CYPRUS

Turkish Cypriots

Activity: 1961-2020

General notes

NA

Movement start and end dates

- The Turkish Cypriot demand for *taksim,* the partition of the island between the two national groups, originates in the early 20th century. In the post-independence era, underground organizations of both the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities were revived in 1961, hence the start date of the movement.
- In December 1963 serious violence erupted in Nicosia after Greek Cypriot policemen killed two Turkish Cypriots on the edge of the Turkish quarter. Communal tensions arose in November when President Makarios introduced a thirteen-point proposal to amend the constitution in a way that would ensure the dominance of Greek Cypriots.
- In early 1964 the UN authorized a peace-keeping force for Cyprus under the direction of the Secretary General. In March and April, severe communal violence occurred.
- In June 1964, the Greek Cypriot government formed the National Guard and Greek soldiers were clandestinely transferred to Cyprus. At the same time, Turkish Cypriots organized militarily under the TMT (Turkish Resistance Organization). Sporadic violence continued through 1967 (Hewitt & Cheetham 2000; Minahan 1996, 2002; MAR).
- In 1974, Turkey intervened militarily and helped establish the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) (Roth 2015: 197).
- The de facto independent TRNC continues to exist as of 2022. The Turkish Cypriots have upheld their claim for self-determination (Hewitt & Cheetham 2000; Minahan 1996, 2002; MAR), though in the new millennium the dominant claim has shifted to autonomy (De Waal 2018).
- Since 2012, the Turkey-Greece maritime boundary dispute and in particular who has the right to exploit newly discovered natural gas resources as well as the sharing of gas revenues have been a major point of contention (Tanchum et al. 2020). Initially, the discovery of gas led to hopes for "a new dialogue" (International Crisis Group 2012), but these hopes were soon dashed (see Grigoriadis 2020; Altunışık 2020). [start date: 1961; end date: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- While independence used to be the dominant claim until 2001, the dominant claim has since changed to autonomy. In the past, both before and after attaining *de facto* independence, the Turkish Cypriot minority demanded *taksim* (Turkish for division), the partition of the island between the Greek and Turkish (Minahan 2002). The proclamation of a Turkish-Cypriot federal state in 1975 and the declaration of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983 is further evidence of independence being the dominant claim. As is the Turkish Cypriot rejection of a 1992 proposal by the United Nations that foresaw a single Cypriot state made up of two zones. [1961-2001: independence claim]
- With the prospects of common EU membership paired with increasing economic backwardness and Turkish attempts to reduce the military costs of presence in Northern Cyprus, the claim for independence started to lose some of its appeal after 2000.

- o A 2001 poll found that 32% of Northern Cypriots wanted a loose federation of two Cypriot states, while only 23% opted for full-fledged independence and 8% for integration within Cyprus (Minahan 2002).
  - o Sovereign status within a bizonal federation was also supported by a majority of Turkish Cypriots in the 2004 referendum (Annan Plan), where 65% of them voted in favour of a federation of two constituent states under a joint federal government apparatus. The proposal was rejected since 76% of Greek Cypriots voted against it (Minority Rights Group International). The endorsement of the final version of the Annan Plan, Annan Plan V, by the Turkish Cyprior elite provides further evidence for a moderation of the dominant claim. Annan Plan V stipulated a federation of two states and not two independent states.
  - o Furthermore, in 2008 the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders committed themselves to working towards "a bicommunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as defined by relevant Security Council resolutions" (United Nations; see also International Crisis Group 2009).
  - o De Waal (2018: 52) highlights that Turkish Cypriots generally cite the 2004 referendum as proof that they would support autonomy within a reunified Cyprus.
  - o In 2016, it was reported that some local authorities were concerned about the prospect of Erdogan supporting a referendum in northern Cyprus (on a merger with Turkey) because it may lead to an increase in support for irredentist claims (Sweet 2016). However, we found no evidence for a politically significant irredentist claim. The vast majority of northern Cypriots overwhelmingly reject such a prospect (Smith 2022).
  - o In 2016, the Rebirth Party was founded, which made claims for outright independence (Kibris Postasi 2016). In 2019, Ersin Tatar also seemingly supported an unfederated two-state solution (LGC News 2019). However, the independence claim does not seem to be dominant. Support for the Rebirth Party has never exceeded 7% in the two elections it participated in since its founding.
- Based on this evidence, and following the first of January rule we thus code autonomy as the dominant claim as of 2002. [2002-2020: autonomy claim]

Independence claims

- As noted, the SDM's dominant was for independence until 2001.
  - o It is worth noting that both elite and popular support for independence had been waning already by 1977 – and that a solution of federation was becoming expected (see Dodd 1992: 38).
- After 2001, the dominant claim shifted to independence. However, there is still notable minority support for independence – with approximately 23% supporting full-fledged independence in 2001 (Minahan 2002)..
- Given the protracted nature of the issue, pro-independence voices have increased again since 2016. The most significant politician supporting a two-state solution is Ersin Tatar who in 2019 suggested that a federal solution is no longer viable (see LGC News 2019). The Rebirth Party founded in 2016 and led by Erhan Arıklı is the most notable party outright supporting an independent Northern Cyprus (Kibris Postasi 2016). It has achieved a maximum of 7.0% in elections and had two seats in the Assembly of the Republic as of 2020. The Nationalist Democracy Party (Milliyetçi Demokrasi Partisi), which was formed in 2017, is another ultra-nationalist party that espouses independence (see Milliyetçi Demokrasi Partisi 2017). Other fringe independent politicians supporting more radical claims are well below the threshold for consideration in this section.
- As there appears to have been continuous contention for independence throughout, we code an ongoing independence movement. [start date: 1961; end date: ongoing]

Irredentist claims

- We found no clear evidence of a politically significant irredentist claim during the period addressed by the project. While Turkey has made threats to annex Northern Cyprus (Euractiv with Reuters 2012), the vast majority of Turkish Cypriots, including their leadership, are opposed to the idea and find it "unacceptable" (ibid.). Recent statements have further made it clear that most Turkish Cypriots strongly reject the possibility of a merger with Turkey and instead support a federal solution (Smith 2022). [no irredentist claim]

Claimed territory

- Cyprus has been de facto partitioned ever since the 1974 invasion, which led to the establishment of the self-declared Northern Cyprus. Since 1974, all territorial claims clearly relate to Northern Cyprus (which we code based on the Global Administrative Areas database). Before that, things are less clear. Starting in 1964, Turkish Cypriots had started to disintegrate from the Cypriot state. Several "enclaves" emerged, ie, discontiguous areas with Turkish Cypriot majorities. These enclaves had their own administration, mail system, currency, etc. and they withdrew from the central government However, already at the time, the Turkish Cypriots' territorial aspirations extended beyond these. To capture the situation before the Turkish invasion, we code Turkish settlement areas in Cyprus according to a map by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA 1973), and GeoEPR for polygon definition. As this is an imperfect approximation, we flag the claim as ambiguous until 1974.

Sovereignty declarations

- In 1975, following the Turkish invasion of the island's northern territory, the Turkish Cypriots proclaimed the "Turkish Federated State of Cyprus". The move was rejected by the Republic of Cyprus and the international community (Minority Rights Group International; Minahan 2002; Hewitt & Cheetham 2000: 302). [1975: independence declaration]
- After several rounds of negotiations with limited progress, the Turkish Cypriots unilaterally declared independence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983. With the exception of Turkey, the new state was not recognized by the international community. In 1985, a constitution was approved in a referendum (Minority Rights Group International; Minahan 2002). [1983: independence declaration]

Separatist armed conflict

- HVIOLSD codings for 1963-1967 and 1974 follow Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl (2019).
    o As noted by SSW, the 1963-1967 episode is a borderline HVIOLSD case. Most importantly, there was only limited violence in 1965-1966. A case study report by the University of Central Arkansas suggests that 3-400 individuals died in 1963-1964 (most in 1964) and that there were at least 34 deaths in 1967 (https://uca.edu/politicalscience/home/research-projects/dadm-project/ europerussiacentral-asia-region/cyprus-1960-present/). Wikipedia reports a higher figure of 538 deaths in 1963-1964 and more than 25 deaths in 1967 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cypriot_intercommunal_violence). While the violence is often described as intercommunal, the Cypriot police was often involved in the violence.
    o [1961-1962: NVIOLSD; 1963-1967: HVIOLSD; 1968-1973: NVIOLSD; 1974: HVIOLSD; 1975-2020: NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- Despite its Greek-speaking majority, the island was ruled by the Ottoman Empire until 1878, when the administration was handed over to Britain in return for British protection against tsarist Russia. When the Ottoman Empire joined Word War I against the Allied Forces, Great Britain formally annexed the territory (Minahan 2002; Minority Rights Group International).
- Relations between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots deteriorated in the early twentieth century, as the latter increasingly and violently demanded its incorporation in the Greek state (*enosis*). A 1959 agreement envisaged constitutional guarantees for the Turkish minority (Minority Rights Group International) and a strong power-sharing arrangement. The agreement included the appointment of a Greek Cypriot president and a Turkish Cypriot vice-president as well as a disproportionate, seven-to-three ratio between Greek and Turkish Cypriots in the Council of Ministers and the House of Representatives (Bahcheli 2000; Minahan 2002). The power-sharing agreement was predominantly personal and lacked a territorial dimension (Coughlan 2000). In terms of autonomy measures, the agreement granted the Turkish Cypriots five separate Turkish Cypriot municipalities in Cyprus' main towns and non-territorial autonomy in the form of separately elected communal chambers: "[t]he constitution also called for the creation of two communal chambers, composed of representatives elected by each community. These chambers were empowered to deal with religious, educational, and cultural matters, questions of personal status, and the supervision of cooperatives and credit societies. To supplement an annual provision to the chambers from the government budget, the constitution enabled the communal chambers to impose taxes and fees of their own to support their activities" (Solsten 1991). The power-sharing system was enshrined in Cyprus' 1960 constitution. [1959: autonomy concession]

Concessions and restrictions

- In 1963, President Makarios, in order "to resolve constitutional deadlocks", proposed 13 changes to the constitution that would have effectively ended the consociational system. The proposed changes include: abolishing the veto rights of the (Greek Cypriot) President and the (Turkish Cypriot) Vice-President, abolishing the separate elections for the Presidency/Vice Presidency, abolishing requirements for qualified majorities in the House of Representatives, abolishing the provisions calling for five, lowering the guaranteed share of Turkish Cyproits in public service, and abolishing the Greeks' communal chamber. The proposals did not include the abolishment of the Turkish Cypriots' communal chamber. Although the amendments were declared illegal by the Supreme Constitutional Court of Cyprus, Makarios implemented them (Solsten 1991). This effectively meant the end of the consociational system and in particular the five separate Turkish Cypriot municipalities in Cyprus' main towns, thus we code an autonomy restriction (while we do not normally code measures concerning the local level, in this case we do since the provision for separate municipalities was a fundamental part of the autonomy arrangement). Note that the non-territorial autonomy arrangement with two communal chambers remained intact (at least in theory since the Turkish Cypriots retreated from national politics in 1963). Makarios' 1963 constitutional amendments led to a civil war (Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl 2019). [1963: autonomy restriction]
- The Cyprus Government published a "Declaration of intentions on the Constitutional Rights of Turkish Cypriots" on October 11, 1965. The declaration made a commitment to respect the minority rights of the Turkish Cypriots (Denktas 2009) and proposed autonomy for minorities in education, religion, culture, personal status, and related matters, as well as participation in Parliament and local government in proportion to their numbers. U.N. observers were accepted "for a reasonable transition period" (Keesing's Record of World Events 1966). We do not code a concession since this is rather a symbolic act that did not alter the level of self-determination.
- The Turkish invasion of 1974 resulted in a de-facto partition of the island with a Turkish north and a Greek south and the establishment of governmental structures in a separate "Turkish Federated State of Cyprus" (Minorities at Risk Project). In 1977, both communities accepted four guidelines for future intercommunal talks (Makarios-Denktas Accords). The first guideline was

that "Cyprus would be an independent, nonaligned, bicommunal federal republic" (Solsten 1991). However, there was no implementation.

- The Annan plan (Sözen & Özersay 2007) endorsed a reunification of the island in a bi-zonal federal structure with a Greek-Cypriot and a Turkish Cypriot constituent state. The idea was a hybrid between a federation and a confederation similar to the Swiss or Belgian model. The constituent states were granted far-reaching autonomy with the central state retaining responsibility for issues regarding defence, foreign policy, currency and economy. The plan furthermore included territorial adjustments, several points realted to the sharing of power at the center and no restrictions on the freedom of movement. In total, the Annan plan underwent five revisions, all presented between Novermber 2002 and March 2004.
- However, the Annan plan was rejected in a 2004 referendum. Among Turkish Cypriots, the support amounted to 65%, while 76% of Greek Cypriots voted against it (Minority Rights Group International; Sözen & Özersay 2007). While we normally code a concession in case of mutually agreed referendums, we do not in this case because the vote was not only among Turkish Cypriots and because they were outvoted.
- In 2008 the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders committed themselves to working towards "a bicommunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as defined by relevant Security Council resolutions" (United Nations). Yet, nothing was implemented.
- The most significant reunification talks since the Annan plan took place in 2014 in the aftermath of the discovery of significant natural gas resources in 2011-2013 (Economist 2014). The Greek and Cypriot leaders stated in a joint declaration that they sought a resolution that would respect democratic principles, human rights, and fundamental freedoms for both communities; and that they supported a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with political equality (Christou 2014). Yet, amidst opposition from Turkey, the talks went nowhere (see Tarihi 2014).
- The election of Mustafa Akinci renewed hopes for reunification as he had indicated his strong interest in forming a federal Cyprus (see Bryant 2015). In November 2016, Presidents Anastasiades and Akinci began five days of talks brokered by the UN (see Chan 2016). Talks for reunification continued in 2017 in Geneva (Xypolia 2017), but no progress was made.
- In 2018, Anastasiades came under criticism for seemingly abandoning the federal solution – proposing instead the prospect of a "loose federation", a confederation, or even a two-state solution (Aygin 2020). President Anastasiades and the Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu discussed a two-state solution in 2018, suggesting that aspirations for reuinification on the Greek Cypriot side may have given way to the acceptance of a (de facto) partition. There is now increased pessimism regarding a possible re-unification (CRS 2019; also see Aygin 2020). Yet, the Greek Cypriot state has not officially accepted partition, so we do not code a concession.

Regional autonomy

- As mentioned above, the power-sharing agreement at independence was predominantly personal and lacked a territorial dimension, also due to the interspersed ethnic demography of the island (Coughlan 2000). Hence, we only code regional autonomy from 1975 onwards due to the establishment of de facto independence in 1974 (see above). [1975-2020: regional autonomy]

De facto independence

- From 1974 onwards and following the Turkish invasion, the government of the Republic of Cyprus did no longer control the occupied northern part of the island (Minority Rights Group International). In line with Caspersen (2012) and following the first of January rule, we thus code de facto independence from 1975 onwards. [1975-2020: de facto independence]

Major territorial changes

- Cyprus attained independence in 1960, implying a host change. However, this was before the start date.
- [1974: establishment of de-facto state]

EPR2SDM

Movement	Turkish Cypriots
Scenario	1:1
EPR group(s)	Turks
Gwgroupid(s)	35202000

Power access

- We follow EPR, with one exception (see below). Self-exclusion = powerless. [1961-1962: senior partner; 1963-2020: powerless]
  - o In December 1963 separatist violence broke out involving the Turks. While EPR is correct that the Turks were included in early 1963, the same does not hold for the end of 1963, when the violence broke out. The violence that erupted in 1963 was the result of a proposal by the Greek Cypriot president that aimed to sideline the Turks and establish Greek dominance. Although the Supreme Court declared the constitutional amendments illegal, the president began implementation, thus effectively ending the consociational system and provoking the outburst of violence (Solsten 1991). EPR codes the Turks as powerless from 1964 onwards but we move the exclusion code forward to 1963 so as to better reflect the case history.

Group size

- We follow EPR. [0.18]

Regional concentration

- Before the Turkish invasion of 1974, the Turkish communities were scattered across the island (see GeoEPR). The invasion lead to an almost complete geographical segregation after Greek Cypriots were expelled from the northern territory and Turkish Cypriots were displaced from the south to the north. We thus code the Turkish Cypriots as regionally concentrated from 1975 onwards. [1961-1974: not concentrated; 1975-2020: regionally concentrated]

Kin

- Turkish in Turkey, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Greece, and Kosovo (see MAR; EPR). Minahan (2002: 1394) also lists Turkish Cypriot communities in the United Kingdom. According to a report by the Home Affairs Committee, the latter amount to around 300,000. With Turkey being within 150 statute miles, we code ethnic kin in a neighboring country. [kin in adjoining country]

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