



Living and Working in **Cyprus**



Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
Department of Labour
Cyprus

An Introduction to **Cyprus**



The third largest island of the Mediterranean basin (9,251 square kilometres) situated in the northeastern end between Europe, Asia and Africa.

Intense Mediterranean climate, with long dry summers from mid-May to mid-October and mild winters from December to February, which are separated by short autumn and spring seasons.

An Introduction to Cyprus

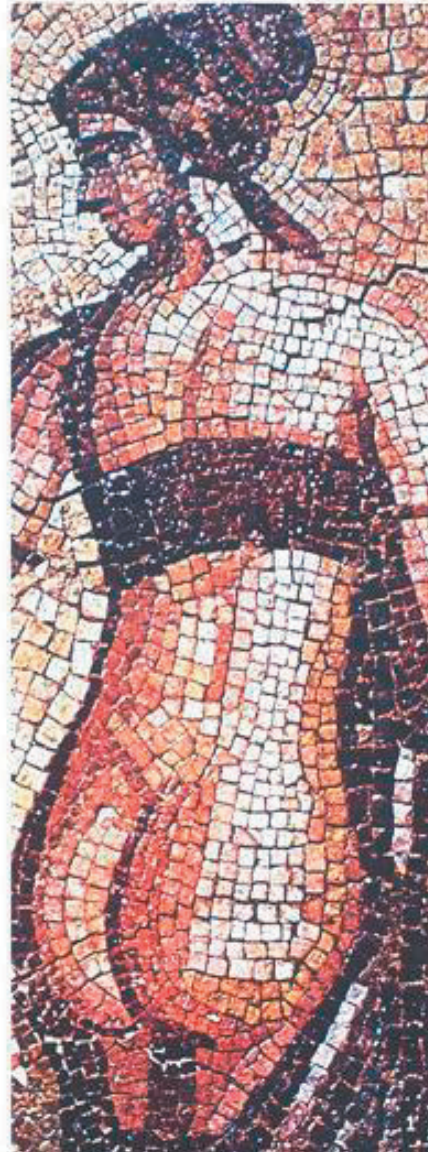
Cyprus prides itself on being the living continuation of one of the world's oldest civilizations. Though a small island, it has always played an important role in the history of the Mediterranean, far exceeding its size. The first signs of undisputed human activity can be traced back to 8500 BC.

In 1960 Cyprus became an Independent Republic following a 82-year period of British administration.

In 1974, Turkey launched a military operation and its troops took control of 37% of the island with large-scale population movements as a result. The de-facto separation remains to this day. Efforts are made under the auspices of the UN to find an acceptable to both sides solution.

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus is recognized by EU and UN as the only legitimate government.

The present population of Cyprus is estimated at 765.000 of whom 653.000 (85,3%) belong to the Greek Cypriot community, 87.700 (11,5%) to the Turkish Cypriot community and 24.500 (3,2%) are foreigners residing in Cyprus.



Working in Cyprus

Migration and registration

Who can work?

As from 1st May 2004, nationals from EU member states (incl. European Economic Area countries and Switzerland) can work in Cyprus without restrictions.

However, they will need a residence permit if they intend to stay longer than 3 months and take up employment in Cyprus. They must apply for such a residence permit before the expiration of this 3-month period to the Civil Registration & Migration Dept.

EU nationals working in Cyprus have the same rights as Cypriot nationals with regard to pay, working conditions, access to housing, vocational training, social security and trade union membership. Family and relatives, who are dependent on them, such as children, have similar rights.

What will you need?

Once in Cyprus, if there is an intention to stay and take up employment one has to:

- Apply within 8 days for an Alien Registration Certificate (ARC) at the local Immigration Branch of the Police (issued automatically for monitoring purposes). A fee of £20 is paid for the issue of such certificate.
- Apply for a social insurance number upon securing employment in Cyprus





Working in Cyprus



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c) Apply for a residence permit in case one intends to stay longer than 3 months and take up employment in Cyprus. This application must be submitted before the expiration of this 3-month period to the Civil Registration & Migration Dept. or at the local Immigration Branch of the Police (Please note that a fine is imposed in case of non-compliance).

In applying for a residence permit, the EU citizen must turn up personally at the Civil Registration and Migration Department (this service is for the time being, provided at the local Immigration Branch of the Police in all districts) and submit the following documents:

- A duly completed standard form (obtainable from Civil Registration & Migration Dept or from the local Immigration Branch of the Police) depending on the category of residence permit he is applying for (employed activity, self-employment, after having been employed, students etc.).
- Valid Passport or ID Card
- 2 photos
- Document of engagement of employment.

from the employer, stamped by the Labour Dept. (standardized form available from Civil Registration & Migration Dept or from the local Immigration Branch of the Police), to be completed and signed by the employer.

- A fee of £5

(Note: if he is applying for dependants, he must present certified true copies of marriage certificate, birth certificates of children etc.).

The residence permit is issued within 6 months from the date of application and the submission of the required documents by the applicant and is valid for a 5-year period, which is renewable.

It should be noted that the conclusion of formalities for acquiring a residence permit is not an obstacle for the immediate commencement of employment.

For more information: Tel.: +357 22804401, +357 22804405
migration@crmd.moi.gov.cy



Finding a job in Cyprus

Employment Services and applying for a job

Public Employment Service

One can visit any District Labour Office to register and receive appropriate information, guidance and assistance in job placement.

A job seeker registering at the Public Employment Service for the first time must present a valid Passport or ID card, his/her ARC (see above) plus copies of certificates of academic and/or professional qualifications as well as translation in either Greek or English.

Contact details at the end of this leaflet.

The website of the Public Employment Services is www.mlsi.gov.cy/dl

Private employment agencies/ job databases

Private recruitment agencies (mainly within Consultancy Firms), are an important source for managerial and highly specialized jobs.

Also in the last years a considerable number of private recruitment services are specializing in recruiting skilled and semi-skilled labor from abroad.

Please note that on the basis of legislation regulating the operation and registration of these agencies, the services offered to job seekers are free of charge. Complaints about misconduct of the agencies can be submitted to the Director of Department of Labour, Tel.: +357 22 400 802, e-mail: director@dl.mlsi.gov.cy



Finding a job in Cyprus

More information upon request from the Cyprus Human Resources Management Association (www.cyhrma.org.cy) and from the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (www.cci.org.cy)

Some private recruitment agencies have a job database with vacancies as well as CV online.

Newspapers/websites

Newspapers are considered an important source when looking for a job in Cyprus.

At the Official Site of the Republic of Cyprus www.cyprus.gov.cy, you can find links for the websites of all main newspapers in Cyprus.

Another way to look for vacancies online is via the Internet-based vacancy system of the Public Employment Service www.pescps.dl.mlsi.gov.cy.

The vacancy details are either in Greek or English (according to the language with which it was inserted). One can also search for job us.

vacancies in EURES, the European Employment Services Network, in Cyprus' section, where there will also be information on living and working in Cyprus.

Applying for a job

The application procedure will differ depending on the type of work you are looking for.

Of course an employer will understand that you cannot come to Cyprus for just





Finding a job in Cyprus

an interview, so a letter of application will initially do.

The standard procedure though, for middle and more senior personnel is a typed letter of application accompanied by a CV.

There is no standard CV or covering letter. However, it is important to include in the CV, information on academic or professional qualifications and experience as well as personal data and information relevant to job preference. The application letter and CV should be typed and a maximum length of two pages should be satisfactory.

Usually references are not required, unless specifically asked in the job advertisement or the specific application form if such form exists.

Pursuit of Professions which are Regulated

Regulated Professions

In case someone wishes to pursue a profession or occupation in Cyprus which is regulated, then a different procedure is followed. Therefore it is wise before coming to Cyprus to find out which are these regulated professions/occupations.

The Labour Department acts as a National Focal Point for providing information on legislation and procedures with regard to pursuing regulated professions in Cyprus, as well as information on the "competent body" responsible for examining applications submitted for the exercise of a regulated profession.

For inquiries: qualifications@dl.mlsi.gov.cy



Starting Work

Wages/collective agreements

Wages are either agreed with the employer, or are based on collective agreements in force, in a specific sector. For shop assistants, office clerks, school helpers and similar professions, minimum wage is regulated by legislation, which, at present is CY£349 (€594) per month, increased to CY£371 (€630) after a continuous service of 6 months.

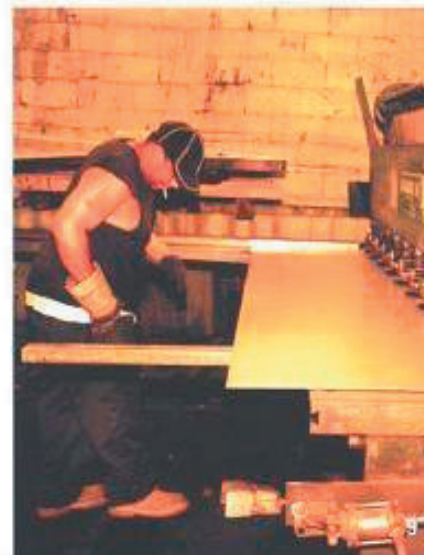
The employer on the basis of legislation is obliged to inform in writing the newly recruited employee, within a period of maximum one month from the date of commencement of his/her job, the terms of his/her employment. In case of non-compliance, complaints can be submitted to the Director of Industrial Relations Service, Tel.: +357 22 401 695, e-mail: info@dir.mlsi.gov.cy

Taxation

An EU citizen has to contact the Department of Inland Revenue in order to get a Taxpayer's

Identification Code. He must have with him his passport and also will have to fill in the Form I.R. 163A.

Tax liability is based on the principle of residence. According to the Income tax Law, an individual is considered to be resident in Cyprus for tax purposes if he resides therein for a period or more, which, in aggregate exceed 183 days. Tax residents in Cyprus are taxed in respect of their worldwide income, while non-tax residents are taxed in respect of Cyprus source income only.



Starting Work

Non-tax residents having a permanent establishment in Cyprus may elect, if it is to their benefit, to be taxed in accordance with the provisions applicable to tax residents.

The Income tax Law provides for various exemptions, on condition that certain criteria are satisfied.

Personal income tax:

For an income up to C£10.000 (€17.000) / year	0% tax rate
For an income up to C£10.001 - 15.000 (€17.001 - 25.500) / year	20% tax rate
For an income up to C£15.001 - 20.000 (€25.501-34.000) / year	25% tax rate
For an income over C£20.000 (€34.001) / year	30% tax rate

Tax is deducted monthly from the salary.

Tax authorities:

Ministry of Finance, Inland Revenue Department

Tel.: +357 22601921
Fax.: +357 22661243
e-mail: svrasida@ird.mof.gov.cy
ecu@ird.mof.gov.cy
<http://www.mof.gov.cy>

Moreover, Income Tax Returns can be submitted electronically, using the TAXISNET system, at the following address:

<http://taxisnet.mof.gov.cy>





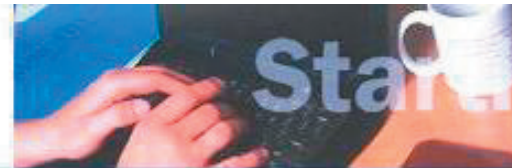
Starting Work

Social Security

In Cyprus there is a General earnings related Social Insurance Scheme, which covers compulsorily, every person gainfully occupied in Cyprus either as employed or self employed person. Employed persons include civil servants and apprentices.

Voluntary insurance is allowed to persons who wish to continue their insurance after a prescribed period of compulsory insurance or to persons who work abroad in the service of Cypriot employers.

The Scheme is financed by earnings related contributions payable by the insured person, the employer and the State. In the case of employees the contribution is 16,6% on his earnings, 6,3% payable by the employee, 6,3% payable by the employer and 4% by the State. In the case of self-employed persons the contribution is 15,6% on the self-employed person's prescribed income, 11,6% is paid by the self-employed himself and 4% by the State. In the case of voluntary insured



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persons the contribution is 13,5% on the earnings on which they opt to pay contributions. From the 13,5%, 10% is paid by the voluntary contributor and 3,5% by the State.

Transferring your social insurance benefits

Cyprus as of 1 May 2004 applies the Regulation 1408/71, which coordinates the social security systems of the member states of the European Union, the European Economic Area and Switzerland. The Regulation 1408/71 governs the retention and transfer of social security entitlements when a person moves from one member state to another.

Furthermore, Cyprus has concluded reciprocal agreements on social security with 4 countries other than the EU member states (Canada, Quebec, Egypt, Australia) for the purpose of maintaining the social security rights of persons who move between Cyprus and these countries.

Kinds of Benefits

The scheme provides for various benefits including marriage benefit, maternity grant, maternity allowance, sickness benefit etc.

In addition, the Scheme provides free medical treatment to victims of industrial accidents and occupational diseases and to invalidity pensioners.

Employed persons are entitled to all the above benefits. Self-employed are





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not entitled to unemployment benefit and benefits for employment injuries. Voluntary contributors working abroad for Cypriot employers are not entitled to benefits for employment injuries. Other voluntary contributors are entitled only to marriage, maternity and funeral grants and to old age and survivor's benefits.

For more information please contact:

Dept. of Social Insurance,

7, Byron Avenue, 1465 Nicosia, Cyprus,
Tel.: +357 22401632, Fax.: +357 22674982,
e-mail: interrel@dsf.mlsi.gov.cy

Sickness benefit

It is payable to employed and self-employed persons between the ages of 16 and 63 who are incapable for work. The period for which sickness benefit is payable cannot exceed 156 days for each period of interruption of employment.

There is a waiting period of 3 days in the case of employed persons and 18 days in the case of self-employed persons for which benefit is not



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payable. Self-employed persons are treated in the same way as employed persons in the case of accident or hospitalization.

Unemployment benefit

It is payable to employed persons between the age of 16 and 63 for involuntary unemployment.

The period for which unemployment benefits payable cannot exceed 156 days for each period of interruption of employment.

There is a waiting period of 3 days except in the

case of persons working abroad in the service of a Cypriot employer in respect of whom the waiting period is 30 days.

Pensions (Invalidity pension, Old age pension, widow's pension)

For more information please contact:

sid
interrel@dsf.mlsi.gov.cy



Health System

Health System

EU citizens residing in Cyprus, are subject to the same obligations and enjoy the same benefits under the legislation of Cyprus as Cypriot nationals.

The medical needs in Cyprus are met through three systems of health services:

- The government (public) health sector
- The private health sector, and
- A number of schemes covering specific sections of the population.

a) Public Health Sector

The right to public health care in Cyprus is subject to an income test, i.e.

Free of charge

Health care is provided free through government facilities to government employees, single persons whose annual income does not exceed €9,000 and members of families whose annual income does not exceed €18,000 increased by €1,000 for each dependant child. Also, it is free among others to members of families with 4 or more children, persons in receipt of public assistance and people suffering from certain chronic diseases.

At reduced fees

For people whose annual income is between €9,001 and €12,000 or to members of families whose annual income is between €18,001 and €22,000 increased by €1,000 for each dependant child.

Paying patients

Persons not coming under above categories can make use of the Government medical services against payment of the fees prescribed from time to time.

Paying patients may have the fees for costly in-patient treatment reduced, taking into account the level of their income.



Health System

Furthermore, medical care free of charge is provided in all cases receiving treatment at the accident and emergency departments irrespective of the economic situation or the nationality of the person involved, including visitors. However, if these cases need hospitalization, subsequent care fees have to be paid.

Government provision of health care is funded out of general taxation.

(b) Private health sector:

It is open to all those who can afford to pay for their treatment. Private medicine is dominated by a large number of physicians in individual practice.

(c) Special Schemes:

A number of special schemes cover specific sections of the population.

These include:

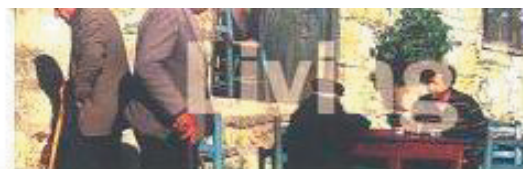
- Medical Services provided by the Trade Unions to the employed persons and their dependants.
- A number of employer-sponsored

- arrangements, all of which provide free medical care mainly through public health facilities.

Health care free of charge or at reduced fees is provided to those who satisfy the referred income criteria and who are issued with a medical card after submitting an application on the prescribed form.

One can get these forms from the public hospitals and deliver them duly completed, either to the same place or directly to the Ministry of Health.





Relocating from another country

Pets

They are required to be:

- Clearly identified by either an electronic microchip or a readable tattoo verifying also animal's owner identity.
- Vaccinated against rabies at least 30 days prior to departure for Cyprus.
- Accompanied by a European Passport (Decision 2003/803/EC) properly issued, updated and ratified by an authorized, by their country's competent authority, veterinarian.
- Antiparasitically treated with concoctions containing the active substances Fipronil and Praziquantel 24-48 hours prior departing for Cyprus
- A document verifying origin from an EU member country, issued by the Head of the transportation means (aircraft or ship) must also be presented.

For more information please contact:

Veterinary Services

Tel.: +357 22805240/1/235

Fax.: +357 22805174

e-mail: Animal.Health@vs.moa.gov.cy

HPipis@vs.moa.gov.cy

Car

All motor vehicles circulating in Cyprus need a motor vehicle license issued by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.

Drivers of all types of motor vehicles must be holders of driving licenses, which are issued after relevant tests and are valid until the age of 70. After this age, the licenses are renewable every two years on submission of a medical certificate.

Visitors importing motor vehicles temporarily for their personal use, which are accompanied by proper



certificates of registration and valid circulation licenses, are not obliged to register them. If the vehicle is not accompanied by the above documents, the owner must apply to the Deputy Registrar of Motor vehicles within 15 days from the date of importation, for securing a temporary registration certificate. In case the foreign circulation license of a motor vehicle expires during its stay in Cyprus, the importer must pay to the Department of Road Transport the circulation fees.

A visitor holding a valid driving license of his country or an international driving license can drive on the roads of Cyprus.

Before driving on the roads of Cyprus, a third party insurance cover by a Cyprus insurance company is essential unless the importer of the vehicle is in possession of an International Insurance Certificate (green card).

All types of motor vehicles have to be inspected before registration. In addition, mechanical inspection of motor vehicles is carried out in accordance with national legislation and regulations.

More information:

Tel.: +357 22807120 (Road Transport Dept.)

Accommodation

The availability of accommodation is good and includes apartments, houses and villas. The rent depends largely where the flat is situated (town, area) and the amenities/equipment in the house. Roughly speaking, the rent of an average flat could range from €425-€600.

Advertisements on flats to rent (or to buy) are in all newspapers. They are also advertised in specialized newspapers. A great number of estate agencies also operate.





Living in Cyprus

The typical length of contract is usually for one or two years, easily renewable upon expiry. Costs for water, electricity, heating and some other expenses are not included when renting a flat.

You will usually be asked to put down a month's rent as a deposit paid with the first rent (rent is normally prepaid). Normally the only document needed to rent a flat is to sign a contract (standard form).

If somebody wishes to buy a flat should look at the advertisements in the local press and also contact the real estate agencies.

Education system

In Cyprus, school attendance is compulsory up to the age of 15 (first nine years of education). The same applies to all children who live in Cyprus, regardless of their nationality or faith.

Detailed information on the educational system in Cyprus you can find on the website of Ministry of Education and Culture (www.moec.gov.cy) or the website www.educonference2003.gov.cy

Shops

During the winter period (1 November - 31 March) shops are open until 19.00 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and until 20.00 on Fridays. Wednesdays are open until 14.00 and Saturdays until 15.00. During Sundays all shops are closed.

During the summer period (1 April - 31 October) shops are open until 20.30 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and until 21.30 on Fridays. Wednesdays are open until 14.00 and



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Saturdays until 17.00. During Sundays all shops are closed.

Furthermore, during the summer afternoon recess (from 15 June - 31 August) all shops are closed between the hours of 14.00 and 17.00.

Special arrangements are also provided during Christmas and Easter period during which shops can stay open until 20.00.

In addition to the above, periods and closing times of shops in the so called "tourist areas" are from time to time designated by a ministerial order.

Cultural and social life

You can find out more about cultural and social life in Cyprus by visiting the website of the **Cyprus Tourism Organization** (www.visitcyprus.org.cy) "What's on", then go to "events".

Transport

Cypriots use their private car a lot for their transportation, whether living in towns or villages.

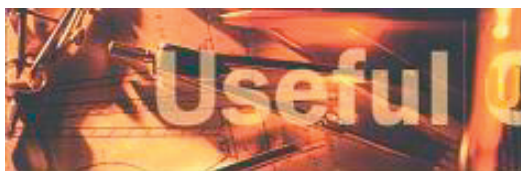
There is also a public transportation network in towns, as well as between urban and rural areas.

But the most common way for an inter-city travel in Cyprus (apart from private means) is the so-called "service taxi" with which you are picked up from your house and delivered to destination. It is a relatively cheap way of travelling to another city. Private taxis are of course available upon request. Inter-city fares are fixed, but those for a private service are charged accordingly.

Another important information:

In Cyprus, driving is on the left hand side.





Useful Contacts

Checklist

Before moving to take up employment, ensure that:

- You have a valid EU passport
- You fully understand the terms and conditions of employment
- You have a clear idea of method of payment
- You are aware of the travel arrangements and whether you or the employer will pay
- You have accommodation in the area you will be moving to
- You have appropriate health cover
- You have sufficient funds to last until you are paid, or return home if necessary

Useful Addresses/websites

www.cyprus.gov.cy (Government of Cyprus general website)

www.mlsi.gov.cy (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance)

www.mlsi.gov.cy/dl (Department of Labour (PES))

www.pescps.dl.mlsi.gov.cy (National web-based database for registering and searching for vacancies)

www.mlsi.gov.cy/dlr (Department of Labour Relations)

www.mcw.gov.cy (Ministry of Communications and Works)

www.mfa.gov.cy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

www.moi.gov.cy/pio (Press and Information Office information on various issues and services)

www.moec.gov.cy (Ministry of Education and Culture)

www.ccci.org.cy (Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry)

www.visitcyprus.org.cy (Cyprus Tourism Organization)

www.cytayellowpages.com.cy (Yellow Pages - Business Directory)

www.elc.ac.cy (European Institute of Cyprus)

District Labour Offices:

Nicosia:

Kiniras str., 1102 Nicosia, tel.: +357 22303555, e-mail: dionio@dl.mlsi.gov.cy

Limassol:

80 Franklin Roosevelt Ave. tel.: +357 25804400, e-mail: dlolim@dl.mlsi.gov.cy

Larnaca/Famagusta:

Filiou Tsigaridi, 6023 Larnaca, Tel.: +357 24304134

Pafos:

1, Filikis Eterias str., 8047 Pafos, Tel.: +357 26306230

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9, Klimentos Str., CY-1480 Nicosia - Cyprus

Tel.: +357 22 400 802, Fax: +357 22 400 809

e-mail: director@dl.mlsi.gov.cy, website: www.mlsi.gov.cy/dl