



# Royal Holloway Geography for Schools Lecture Series

## The Cyprus Problem

### Lecture Summary

The Cyprus Problem refers to the ongoing and seemingly irresolvable dispute between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The lecture offers a summary of some of the factors that led to the political and ethnic division of Cyprus, explains the role of the United Nations as a peacekeeping force, looks at the Buffer Zone as a visible symbol of the island's division, and considers the prospects for future peace. The lecture looks, too, at Britain's role in Cyprus, both in the past and today, and how the legacies of British colonialism present themselves in modern Cyprus.

### Key Facts (January 2023)

	Republic of Cyprus	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
<b>President</b>	Nicos Anastasiades (b. 1946)	Ersin Tatar (b. 1960)
<b>Capital</b>	Nicosia (south)	Nicosia (north)
<b>Area</b>	5,896 km <sup>2</sup>	3,355 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Population</b>	1,244,188	382,836
<b>Currency</b>	Euro	Turkish lira
<b>Official language</b>	Greek and Turkish	Turkish

### Timeline to division

- 1878 The British begin to administer Cyprus as part of an agreement with the Ottoman empire.
- 1914 Britain annexes Cyprus in response to Turkey's support for Germany during the First World War.
- 1925 Cyprus becomes a British Crown colony.
- 1931 Greek Cypriots seeking union with Greece (*Enosis*), and resisting British rule, burn down Government House in Nicosia.
- 1955 The National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA) begins violent resistance to British rule.
- 1958 Intercommunal violence between Greek and Turkish Cypriots intensifies.
- 1960 Cyprus gains independence from Britain.
- 1963 Further intercommunal violence leads to Nicosia being divided by the "Green Line".
- 1964 UN peacekeeping troops arrive.
- 1967 A right-wing military junta topples the democratic government in Greece.
- 1974 A coup d'état, supported by the junta, sees the Cypriot President deposed and a pro-*Enosis* successor installed;  
Turkish military are sent to Cyprus, occupying a third of the island;  
A month-long conflict ends with the large-scale displacement of people;  
The ceasefire line becomes the UN Buffer Zone.

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