

CYPRUS

Whole country

Cyprus owes its inclusion here among the southern-rim countries to its geographical proximity to the Middle East. The island was partitioned in 1974 into a zone controlled by the Cypriot government and a Turkish occupied zone separated by a UN-administered buffer zone.



Pre-partition in 1974, 77% of the population was Greek, compared to 18.3% for the Turkish community¹⁰. Cyprus also has a very high living standard¹¹ and is set to join the European Union. It is also a demographic transition country, having long had a mature demographic structure, unlike the other southern-rim countries. In the territory controlled by the Cypriot government, fertility fell to 2.1 children per woman in 1974, only to return to 2.5 in 1982. All-island parity is higher still, because Turkish Cypriot fertility is higher than that of Greek Cypriots. Following the 1982 peak, however, fertility declined anew to near-replacement (2.08 children per woman) in 1996.

This population projection for Cyprus is an all-island forecast. The Greek Cypriot part decreased from 632 000 people in 1973 to 498 000 in 1976 following the loss of approximately 38% of the northern part of the island, and cross-migration of Greek Cypriots to the southern zone and Turkish Cypriots to the northern zone. The current population is probably underestimated by 10 to 12%, depending on whether foreign troops stationed in the island (UN, the United Kingdom, Turkey, etc.) are included, and especially due to Turkish immigration from Turkey and Bulgaria, estimated at 65-80 000 by the Greek Cypriot government.

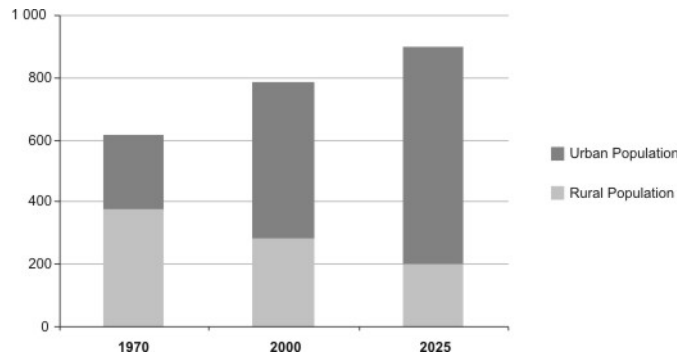
In 2000, fertility rate is 2 children per woman. This will decline steadily to 1.90 by 2010 and continuing to 2025. Comparison with Greece - valid, given how close the two populations are - suggests that Cyprus will maintain higher fertility over the next 25 years: 2.00 against 1.59 in 2000, 1.90 against 1.70 in 2025. This differential fertility is partly attributable to the more fertile Turkish Cypriot population and northern zone Turkish population. The island's population will increase little over the next 25 years - 14.6% from 785 to 900 000, adding 115 000 people. In both relative and absolute terms it will be the lowest increase in the southern Mediterranean. The rate of increase in the population of 8 per thousand in 2000-05 will decline further to 3 per thousand in 2020-25.

Urbanization has been rapid, first as a result of the 1974 partition, then the war in Lebanon when Cypriot urban areas took Beirut's place as the financial and tourist hub of the Middle East. Pre-1974, only a third of the population was urban, compared to 63.8% in 2000 (in urban areas of over 10 000 people). This population will grow 40% by 2025 to reach 77.7%. The accuracy of these figures is impaired by the incomplete information on the northern zone, however, where urbanization is nevertheless known to be much less developed than in the southern zone (42% according to 1990 figures).

¹⁰ Most recently available figures from the 1960 census.

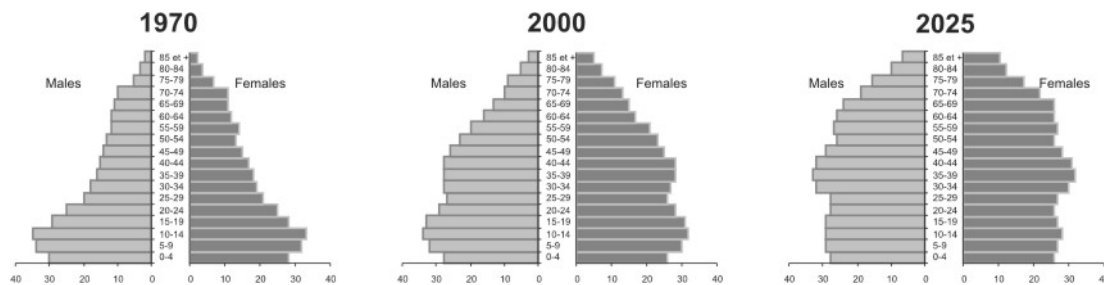
¹¹ US\$ 11 477 in purchasing power parity in 1998

Figure 85. Rural population and urban population 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)



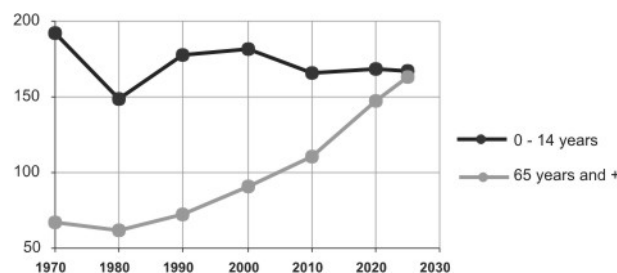
Cyprus' projected rapid population ageing also puts it in the northern-rim camp. The population aged 65 and over will increase by 79% from 91 000 to 163 000 in numbers and from 11.6 to 18.1% in share between 2000 and 2025. But these figures do not include older European and Middle Eastern semi-residents who are technically classed as immigrants.

Figure 86. Population age structure (by 5-year age groups) 1970-2000-2025 (in thousands)



Cyprus has no under-employment problem: unemployment stood at 3.1% in 1996. The number of young labour force entrants, hovering between 11 and 13 000 a year between 2000 and 2025, will gradually be caught up by exits, so that by about 2020, the two flows will balance out in strictly demographic terms.

Figure 87. Populations aged 15-and-under and 65-and-over, 1970-2025 (in thousands)



All six of Cyprus' regions are classed as coastal: Nicosia (population 272 000 in 1995), Limassol (146 000), Famagusta (145 000), Larnaca (71 000), Paphos (67 000) and Kyrenia (38 000). In 1995, it had 5 urban areas of over 10 000 people: Nicosia (population 183 000) which increased at the mean annual rate of 2.0% between 1970 and 1995; Limassol, a little smaller (148 000 people) but growing more rapidly (3.1% a year); Larnaca (72 000 people, and an exceptionally high 5.3% rate of growth); and Paphos (population 33 000). Famagusta was hard hit by the 1974 war and the partition of the island, losing more than half its population - down from 38 to 18 000 people - between 1970 and 1995.

Aggregate population growth in Cyprus' Mediterranean regions and all-country growth are the same, i.e., 115 000 people more in 25 years (785 000 in 2000 and 900 000 in 2025). The same applies to the Mediterranean urban areas, whose population will grow from 501 to 699 000 people, with a significant rise in the urbanization rate from 63.8% in 2000 to 77.7% in 2025.