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## FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

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# Cyprus

[Cyprus](#)[Freedom of the Press 2013](#)

Freedom of speech and expression are guaranteed under Article 19 of the constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, which controls the largely Greek-speaking southern side of the divided island. These rights are generally respected in the south, where the independent press is vibrant and frequently criticizes authorities. The 1989 Press Law protects the circulation of newspapers, journalists' right not to reveal sources, and access to official information. The internet is not subject to any known government restrictions. Because there is no formal press council, journalists must use self-regulation to deal with complaints or professional lapses.

There are some press freedom laws in the separatist Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, but authorities there are hostile to the independent press, and journalists can be arrested, put on trial, and sentenced under the "unjust actions" section of the criminal code.

Reports of physical attacks or harassment aimed at journalists in the south are rare. However, the Northern Cyprus government has frequently targeted independent newspapers and journalists who choose to cover controversial issues.

Many journalists working in the north are subject to regular press freedom violations, though there were fewer such incidents in 2012 than in 2011. Media in Northern Cyprus can also display certain societal biases. In January 2012, using a reportedly derogatory tone, the Turkish Cypriot newspaper *Kıbrıs* revealed the identities of two men arrested under Section 171 of the penal code, which bans homosexual activity.

Cypriots have access to Greek- and Turkish-language broadcasts throughout the island, and several channels are transmitted from nearby Greece and Turkey. The broadcast sector consists of a mix of state and private outlets. The state-funded Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation operates three television channels and four radio stations in the south. Following the end of analog television transmission in 2011 and a requirement that all television stations broadcast nationally with a digital signal, several local television stations have shut down, unable to afford the cost of nationwide transmission. There are 7 daily newspapers, many of which are closely linked to political parties, as well as 31 weeklies and several monthly and other occasional publications. Northern Cyprus has its own press and broadcasters. Several daily newspapers are available, although mainland Turkish papers are generally preferred. The government-operated Bayrak Radio-TV offers two television channels—BRT 1 and BRT 2—as well as four radio stations. About 61 percent of the Cypriot population accessed the internet in 2012.

*[Although the narrative covers both Greek and Turkish Cyprus, the numerical rating for Cyprus is based on conditions on the Greek side of the island only.]*

## 2013 SCORES

PRESS STATUS

**Free**

PRESS FREEDOM SCORE

**25**

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

**6**

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

**10**

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

**9**

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