

## Cyprus

Cyprus was amongst the first countries to ratify the UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. In the context of the Cyprus Constitution there are certain provisions that promote the respect to Human Rights without making any distinction or differentiation between citizens and non-citizens of the Republic and without any distinctions or differentiation on grounds of community or religion or nationality, or on other grounds.

Moreover, as a Party to the Convention, Cyprus has the legal obligation to implement the Convention when exercising its competences in policy areas falling within the scope of the Convention. A focal point for the Convention was appointed at the end of 2010. In this respect, the accumulation of the relevant data and information refer to the work that has been carried out in the framework of the last two years.

The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus (hereinafter referred to as the “Ministry”) is the administrator for implementing the Convention in the Republic of Cyprus. The Ministry, however, is mainly responsible for contemporary culture and European and International Affairs in the field of culture. A number of other Ministries and Services are also dealing with certain aspects related to the Convention and have been consulted in this respect.

The measures elaborated at the national level (Section 2.1) include the promotion of arts and culture, the promotion of cultural activities of certain religious groups (Armenians and Maronites), the support of film and cinema, the support provided to diaspora communities in other countries, as well as cultural activities which occur at European level. Additionally, certain activities that promote intercultural education have been included as well. Measures elaborated in the area of international cooperation (Section 2.2) are related to the mobility of artists and professionals, bilateral cooperation with other countries and the promotion of intercultural dialogue. In section 2.3.1 certain measures are included which aim at the integration of culture in sustainable development policies (Section 2.3). This report also includes references regarding cooperation with the civil society at the national and international levels (Section 3.1, 3.2). The challenges related to the introduction of the Convention and the solutions identified for their implementation also constitute part of this report (Section 4). Annexes to the Report contain the available statistical data (Section 5).

This report presents policy areas falling within the scope of the Convention and for which relevant policy measures exist at national level. In preparing this report the absence of cultural statistics and relevant data has been a major obstacle. Nevertheless, the preparation of this report provided us with a concrete framework as to where we would focus our future actions.