

Welcome to Newsletter #2!

This newsletter is prepared within the frame of the Inclusive Peacebuilding (InPeace) Project, which is funded by the European Union under the Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community and implemented by the Interdisciplinary Centre for Law, Alternative and Innovative Methods (ICLAIM) and the Human Rights Platform (IHP). InPeace aims to generate knowledge, and draw lessons relating to, the operation and effectiveness of the bicomunal Technical Committees.

In 2008, seven bicomunal Technical Committees were established by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot community leaders to “address issues that affect the day-to-day life of people, through encouraging and facilitating greater interaction and understanding between the two communities”; since then, five more Technical Committees have been added to the list. There are currently 12 bicomunal Technical Committees, which are unique mechanisms run under UN auspices, operated by Greek and Turkish Cypriots, to address the shared challenges and aims for Cyprus.

Although their work improves our daily lives and contributes to the collaboration between the two communities, little is known about the work of the bi-communal Technical Committees. The main aim of this newsletter is to disseminate information on their progress and inform the public about their achievements as well as providing up to date information on the activities of the InPeace Project. Information provided in this newsletter covers the period of 1 September 2023 and 29 February 2024 and is collected through research on online sources and interviews with past and present members of the Technical Committees (websites, social media, news agencies etc.)

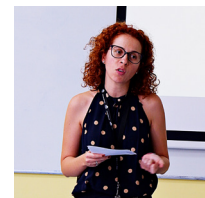
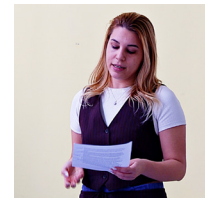
InPeace Project Team at the CRoLEV Citizen Festival



The research team of our project, Nasia Hadjigeorgiou and Fezile Osum, attended the CRoLEV Citizen Festival at UCLan Cyprus and presented preliminary research findings about the bi-communal Technical Committees in Cyprus. The CRoLEV Citizen Festival was organised by UCLan Cyprus and co-funded by the European Union.



In the panel discussion, Fezile Osum informed the audience about the InPeace project and the functioning of the Technical Committees. Following that, Nasia Hadjigeorgiou discussed the details of the research that had been conducted on the Technical Committees up until that point. One of the insights of Dr Hadjigeorgiou's presentation was that there is more political leeway and generally higher productivity in the Technical Committees when the negotiations are going well consequently, trust levels increase between the communities.



Activities of the Technical Committees between September 2023 and February 2024

Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage

Conservation Works

From September 2023 to February 2024, the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage (TCCH) completed 5 different conservation works in different parts of Cyprus. These are the Mosque in Kalo Chorio/Vuda, the Aqueduct in Lefka/Lefke, the Agios Georgios Church, the Profitis Elias Church, and the Arsenal/Canbulat Bastion in the Famagusta Area. Moreover, the Technical Committee announced that the Mosque in Terra village in Paphos, and the Arif Bey Aqueduct near Afania/Gaziköy have been selected as the next historical places for their extensive conservation efforts. These projects were implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage under the project 'Supporting Cultural Heritage Monuments of Great Importance in Cyprus', funded by the European Union. The projects are seen as both a safeguard for Cyprus' cultural legacy and a means of building a stronger sense of solidarity and mutual respect across groups.

Furthermore, on the same day as the Arsenal/Canbulat Bastion conservation work's closing event in Famagusta, the Technical Committee hosted a storytelling and virtual tours event in the Martinengo Bastion, where attendees learned more about the cultural heritage of Cyprus.



Other Activities

Aside from the conversation works and related events, the TCCH organised a number of other activities. First, ten Heritage Youth Ambassadors from both communities travelled to Brussels on 5th and 6th December for their first joint study trip, where they presented their work promoting Cyprus' rich cultural heritage and learned about the EU's cultural heritage initiatives. Second, in collaboration with UNDP and the European Union (EU), the TCCH convened a two-day working group to analyse successful projects, discuss obstacles, and use learned insights to influence the future strategic direction of cultural heritage efforts on the island on January 26-27, 2024. Third, the Technical Committee hosted Nick Hartmann, Deputy Assistant Administrator of the UNDP and Deputy Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS, to Cyprus. He came to see the successful projects of the TCCH that have been made possible by the long-standing collaboration between the EU, UNDP, and TCCH.

Funding Announcement

Last but not least, the European Commission and the UNDP reached a new delegation agreement that will provide an extra 2.5 million euros in funding to support the work of the TCCH through 2024-2026. In this way, the island's rich cultural legacy may continue to be preserved, restored, and protected.

Technical Committee on Gender Equality

The Technical Committee on Gender Equality held a networking gathering for women entrepreneurs from both sides of the island. Notable attendees involved Meral Güzel from UN Women, along with entrepreneurs Dr. İçim Çağınır Kavuklu and Dr. Celia Hadjichristodoulou. This event, held on 4 December 2023 at the Ledra Palace Hotel and virtually, was organised jointly with OSASG Cyprus. It served as a valuable platform for women entrepreneurs to discuss various initiatives and experiences from across the island.

Technical Committee on Economic and Commercial Matters

The Technical Committee on Economic and Commercial Matters announced their partner project entitled 'Young Professionals Internship Programme', which will run for the first time as a pilot project. Six interns will be selected for this first phase. The primary objectives are to provide opportunities for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots between the ages of 18 and 35 to gain work experience, develop professional skills, and better understand working environments across the island. The Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KEBE) and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce (KTTO) will implement the project and find the relevant companies that will suit the applicants' background and needs. The internships will run for 3 months in total and the interns will receive a monthly stipend of 600 EUR. If the pilot phase is completed successfully, a continuation phase will follow. The application deadline is 1st of July 2024.

[Click here](#) to see the full announcement of the Internship Programme.

Technical Committee on Health

The Technical Committee on Health held a training, focusing on Aedes invasive mosquitoes on 29 February 2024 at the Ledra Palace Hotel, with participants from both communities. The event was funded by the European Union and organised by the UNDP in coordination with OSASG-Cyprus. The participants involved health care professionals and members of the public. The main themes of the training were effective surveillance and monitoring strategies, as well as practical approaches for individuals to protect themselves from illnesses that can be caused by insects. [Click here](#) for more information about this event.



Technical Committee on Culture

On 23 September 2023, around 200 runners from both communities gathered in Nicosia old town to mark International Peace Day 2023 with an 8km run. The event was funded by the European Union, ran under the auspices of the Technical Committee on Culture, and was co-organised by UNDP Cyprus, bi-communal running group Runite and the OSASG-Cyprus. Stefan Simosas, head of the European Commission's Cyprus Resolution Process Support Service, emphasised sport's role in fostering tolerance and trust and affirmed the EU's support for initiatives uniting the communities in Cyprus. The head of UNDP Cyprus, Jakhongir Khaydarov, described the International Day of Peace Road Race as a symbol of cooperation, highlighting the sport's ability to unite communities. [Click here](#) for more information about this event.

Technical Committee on Environment

More than 60 participants from both communities gathered at the Alakati/Alagadi Beach in Kyrenia, an important nesting area for caretta caretta turtles in Cyprus. The event, organised on 17 September 2023, was held under the auspices of the Technical Committee on Environment. Throughout the event, participants were informed of the work of SPOT (Society for the Protection of Turtles), a local civil society organization working on protection of turtles, fisheries and marine ecology. [Click here](#) for more information about this event.

