



## EDITOR'S NOTE

An EU member state in the Eastern Mediterranean, at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa; this is Cyprus in a nutshell.

The monthly FES Cyprus Newsletter gives you a current overview of the domestic political situation and the external affairs of an island, which is far more than a divided country. Have a pleasant read!

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## HEADLINES

United Nations Secretary-General's personal envoy, Maria Angela Holguin Cuellar, returns for a third round of meetings with Cypriot leaders; Tatar rejects tripartite meeting sparking criticism internally as envoy's mandate approaches deadline; Findings report and UNSG brief expected in early July.

The government's dispute with the LNG terminal's construction consortium continues. Plan B explored by government, including termination of the current contract.

Cyprus is faced with water and drought crises as water levels are dropping dramatically; Issue to be raised during Minister's meetings with EU counterparts.

The law that regulates the "Immoveable Property Acquisition" by foreigners in the north has been amended to address concerns regarding the increase of sales to foreigners.

A World Bank report showed that the recovery of the Turkish Cypriot economy in 2023 was stronger than expected, and GDP is estimated to have rebounded to its pre-pandemic level.





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PODCASTS in JUNE:  
No podcasts in June



PODCASTS in JULY:  
*No podcasts in July*

PUBLICATIONS in JUNE:  
*No publications in June*



PUBLICATIONS in JULY:  
*No publications in July*

EVENTS in JUNE:

*Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and Vasiliki Triga*  
**„Grab a Cypriot Coffee“**

**European Elections in Cyprus:**

**How a Tiktoker Shocked the Party System**

Date: Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Time: 9:30 am – 10:00 am (EEST / Cyprus time)

Location: Zoom Seminar

Kindly RSVP by June 17<sup>th</sup> to receive the Zoom link  
by emailing [office.cyprus@fes.de](mailto:office.cyprus@fes.de)



EVENTS in JULY:

*No events planned so far*

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## FES CYPRUS NEWSLETTER

### CYPRUS PROBLEM & INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

In May, the United Nations Secretary-General' (UNSG) personal envoy, María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar, arrived on the island for a third round of meetings with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders,<sup>1</sup> Nicos Christodoulides and Ersin Tatar respectively, following engagements with EU officials in Brussels and other European cities and a meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan in Ankara.

On May 8, following separate meetings with both Cypriot leaders, which she described as "constructive", Holguín stated that "It is now up to both leaders to find a common ground for negotiations to restart". Tatar later stated that he rejected a UN proposal suggesting a trilateral meeting with Holguín and Christodoulides. The rejection sparked criticism by the leader of the Republican Turkish Party, Tufan Erhürman, arguing that this was not in the interest of the Turkish Cypriots. Tatar was also criticised by former Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akıncı with the two exchanging statements on their respective stances on the Cyprus problem over the following days.

On May 13, Holguín held another round of meetings with the two leaders. Speaking after her meeting with Christodoulides, the envoy underlined that she would continue to push for a trilateral meeting and highlighted that the leaders needed to listen to the people. Holguín's meeting with Tatar was brief and reportedly soured relations, with Holguín departing Tatar's office after less than 20 minutes without making any statements. Tatar reportedly reiterated his commitment to only restart negotiations once

the sovereign equality and equal international status of the Turkish Cypriots was accepted by the Greek Cypriots and the international community. In a later interview with news website Kibris Postasi at the Ledra Palace hotel, Holguín said she had been "surprised" that the Turkish Cypriot leader had rejected a proposal of a tripartite meeting with herself and Christodoulides. In a subsequent interview, Tatar argued that he refused to sit at a table where Greek Cypriots would be classed as the Republic and the Turkish Cypriots would be a community. The envoy added that she had also proposed a 5+1 meeting, to include the negotiators, and had specified that Turkey's Foreign Minister, Hakan Fidan, was willing to listen "with an open mind". Among a number of visits with stakeholders, Holguín also met with Sener Levant, journalist and editor-in-chief of Turkish Cypriot newspaper Avrupa, as well as with Akıncı. Tatar slammed Holguín's meetings and accused her of provoking the opposition to turn him into a target.

On May 14, Holguín declared that her mandate had come to an end and that she would now be writing a report based on her findings. She would be briefing the UNSG in early June and discuss with him the next steps. On the same day Holguín also met with Greek Foreign Minister Giorgos Gerapetritis in Athens.

On May 14, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis briefed Christodoulides about his meeting with Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan the previous day in Ankara. The Greek PM said he had conveyed to Erdoğan the message that a tripartite meeting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders is needed. Speaking after the meeting, Mit-

<sup>1</sup>The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) is only recognised by the Republic of Turkey. While for Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots, Ersin Tatar serves as President of the TRNC, the international community considers him the communal leader of the Turkish Cypriots. As the government of the Republic of Cyprus remains internationally

recognised as the government of the whole of the island, the entire island is now considered to be a member of the European Union. However, the *acquis communautaire* is suspended in northern Cyprus pending a political settlement to the Cyprus problem (see Protocol no. 10 of the Accession Treaty).





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sotakis stated that he and Erdoğan obviously disagreed on the Cyprus problem but the antidote to any deadlock would only be dialogue. Erdoğan briefly touched on the Cyprus problem saying that it was important to reach a fair and permanent solution to the Cyprus problem on the basis of the facts on the island.

On the occasion of May 1st, events were held in cities across the country to honour workers. In Nicosia, Cyprus Labour Federation (PEO) and Turkish Cypriot trade unions co-organised a march, while the Confederation of Cyprus Workers (SEK) hosted an event at its premises with the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance in attendance. Messages advocating for the reunification of Cyprus, the common demands of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot workers, and support for Palestine were voiced during these events.

A total of 103,269 Turkish Cypriots who live in the north are registered to vote in June's European parliament elections. In addition, 834 Turkish Cypriots who live in the south have also registered to vote. Three Turkish Cypriots are standing as candidates for the European Parliament elections: incumbent MEP Niyazi Kızılyürek of Akel, Oz Karahan of the Green Party and Hulusi Kilim of Volt.

### HYDROCARBONS

On May 2, Cyprus rejected the new proposal by consortium Chevron, NewMed Energy, and BG Cyprus (Shell) for an optimal development of the Aphrodite natural gas field in Block 12 of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The government deemed the proposal inadequate and requested the consortium to respond within six months on specific actions aimed to develop the gas field. The Cyprus News Agency (CNA) reported that Chevron's proposal was deemed inadequate because it was submitted on the basis of a Floating Production Unit (FPU), in-

cluded certain conditions, and that it had not targeted specific timeframes.

According to an announcement on May 14 by Greece's Independent Power Transmission Operator, the final results of the cost-benefit study for the Greece-Cyprus Great Sea Interconnector electricity project were anticipated to be unveiled by the end of May. The study was requested by Energy Minister George Papanastasiou. The Great Sea Interconnector is the planned undersea cable that will link the grids of Cyprus, Israel and Greece, which was formerly known as the EuroAsia Interconnector. The project is set to cost €1.9bn and is expected to go operational in 2029.

On May 20, President Nikos Christodoulides met with Chinese ambassador Liu Yantao to discuss the ongoing dispute over the liquefied natural gas terminal (LNG) being built in Vasiliko, which has been hit by a series of setbacks. The government is currently in arbitration in London with the Chinese consortium CPP Metron (CMC), which has undertaken the construction of the terminal. CPP has filed a claim with the court of arbitration for additional compensation from the Cyprus government amounting to €200m, alleging that Cyprus has altered the terms of the original contract. Speaking to CyBC, energy expert Charles Ellinas stated that it was unclear who is in the right in the ongoing dispute between local stakeholders and the Chinese consortium. The expert noted it was imperative for a compromise to be reached since the Vasiliko terminal (now standing at 50% complete) would save close to €300m every year in fuel costs. Terminating the contract and finding someone other than CMC to complete the project, an idea which has been floated by the state as a "Plan B", would be very difficult to carry out in practice and would cause years of additional delay, the expert added.

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### GREEK CYPRIOTS

#### Gender Developments

Cyprus was given a score of just 34% for the human rights situation and living standards of its LGBT population. The score was given by LGBT advocacy group Ilha Europe, which ranked and rated 48 European countries' LGBT human rights and living standards with its findings published on May 16 ahead of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. Cyprus' score ranked it in 28th place.

A two-day high-level conference "Women for the Mediterranean", was co-organised by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Office of the Gender Equality Commissioner on behalf of the Republic of Cyprus. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the conference on May 30, Gender Equality Commissioner Josie Christodoulou emphasised that gender equality is a matter of national interest because empowering women strengthens both society and the economy. Christodoulou said the conference would serve as a platform for discussions leading to the adoption of the Roadmap for Implementation 2024-2025. She highlighted the need to address gender equality holistically rather than sporadically. The issue, she added, is a horizontal priority for the Christodoulides government.

#### Economic Developments in Times of Green Transition

On May 16, Hellenic Bank announced that it achieved a recertification for another year under the International Energy Management System ISO 50001, focusing on energy management. The group has been annually certified since 2015 with the International Energy Management Standard ISO 50001, the announcement said. Moreover, the bank stated that it was the first organisation in Cyprus to receive such certification from the Cyprus Certifi-

cation Company. The Energy Management System covers all group activities and facilities in Cyprus, the announcement explained, offering a systematic approach for continuous improvement in energy performance, including energy efficiency, usage, and consumption. The bank has revised its Environmental, Social and Governance strategy from 2023 so that it incorporates specific goals at all operational levels while its Sustainable Bond Issuance Framework allows it to issue green bonds.

On May 20, the Green Agenda Cyprus Summit was held in Nicosia. The event focused on the risks posed by climate change and their impact on human life, the banking system, industry, real estate and the insurance sector and highlighted the vision and actions necessary for the green transition of the Cypriot economy.

On May 30, the Cyprus Stock Exchange (CSE) and the Hellenic Energy Exchange (HEEnEx) signed a Memorandum of Understanding governing negotiations on the secondary market of Guarantee of Origin certificates from renewable energy sources. The CSE, as part of its ongoing efforts to expand markets, products, and services, and align with modern developments, has been actively involved in the energy sector. As part of its green transition efforts and to reduce the impacts of climate change, the CSE aims to facilitate the use of resources through the issuance of such certificates and their redirection towards renewable energy sources, which historically have been underutilized.

#### Domestic Developments

According to water development department engineer Yianna Economidou, Cyprus is currently facing the third lowest inflow of water of the decade. The ongoing drought and looming water crisis that Cyprus is facing will be raised by Agriculture Minister Maria Panayiotou during a meeting with her counterparts in Brussels. Water levels in the island's

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dams and reservoirs have dropped dramatically this hydrological year and are continuing to do so, with total levels currently standing at 43% of capacity compared to 66.3% last year.

Two investigators were appointed by the cabinet to investigate the 19-year-old case of the murder of guardsman Thanasis Nicolaou, who was killed back in 2005. His death was first ruled as a suicide, but his family fought to prove that it was a murder cover up. The third inquiry into his death determined in early May 2024 that he was strangled in a criminal act, thus paving the way for a new investigation, seeking to identify his killers and why it was covered up for so long.

### Future of Work, Labour Relations & Trade Unions

On May 2, the trade union EQUALITY called for the immediate amendment of Article 58 of the Army of the Republic Law of 2016. The article currently prohibits members of the armed forces from participating in trade unions, a ban the union argues infringes on fundamental trade union rights protected by the state's constitution and international conventions. EQUALITY's argument is supported by the European Court of Human Rights decisions, which have ruled that such an absolute ban violates Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Additionally, it is important to mention that Convention No. 87 "Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention" of the International Labour Organisation allows national laws or regulations to determine the extent to which the guarantees provided for in this Convention shall apply to the armed forces and the police. At the same time, this request has also revived the debate on the 2015 bill regulating essential services and the right to strike. This law pertains to services related to the operation of ports, prisons, medical services, telecommunications, airports, the armed forces, and security forces such as the police and fire brigade.

On May 2, the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance issued a decree expanding the sectors and professions in which third country national (TCN) students can work. The decree, considering the current labour market situation and following consultation with social partners, allows TCN students to work in more sectors and professions provided they secure a work contract approved by the Labour Department. Additionally, students will have to provide a certificate of registration from the university or college they attend and their residence permit. Lastly, the monthly work schedule should be communicated to the Labour Department.

On May 8, workers at the port of Larnaca went on an indefinite strike, complaining of a violation of the agreement on working hours and overtime. A representative of PEO stated that PEO and SEK are urging the company to comply with the agreement signed on February 9, following a previous strike. Employers' organisations, Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation (OEB) and Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KEBE), demanded an immediate end to the strike and called for the activation of the debate on the law regulating essential services. The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance convened a meeting with trade unions, resulting in the strike measures ending at 17:00 the same day.

On May 9, negotiations regarding the renewal of the collective agreement between the trade unions and the companies that provide services at Paphos and Larnaca airports reached an impasse. Consequently, the labour dispute was referred to the Department of Labour Relations as provided by the Industrial Relations Code. The employers' side insist on renewing the collective agreement as it is, while the trade unions are demanding improvements to staff salary scales. Additionally, trade unions emphasise that working hours are not aligned with "human needs" nor with the ILO's Conventions and Recom-

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recommendations on “Workers with Family Responsibilities” since workers are required to return to work by 7 am the morning following a night shift ending at midnight.

On May 10, the Labour Advisory Body convened to address the issue of undeclared work. The Minister highlighted a significant increase in this phenomenon in recent months, attributing it to increased migration flows. In the first quarter of 2024 alone, 374 cases of undeclared and illegal work were identified.

Furthermore, on May 10, an agreement mandating safety and health training for all construction industry workers was signed between social partners and the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance. This agreement provides a two-year transitional period for employees to complete the training. After this period, workers without the required training will be prohibited from entering construction sites.

On May 15, representatives of trade unions SEK and PEO highlighted the issues regarding the renewal of collective agreements in the construction and hotel industry, as direct negotiations had failed. For the construction industry, the trade unions demand that recruitment wages be standardised and enforced by law instead of existing only in collective agreements. Concerning hotel workers, trade unions are requesting a 5% wage increase and a 50% increase in allowance for working on Sundays, which employers' organisations argue are excessive.

Negotiations between the Employers' Association of Banks and the Union of Bank Employees (ETYK) regarding the renewal of the collective agreement in the banking sector, which expired in December 2022, are also at a standstill. Despite initial progress for an agreement with Hellenic Bank last April, further negotiations have not resumed.

On May 27, the Tripartite Advisory Committee for the employment of third country nationals met for the first time since the agreement was reached last April. It is estimated that the number of third-country nationals employed has risen significantly, amounting to approximately 100,000, with many working as domestic workers. A significant number are also employed in investment funds, forex, and other financial companies.

Also on May 27, the Minister of Transport, Communications and Works announced the termination of the contract with Kition, the managing company of the port of Larnaca, raising serious concerns for the company's employees. The government has initially assured trade unions that the necessary measures will be taken to protect the workers. According to the law, when a business is transferred, employees are automatically transferred to the new entity with all their rights intact ensuring continuity of employment. The Development Company of Larnaca and Famagusta is expected to temporarily assume the role of employer to avoid any disruption to employees' rights.

On May 30, members of the EQUALITY Union decided to completely abstain from the on-call service of social workers in the Social Welfare Services. The trade union claims that the current implementation of the service violates the rights of workers and more specifically the Law on the Organisation of Working Time. In addition, they report that the issue is becoming more acute because of the understaffing of social welfare services partly due to continuous secondments to other departments.

Additionally, on May 30, the Independent Union of Public Servants of Cyprus (ASDYK) criticised the Ministry of Finance's decision to restrict public sector employees' right to seek promotion 18 months before retirement. This issue is a key topic for an upcoming meeting between the Cypriot Union of Civil



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Servants (PASDYD), ASDYK, and the Ministry of Finance aiming to prevent the need for more dynamic actions.

Lastly, on May 30, the members of the Independent Union of Public Servants (ASDYK) decided to take collective action against the decision of the Ministry of Finance regarding the compensation of the members of the police who will work compulsorily on the day of the elections. The trade union criticises the decision of the Ministry of Finance to determine the remuneration on the basis of the A3 salary scale instead of the scale in which each employee is placed. This practice, the union argues, will result in officers with 15 years' service and working in grades A7, A8 and A9 being paid as if they were new recruits.

### TURKISH CYPRIOTS

#### Gender Developments

According to a report by the World Bank (please see the next section for more on this) women's employment increased significantly in 2023, reaching an historic high. In 2023, 44%, or 4,177, of the new jobs created went to women, with most of them in the services sector. The significant rebound in female employment since 2021 was a consequence of the disproportionately adverse impact the pandemic had on it. "While the Turkish Cypriot community has still one of the lowest female labor force participation rates, it is encouraging to observe more women joining the labor force in 2023," the report noted.

#### Economic Developments in Times of Green Transition

According to the Statistical Institute, the consumer price index was 95.4% higher in May 2024 compared to May 2023. Consumer prices had risen by 3.5% in May alone; the inflation rate in the first five months of 2024 has already reached 27.3%. The monthly food inflation was 2.4%. The highest monthly infla-

tion was in the "education" segment where an increase of 14.1% was recorded; the second highest was "furniture, home appliances and maintenance" segment with 7.7%.

According to the macroeconomic monitoring report prepared by the World Bank, the recovery of the Turkish Cypriot economy in 2023 was stronger than expected (i.e., it is estimated to have grown at above 5%), and GDP is estimated to have rebounded to its pre-pandemic level. Furthermore, it is reported that labour market indicators have exceeded pre-pandemic levels, and over 9,600 jobs were created of which over 9,200 jobs were in the private sector; about 400 jobs were created in the "public sector", where employment remained at around 36,000 after reaching its peak during the pandemic. Moreover, the labour force reached its highest level in 2023, at 156,000 people. The services and construction sectors contributed most to the creation of new jobs in 2023. The report also pointed out that local revenues, excluding grants (from Turkey), reached almost TL 35 billion (in nominal terms, equivalent to €1.3 billion), from TL 17 billion in 2022 (€0.96 billion), and slightly increased as a percentage of GDP from 22.6% in 2022 to 25.6% in 2023. While recovering in terms of percentage of GDP, with respect to 2021 and 2022, revenues remain well below the pre-pandemic average of 30% in the period 2010-2019. The fiscal deficit has been also reducing to the pre-pandemic levels, after reaching a record deficit in 2020. The fiscal consolidation also reflects a general contraction of financial support received from Turkey. Speaking at the launch of the report, the lead author, World Bank senior economist Natasha Rovo said: "Firstly, Green Line trade and crossings are expected to continue to increase and support the Turkish Cypriot economy, thus providing a significant opportunity for growth and economic integration. Secondly, economic opportunities are expected to increase further as a result of more women and more workers in general joining the workforce. In

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addition, it is expected that labor mobility between the Turkish Cypriot economy and the Greek Cypriot side will increase, which will not only contribute to increased income but also to spread of information."

### Domestic Developments

The law that regulates the "Immovable Property Acquisition" by foreigners has been amended to address concerns regarding the increase of land and property sales to foreign nationals, particularly those which are based solely on sales contracts. Under the new law, foreign nationals will be restricted to purchasing just one apartment or house in the TRNC, while "citizens of countries that recognise the TRNC", i.e., Turkish citizens, will be able to purchase up to three houses or apartments. Sales contracts must now be registered with the Land Registry within a six-month transition period, ensuring transparency and tax compliance. Failure to register will render the contracts invalid. It is hoped that this way, purchase and sale contracts "kept in safes" of intermediaries [i.e., lawyers] will come to light and unpaid taxes will be collected. By registering the contracts, data on the number of foreign nationals purchasing real estate in the TRNC will also become easily accessible. During the transition period, after the purchase agreement for immovable properties is registered with the Land Registry, permission to purchase immovable property can be obtained from the Council of Ministers. Once this permission is obtained, the title deed must be transferred within six months. The buyer and seller will be responsible for paying all taxes and fees arising from the purchase and sales transaction within 60 business days; if the process is not completed within this period, the Council of Ministers' decision will automatically be annulled. Another significant provision of the law is that half of the revenue generated will be transferred to a fund created for the Immoveable Property Commission (IPC), which awards compensation to Greek Cypriot applicants who had property in the north before 1974. The other half of the revenue will

be deposited into a special account for use by revenue and tax offices for Land Registry services. Thus, a steady income will be generated for the IPC and the funding needed to increase the capacity of Land Registry offices will be created.

On May 17, the Prime Minister Ünal Üstel announced that the government decided to import meat (20 tonnes of frozen boneless lamb meat and packaged mincemeat) from the Netherlands with the aim of reducing the cost of meat for consumers. Possibly aware of a coming backlash from livestock breeders, Üstel said "there will be no stepping back" from the decision, and that the government had also increased the subsidy for locally bred lamb from TL 800 (€22.84) to TL 1100 (€31.40) per lamb. The Cyprus Mail pointed out that the government's first attempt to reduce prices for consumers was to implement price controls for lamb meat in April. The government decreed that lamb be sold for no more than TL550 (€15.89 at the time) per kilogram, and butchers who attempt to sell their meat for more than the stated price would be fined. Butchers sidestepped the law, however, by introducing a "service fee" on top of the retail price of lamb. It is widely speculated that a serious amount of meat consumed in the north is smuggled from the south, where it is considerably cheaper. On May 20, as expected, farmers from across the country descended on Nicosia, announcing an "indefinite" protest against the government's decision to import meat, and the low prices offered for products such as raw milk and livestock. The protests were led by the Livestock Producers and Breeders Association and were supported by various non-governmental organizations including the Butchers' Association, whose chairperson accused the government of betrayal and said his association does not support the plans to import meat from the Netherlands. On the second day of protests, farmers smashed down the gate of the Prime Minister's office. In addition, they burnt hay bales in front of the building. With the

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gate detached, police arrested six demonstrators, bringing the total number of arrests on the first two days of the protest to nine. Eventually, at the end of the month, Prime Minister Ünal Üstel met with the Livestock Producers and Breeders Association Mustafa Naimogullari. Although the government did not change its decision, the association called off the protest in return for the Prime Minister's promise to take their demands to the Council of Ministers.

According to a survey commissioned by Bagimsiz Media, and conducted by Metron research company, an overwhelming majority (75%) of Turkish Cypriots are in favour of maintaining the parliamentary system; only 18% said that they preferred the presidential system. The majority (62%) is also in favour of keeping the split voting (which makes it possible for voters to vote for individual candidates from different party lists) in general elections; only 21% is in favour of abolishing it. Furthermore, when asked "Are you satisfied with the general course of the TRNC?", 76% responded negatively: 48% saying they were "not satisfied" and 28% saying they were "not at all satisfied". Another 10% said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. The participants were also asked the question "How do you see the economic situation in the TRNC?" While 49% of the participants evaluated the economic situation as "bad", 31% said that it was "very bad". The rates of those who think that the economy was doing well and those saying "neither good nor bad" was around 10% each. The survey was conducted in March-April 2024 with 515 people using the face-to-face interview method.

In the 2024 World Press Freedom Index was published by Reporters Without Borders on the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2024, northern Cyprus ranked 90th among 180 countries, thus falling 14 places compared to the previous year.

### Future of Work, Labour Relations & Trade Unions

On May 20, the Minimum Wage Determination Commission decided to raise the minimum wage to a net figure of TL 29,640 (€848) per month. The employer representatives expressed their discontent with the outcome, stating that employers could and should not be held responsible for the soaring inflation in the country: "Employers are not able to pay for the inflation in this country. We have objected to the rate of increase", he said, reminding that this rate was a basis for all salaries and that many businesses were already paying much higher wages. He pointed out that the current rise would run many businesses to the ground. On May 31, upon the formal appeal of the employers' representatives, the new minimum wage was revised down to TL 29,520 (€845). The new figure brought the minimum wages on both sides of the divide very close to each other. The new net figure is only €40 lower than that of the south, where the net minimum wage is €885. According to the Cyprus Mail, the north's new gross minimum wage is higher than that of 13 European Union member states, including Greece.

On May 27, all public sector trade unions staged a nationwide general strike in solidarity and support for the livestock breeders who have been staging a week-long protest in front of the Prime Minister's office against the government's decision to import meat. The government announced a 60-day postponement of the strike planned by the Air Traffic Controllers' Union at Ercan (Tymbou) Airport.

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### SHORT BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS

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Yiannis Charalambous has been a Research Assistant for FES Cyprus contributing to the writing of the monthly FES Cyprus Newsletter since July 2012. Yiannis obtained a Bachelor's degree in Turkish Studies from the National Kapodistrian University of Athens and an MA in International Relations and European Studies from the University of Nicosia. The subject of his dissertation focused on evaluating the catalyst effect in resolving the Cyprus problem, by comparing the factors of EU membership and the discovery of hydrocarbons. Yiannis speaks Greek, English and Turkish.

#### Hubert Faustmann

Hubert Faustmann is a Professor of History and International Relations at the University of Nicosia. Additionally, he is the director of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Cyprus. He is an expert on British colonial Cyprus and post-independence Cypriot history and politics. His research also focuses on Hydrocarbon politics in the Eastern Mediterranean as well as the relationship between state and society with a focus on Political Culture, Clientelism and Political Patronage.

#### Enis Porat

Enis Porat is a PhD candidate in International Relations at Cyprus International University, where he works as research fellow at the Center for Cyprus and Mediterranean Studies.

#### Sertac Sonan

Prof. Dr. Sertac Sonan works in Political Science & International Relations Department at Cyprus International University. He is the Director of the Centre for Cyprus and Mediterranean Studies at the same university.

#### Stavros Stavrou

Stavros Stavrou holds a Bachelor's degree in History from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, a Master's degree in International Relations from the University of Warwick and a Master's in Industrial and Employment Relations from International Training Centre of the ILO in collaboration with University of Turin. His research focuses on the employment relations of migrants and refugees, trade unions, and social inequalities.



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