

The Cyprus Problem

Class Activities

Activity 1: The divided streets of Nicosia

Using Google Maps and Google Street View, explore the old town of Nicosia (the part of the city enclosed within the Venetian walls) and look for visual evidence of the Buffer Zone's presence in the city. How many sentry points can you find? What visual clues indicate the presence of the Buffer Zone, and do these differ between the north and south of the city? What else can you see on the streets of the city that reflects its cultural and political differences? How are the north and south of the city similar?



Activity 2: The future of the 3%

The UN Buffer Zone contains about 3% of the land area of Cyprus. What should be done with that area when the UN leaves has been an often difficult-to-resolve question in peace negotiations. One proposal is that the land be returned to its original owners (or to their descendants), another that the land be divided proportionally between the two states. Others think that the space should be retained as a nature reserve. What do you think could be done with the Buffer Zone in the future? What creative ideas can you come up with and how would you justify their value to islanders?

Additional resources

- Mediterranean with Simon Reeve (Series 1, Episode 2, 2018) contains an excellent summary of the Cyprus problem (available via the BBC iPlayer).
- "Portraits of No Man's Land," hosted by Google Arts & Culture, examines a range of forbidden or hostile spaces across the world and through time, including the UN Buffer Zone (<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/portraits-of-no-man-s-land>).

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