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Land registers in EU countries

Cyprus

What does the land register offer?

Administration of the land registers is the responsibility of the [Department of Lands and Surveys](#) (Τμήμα Κτηματολογίου και Χωρομετρίας) of the [Ministry of Interior](#) (Υπουργείο Εσωτερικών). Large parts of the land registers were computerised during the development of the Land Information System (LIS) (Σύστημα Πληροφοριών Γης (ΣΠΓ), which started in September 1995. The LIS comprises four databases: legal database (κτηματολογική βάση), fiscal database (εκτιμητική βάση), digital/cadastral database (γεωγραφική/κτηματική βάση) and survey database (χωρομετρική βάση).

The Cyprus Land Register contains information on the identity of every registered plot of land or unit of immovable property. More importantly, it contains the survey reference of the plot or unit, the location, a description, the surface area, the fiscal value and any charges in rem, encumbrances, deeds of sale, easements, tenancies, restrictive covenants or other related information. It also contains details of the owner or owners, each owner's share and how and when the property was acquired.

On 14 July 2009, a total of 1,082,660,000 properties in free and occupied Cyprus (i.e. 85.25%) had been recorded in the legal database.

Is access to the land register free of charge?

There is no public access to the land register and Land Information System. Only interested parties can request information on property in which they have a legitimate interest.

The fees paid in order to obtain a search certificate from the Department of Lands and Surveys vary depending on the information requested.

Search certificate

(a) for property registered to a named person, for each village or parish	€ 1.71
(b) for property recorded to a named person, for each village or parish	€ 0.85
(c) for the name of the registered owner of a specified registered property, for each property	€ 0.85
(d) for the history of or charges in rem on a specified property or for any other information for which there is no prescribed fee, for every hour's search	€ 8.54

How to search the land register

Under current legislation in Cyprus, only interested parties have access to the land registers. Information is provided in the form of a certificate called a 'search certificate' (πιστοποιητικό έρευνας). A search certificate is only issued once an application has been filed and the prescribed fee has been paid to the Department of Lands and Surveys. Applications are filed using form N.50 and can be filed with any Lands Office (Κτηματολογικό Γραφείο) by any interested party or their agent or attorney. Under section 51A in Chapter 224 of the Immovable Property (Tenure, Registration and Valuation) Law (Ο περί Ακίνητης Ιδιοκτησίας (Διακατοχή, Εγγραφή και Εκτίμηση) Νόμος), 'interested party' means the owner, his universal or specific successors in title, the owner of any trees, buildings or other objects on land which belongs to another and vice versa, a person with any right or interest in the immovable property, a person who satisfies the Director that he is a prospective purchaser or mortgagor, the plaintiff in any action against the owner of the property, a professional valuer who requires certain information for the purpose of valuing certain immovable property in connection with a compulsory purchase and any person not already specified to whom the Director orders that information be furnished.

A search certificate is issued on form N.51 by the Lands Office responsible for the register or book in which the information is recorded, signed and stamped with the Department's seal and handed over or mailed to the applicant.

History of the land register

The database which was the precursor to the current land register was started in the final years of the Ottoman Empire on 21 April 1858, with the adoption of the Ottoman Land Code (Οθωμανικός Κώδικας περί Γαιών). The main purpose of the land registry at the time was to register land, especially state-owned land provided to tenant farmers, and to record sales and transfers of and mortgages on immovable property.

This gave rise to the first registers, in which all daily acts started to be recorded.

New legislation was passed in 1860 requiring mandatory and systematic valuation and registration of all forms of property and the provision of the relevant title deeds ('Γιοκλάμα'). The land in every village was roughly surveyed and entered in separate registers and interested persons had to pay registration fees in order to obtain a title deed. Persons who failed to pay were not given a title deed and the corresponding entries in the registers were left undated and lapsed from 1943 onwards.

On 4 June 1878, when the Turks ceded their rights over Cyprus to Britain, the British retained the system in force unchanged and they in turn used the 'land register' as a means of levying and collecting taxes.

However, in 1890, because of the difficulties caused by having so many different registers, it was decided that they urgently needed to be translated into English and consolidated into one new register. All entries in the old registers were transferred exactly as they stood on the date of transfer to this register, which was prepared for each village separately.

In 1904, a survey of Cyprus was commenced on the basis of the provisions of the Survey for the Purpose of Revenue Law (Ο περί Χωρομετρήσεως για σκοπούς προσόδων Νόμος) No.5 of 1890, in order to make the registration system more reliable and efficient.

While the surveying and mapping of Cyprus (as started in 1904) was under way, the Registration and Valuation of Immovable Property Law (Ο περί Εγγραφής και Εκτίμησης Ακίνητου Ιδιοκτησίας Νόμος) No.12 of 1907 was passed for the purpose of registering and surveying all immovable property up to 1929.

Once surveying and mapping had been completed, the immovable property in the land register was valued and registered. The register contained all the information which defined each separate immovable property and the name and interest of every owner. Following registration, the State issued the owner with an official title deed.

Registration of immovable property in Cyprus was completed in 1929. This procedure gave rise to three registers, which are still in use:

An improved type of Land Register (Μητρώο Εγγραφής) containing the details and identity of all property.

A Tax Register (Φορολογικό Μητρώο), in which every person's immovable property was recorded by geographical area, together with the total value of the property for land tax purposes.

A Value Schedule (Δελτίο Εκτιμητών), known as form N115, describing the property by geographical area and page/plan (surface area, location, beneficiary and value of property).

When the Immovable Property (Tenure, Registration and Valuation) Law Chap. 224 was passed and entered the statute book on 1 September 1946, the Ottoman laws and many of the later colonial laws were repealed, including Law No. 12 of 1907 (which was still on the statute book), and a new, modern basis was introduced for the registration, tenure and valuation of immovable property.

Computerisation of the land register started in 1995 and is progressing well.

Related Links

[Department of Lands and Surveys](#)

[Ministry of Interior](#)

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