicosia.

Beneficiaries: *residents of the Nicosia municipality aged 65 or over, who are cared for on a daily basis by female family members.*

Objectives:

A) to provide psychological support and promote the physical and mental health of older people through a daily programme of activities;

B) to release women from having to provide daily care for elderly family members and enable them to enter the labour market.

Services:

- transport for the elderly to and from the centre
- provision of breakfast and lunch
- music lessons
- dance and gym lessons
- occupational therapy
- recreational trips and pilgrimages

Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 7.30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

10

12

CreaMed: FOSTERING CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA AS KEY ELEMENTS FOR REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- **BUDGET:** €8m
- **CO-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND**
- **IMPLEMENTED BY THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

CreaMed is a transnational alliance of 11 partners from 8 different countries aimed at fostering Creativity and Innovation in all Mediterranean regions at both public and private level, for ensuring regional Sustainable Development. The CreaMed Alliance encourages mutual policy learning, synergies and cooperation in order to constitute a framework for developing Regional Innovation Policies in the MED Area.

Strategic goal is to align public Innovation Policies in the MED area for ensuring that their implementation is performed in accordance and coherence with EU priorities. The actions foreseen to be implemented are expected to boost the Mediterranean Industry and contribute to the consolidation of the European Knowledge Economy. To this end, a sound Alliance of key Mediterranean actors in the field of Innovation promotion has been brought together for transferring knowledge and methodologies about Creativity and Innovation among public and private bodies. The reinforcement of the MED business innovation potential will contribute to the growth, prosperity and sustainability of the regions, leading in the long-term of business – and particularly the SMEs – at the forefront of EU in terms of competitiveness

<http://www.hrdauth.org.cy>



09 Main Events

The CoR regularly raises the profile of local and regional authorities on the European stage by organising conferences, seminars and exhibitions all year round in cooperation with its regional and local partners, including the “OPEN DAYS – European Week of Regions and Cities”, which brings together more than 6,000 stakeholders each October. OPEN DAYS 2012, taking place in Brussels, 8-11 October, will be the 10th anniversary of the event.



10th European Week of Regions and Cities
Brussels
8 - 11 October 2012

Europe's regions and cities: Making a difference

Looking back to a decade of political debate and exchange of good practice, the 10th European Week of Regions and Cities-OPEN DAYS will discuss the future of EU cohesion policy under three thematic aspects: smart and green growth, territorial cooperation, and delivering results.

Organised jointly by the Committee of the Regions and the European Commission's Regional Policy Directorate-General, the event will be held between 8 and 11 October 2012 involving about 200 regions and cities as well as other EU institutions and associations.

The OPEN DAYS 2012 will consist of 100 workshops, debates, and networking opportunities for about 6,000 participants.

More information: www.opendays.europa.eu

■ Cypriot Participation

The European Office Cyprus (EOC) participates in the organisation of two seminars during the OPEN DAYS 2012 – European Week of Regions and Cities - and the Open Days University event, to be held in parallel in Brussels from 8 to 11 October 2012, organised by the Committee of the Regions and DG Regional Policy.

The EOC on behalf of Nicosia participates in the Capital Cities and Regions Network, where ten Capital Cities and Regions are organising a debate entitled “*Capital Cities and regions: key to Europe's smart future*” (10 October 2012). The debate will highlight the important role Capital Cities and Regions play in moving towards a greener economy in order to achieve smart growth for all. In addition, the EOC will be hosting a workshop for the Open Days University on “*Smart Academic Cities*” together with UNICA, the Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (9 October 2012). The innovative “Smart Academic Cities” concept is based on the “smart cities” model and applies the same six characteristic features of a “smart city”: smart people, smart economy, smart governance, smart mobility, smart environment and smart living. The aim of the workshop, an EOC initiative, is to offer the floor to different city stakeholders: renowned academics and researchers in the field of urban development, policymakers, businesses, and students. It will showcase good practices and offer a lively forum for the exchange of ideas and knowledge on how Smart Academic Cities can foster regional and local economic development.

■ Local events in Cyprus



This year there are two local events organised in Cyprus.

1. **"Innovative Cities"** organised by the Cyprus Energy Agency (CEA) with the support of the European Office of Cyprus (EOC). The local event will have the form of a special session within the *"East-Meets-West on Innovation and Entrepreneurship Congress and Exhibition"* organised by the EOC. The Congress and Exhibition will be held on 1-4 September 2012 in Nicosia and it is put under the auspices of the Cyprus' Presidency of the Council of the EU.

The aim of the *"Innovative Cities"* session, which will take place on 2 September 2012, is to provide information to the participants about the smart cities, best practices on energy management, renewable energy in cities and towns, environmental management and in general to address the issue of sustainable living.

2. **"Human Biomonitoring (HBM) – Linking Environment to Health and Supporting Policy"**. This Conference to take place from 22-25 October in Larnaca is organized by the Cyprus Presidency of the European Union Council and the Cyprus State General Laboratory of the Ministry of Health, together with the Consortia of the EU-funded projects "COPHES" (FP-7) and "DEMOCOPHES" (LIFE-Plus).

The conference will present the results of recent European efforts to harmonize human biomonitoring surveys in environment and health across Europe. Discussion of challenges and opportunities encountered in a European wide pilot study will precede conclusions regarding the applicability, obstacles and advantages of a harmonized approach to HBM in Europe. It is hoped that this conference will further pave the way for a sustainable framework of Human biomonitoring in Europe, supporting and evaluating policy, as demanded for in the European Health and Environment Plan.

■ EuroPCom 2012 3rd European Conference on Public Communication Brussels – 17-18 October 2012

The programme is based on the evaluation and conclusions of the previous editions and on the input of the Advisory Board and – through online platforms – of the target audience of the conference. The themes and topics respond to the demands and expectations of European public communicators at all levels, and are inspired by the most relevant issues on the actual EU policy agenda. The main EU communication priorities (Europe 2020, Citizenship), as confirmed by the IGI meeting of 6 June, are explicitly part of the programme.

The CoR agreed with Commissioner Reding to dedicate a flash **Eurobarometer** in 2012 to questions of perception of and trust in policy making at European, national and regional levels.

The Eurobarometer survey will be done **exceptionally at regional level**: at the level of 170 'constitutional' regions (NUTS 1 and 2 level) in the 27 Member States, a total of 50,000 citizens will be interviewed.

The overview of the citizens' economic confidence, the image of the EU and trust in its institutions will be presented at the EuroPCom conference. The highlights will be presented and discussed during the plenary opening session, in-depth debates will follow then in a thematic workshop and possibly a separate press briefing.



10 Calendar of events

July

2 JULY

Committee of the Regions :
COTER Commission

■ BRUSSELS

5-6 JULY

Committee of the Regions : External meeting
of the EDUC commission and seminar
"Sports for All – interregional cooperation"

■ PALANGA (LT)

12 JULY

Informal EPSCO-Employment – COREPER II

■ BRUSSELS

13 JULY

Informal EPSCO-Employment
- COREPER I (poss)/PSC

■ BRUSSELS

17 JULY

Committee of the Regions : Bureau

■ BRUSSELS

18-19 JULY

Committee of the Regions : Plenary Session

■ BRUSSELS

23 JULY

FAC- Informal JHA

■ BRUSSELS

24 JULY

GAC- Informal JHA PSC

■ BRUSSELS

September

7 SEPTEMBER

Committee of the Regions :
Extraordinary Bureau Meeting

■ NICOSIA

13 SEPTEMBER

Committee of the Regions : ECOS
commission : Study visit "Reactions to new
uncertainties in the financial markets"

■ FRANKFURT AM MAIN (DE)

19 SEPTEMBER

Committee of the Regions : ECOS Commission

■

20-21 SEPTEMBER

Committee of the Regions : External meeting
of the ENVE commission and seminar on
"Promoting synergies between regional
development and protection of biodiversity"

■ PESCARA (IT)

24 SEPTEMBER

Committee of the Regions : CAFA

■ BRUSSELS

25 SEPTEMBER

Committee of the Regions : CIVEX
Commission

■

26 SEPTEMBER

Committee of the Regions :
COTER Commission

27 SEPTEMBER

Committee of the Regions : EDUC Commission

■

October

1 OCTOBER

Committee of the Regions : NAT Commission

■

8 OCTOBER

Eurogroup : Informal Ministerial Meeting
on integrated Maritime Policy

■ LUX.

8 OCTOBER

Committee of the Regions : Bureau

■ BRUSSELS

8-11 OCTOBER

Committee of the Regions : OPEN DAYS
– European week of regions and cities

■ BRUSSELS

9-10 OCTOBER

Committee of the Regions : Plenary Session

■ BRUSSELS

15 OCTOBER

Conference of the regional and local
authorities for the Eastern Partnership
(CORLEAP) – annual meeting

■ CHISISNAU MOLDOVA

17-18 OCTOBER

Committee of the Regions :
EUROPCOM – European Conference
on Public sector Communication

■ BRUSSELS

18-19 OCTOBER

European Council

■ BRUSSELS

24 OCTOBER

Committee of the Regions : COTER
- Commission Seminar on "The impact
and leverage effect on territorial cohesion
of the Connecting Europe Facility"

■ VANECA (ES)

November

5-6 NOVEMBER

Informal Meeting of Ministers for Territorial
and Urban Development and Cohesion Policy

■

5-9

"EU Back to school initiative":
European Commission

■ CYPRUS

12 NOVEMBER

Committee of the Regions : CAFA

■ BRUSSELS

22 NOVEMBER

Committee of the Regions : EDUC Commission



28 NOVEMBER

Committee of the Regions : Bureau



BRUSSELS

29-30 NOVEMBER

Committee of the Regions : Plenary Session



BRUSSELS

29-30 NOVEMBER

Committee of the Regions :
"Citizenship" Forum



BRUSSELS

December

4 DECEMBER

Committee of the Regions : CIVEX Commission



5 DECEMBER

Committee of the Regions : NAT Commission



6 DECEMBER

Committee of the Regions : ENVE Commission



7 DECEMBER

Committee of the Regions :
COTER Commission



13-14 DECEMBER

European Council



BRUSSELS

14 DECEMBER

Committee of the Regions : ECOS Commission



14 DECEMBER

European Council



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