



# DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS IN CYPRUS

## UPR Info Pre-sessions, 2024

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## PLAN OF THE STATEMENT

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1. General Recommendations  
from the previous cycle

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2. Non-discriminatory  
application of Cypriot  
nationality

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3. Freedom of expression and  
access to information

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4. Freedom of association

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS CYCLE

- During the last cycle, **Chile, Ireland, and Argentina** proposed general measures against discrimination of all types, and racial discrimination targeting Turkish Cypriots.

## NON-DISCRIMINATORY APPLICATION OF CYPRIOT NATIONALITY

- **Netherlands, UK, USA, and Germany** have made specific recommendations regarding Cypriot nationality, urging the non-discriminatory application of Cypriot nationality laws, especially in processing citizenship applications for children of mixed marriages.
- This problem has resulted in approximately 3,500 cases being pending and many more who have not resorted to the court system living with its effects.
- Despite the recent measures announced by the Presidency regarding the rights of Turkish Cypriots, this issue was not tackled effectively.

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Legal provisions and respective 2007 Council of Ministers decisions should be reviewed and amended to ensure equal access to Cypriot nationality for individuals with at least one Cypriot parent, regardless of their ethnicity.

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Process citizenship applications for children of mixed marriage within a reasonable time frame.

RECOMMENDATIONS – ISSUE I

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- **Ecuador** suggested adopting measures promoting the integration of minorities and respecting cultural diversity, including linguistic diversity. Even though Turkish Cypriots are not a minority legally, socially they are treated as minorities.
- Vital data is mainly available in Greek and sometimes English.
- Turkish-speaking staff is lacking in government departments.
- Hindering Turkish Cypriots' access to information, freely expressing themselves, and advocating for their rights.

The RoC should remove the 1964 Supreme Court decision, and adapt to the current situation where there is no hot conflict between communities and number of Turkish Cypriots who resides, works or travel in the RoC increases.

Prioritize language accessibility in government services and information dissemination by providing translations of vital official information, including national legislation and data, into Turkish made readily available to its citizens through an accessible platform.

Recruit enough Turkish Cypriot staff in all governmental departments and supply information in Turkish.

## RECOMMENDATIONS – ISSUE 2

## RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

- During the previous assessment, the issue of access to the right of association was not raised by any foreign delegation.
- Challenges reported by CSOs include: the complex legal framework, difficulties at access to funds, inconsistencies in the interpretation of laws by district offices, access to information and banks categorising all CSOs as "high risk".
- Turkish Cypriots face additional hurdles in forming CSOs or taking management positions due to residency requirements in the Republic of Cyprus and difficulties in opening bank accounts.
- Accessibility issues, such as the Ministry of Interior's website being unavailable in Turkish or English, further compound challenges.
- Turkish Cypriots encounter obstacles in opening bank accounts in the Republic of Cyprus.



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Simplification and streamlining of the legal framework in a manner that extends freedom of association. The legal framework and practice should be amended to facilitate Turkish Cypriots' access to this right.

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Prepare Turkish guidelines for CSOs on their administrative and financial obligations. Make it available on the Ministry website along with all relevant legislation.

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Ensure banks stop treating all CSOs and Turkish Cypriots as 'high risk' causing systematic discrimination and instead evaluate each case by its potential.

## RECOMMENDATIONS – ISSUE 3

**THANK YOU!**

From all the members of our coalition:

- **Civil Society Initiative Association**
- **Human Rights Platform**