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Efficiency of process

Cyprus's courts have undergone sweeping reforms to modernise justice, cut backlog and remain attractive for international disputes. Key changes include the introduction of new courts, the New Civil Procedure Rules effective from September 2023 (New CPR), the revised Evidence Law, updated interim relief powers and the rollout of the iJustice digital case management platform after an earlier eJustice pilot faltered. These initiatives embed technology, streamline procedure and enhance efficiency across the island's dispute resolution landscape.

Cyprus has radically modernised its justice system to shorten the four-to-six-year wait that once plagued civil, commercial and administrative cases. The Courts' Reform Plan couples digital, procedural and structural measures to deliver quicker, more predictable outcomes.

Launched in 2024, the iJustice platform replaced the limited eJustice pilot. Lawyers now file claims, evidence and pleadings online; judges receive automatic case allocation and scheduling; parties track progress in real time; and precedents are searchable instantly. The result is less paperwork, fewer adjournments and greater transparency.

The New CPR empower judges to impose tighter timetables at early case management conferences, provide simplified procedures for lower-value and more straightforward claims, and encourage parties to consider arbitration and other alternative dispute resolution (ADR) routes where appropriate. These reforms apply to civil cases filed after September 2023 and are designed to promote proportionality, active case management and faster disposal, although legacy backlog cases remain a continuing challenge.

Under Part 24 of the New CPR Rules, summary judgment allows the court to decide a claim or specific issue without a full trial where one party has no real prospect of success and there is no compelling reason for the matter to proceed to trial. An application may be made by either the claimant or the defendant after the defendant has filed an appearance, unless the court permits otherwise. The hearing must be scheduled with at least 14 days' notice. Any party relying on written evidence must file and serve it at least seven days before the hearing, with any reply evidence served at least three days before. The court may grant final judgment, strike out or dismiss the claim or defence, dismiss the application, or issue a conditional order requiring a party to take specific steps. If summary judgment is granted in the absence of a party, that party may apply to set aside or vary the order.

There has also recently been a complete structural overhaul of the Court System, especially on the upper levels of justice:

- Specialist courts and jurisdictions: Cyprus has long operated specialist jurisdictions such as Family, Rent Control, Labour Dispute and Criminal Courts. In addition, a dedicated Commercial Court and Admiralty Court have been established by legislation as part of the wider court reform programme, with the aim of channelling qualifying commercial and maritime disputes to judges with specialist expertise, subject to their operational commencement and applicable procedural rules.
- Two-tier appellate ladder: A 16-judge Court of Appeal now reviews facts and law, easing the Supreme Court's former dual role.
- Third-tier apex courts:
  - Supreme Court (seven judges), which hears only precedentially important appeals and holds exclusive admiralty and prerogative writ jurisdiction.
  - Supreme Constitutional Court (nine judges), which decides constitutional and administrative law questions.

This tripartite structure preserves the common law doctrine of precedent while accelerating routine appeals.

Extra judges, streamlined workflows and mandatory digital filing are shrinking backlogs and restoring investor confidence in Cyprus as a dispute resolution hub. Legacy cases still require attention, but the blend of technology, stricter timelines and specialised courts now aligns Cypriot justice with international benchmarks for speed, accessibility and reliability.

Integrity of process

Judicial integrity in Cyprus rests on strict separation of powers and a constitutionally independent bench, giving judges freedom from executive or legislative pressure. Decisions are evidence-based and adversarial, ensuring equal hearing of both parties. Article 30 of the Cyprus Constitution guarantees the right to a fair trial, including access to a lawful, independent, and impartial court within a reasonable time. It prohibits special or extraordinary courts and ensures that hearings are public unless privacy or public interest justifies exclusion. It also protects rights such as being informed of charges, adequate time to prepare a defence, presenting and challenging evidence, legal representation (with legal aid where justice requires), and interpretation if needed.

Procedural fairness has been tightened by clearer disclosure rules, secure e-filing and encrypted communication, protecting confidentiality while expediting sharing of non-sensitive materials. The legal hierarchy – Constitution, retained laws, common law and equity principles, parliamentary statutes, and the supremacy of EU law – ensures consistent, rights-based adjudication aligned with European standards.

Ethical safeguards include the Supreme Court's *Guide on Judicial Conduct*, modelled on the Bangalore Principles and the English Guide, and lifelong training through the School of Judges (Law 101(I)/2020). Continuous education keeps judges current with international developments and reinforces impartiality.

For domestic and international litigants alike, this package of independence, ethics, training and digital transparency sustains confidence in Cyprus as a dependable forum for resolving complex cross-border disputes. By prioritising impartiality and accountability, Cyprus upholds the rule of law and delivers justice that meets modern expectations of speed, fairness and openness.

Privilege and disclosure

The New CPR have reshaped disclosure in Cyprus by introducing a more structured and proportionate approach to documentary evidence, while preserving the long-standing protection of legal professional privilege (LPP).

General disclosure

Each party must list and produce every document it will rely on at trial, giving the court and opponents early sight of the evidence and preventing ambush.

Specific disclosure

On application, the court may compel production of further material it believes lies with the other side. Judges weigh relevance against privilege or oppression. In claims below €10,000, disclosure is ordered only if needed, speeding up small-claim cases.

Strict Civil Procedure Rule (CPR) timetables require identification, categorisation and ongoing supplementation of document lists; undisclosed material is normally barred later unless the court grants relief. "Without prejudice", privileged or plainly irrelevant documents remain exempt.

Pre-action disclosure

The New CPR introduce a procedure for pre-action disclosure under Rule 31.7, allowing a person to apply to court for the disclosure of specific documents against a potential defendant before starting legal proceedings.

In Cyprus, LPP is safeguarded by the Advocates' Law, Cap. 2, the Advocates' Code of Conduct, common law principles and relevant European case law. Confidential documents protected by privilege are exempt from disclosure and inspection.

LPP protects confidential communications between lawyer and client made for the purpose of giving or receiving legal advice. It also protects communications and documents created for the dominant purpose of actual or contemplated litigation, including appropriate communications with third parties where they are made for the purpose of obtaining legal advice or conducting litigation. In addition, without prejudice communications made in genuine settlement negotiations and material protected by the privilege against self-incrimination remain protected.

The privilege belongs to the client, not the lawyer. It continues indefinitely unless waived by the client or displaced by a recognised legal exception. If a dispute arises as to whether a document is privileged, the court may inspect the document or otherwise determine the issue before ordering disclosure.

Legal professional privilege is treated not merely as a private confidentiality obligation but as a fundamental protection connected with the administration of justice and the rule of law. This is particularly important in the context of regulatory and criminal investigations. In 2026, the Supreme Court of Cyprus annulled a search warrant issued in relation to the home, law office and vehicles of a practising advocate and his law firm. Although the warrant was annulled on the narrower ground that the issuing court had not properly satisfied itself of the required connection between the items sought and the premises to be searched, the proceedings underline the need for strict judicial scrutiny where search warrants affect lawyers, law firms, privileged communications and client data. Together with existing case law, the decision reinforces that investigative measures must not become a vehicle for general or unrestricted access to privileged material.

Article 13 of the Advocates' Code of Conduct also imposes a strict duty of professional secrecy. Advocates must protect client information permanently and may refuse to answer questions or disclose material where doing so would breach professional confidentiality. The duty extends to information obtained from clients, third parties, failed settlement discussions and other lawyers. Limited disclosure may be permitted where necessary for the lawyer's own defence in criminal, disciplinary or civil proceedings.

Evidence

Cyprus inherited the adversarial tradition of English common law, yet its rules of proof have gradually assumed an indigenous character. Their statutory backbone remains Cap. 9 of the Evidence Law, supplemented by common law principles imported through Article 29 of the Courts of Justice Law of 1960 (Law 14/60). Cap. 9 was recast by Law 32(I)/2004, a watershed reform that abandoned the rigid exclusion of hearsay, authorised written witness statements as evidence-in-chief and conferred wide judicial discretion to receive any relevant information, provided that its probative value outweighs any risk to the fairness of the proceedings.

All evidence must first be relevant; only thereafter does the court ask whether some exclusionary rule applies. The traditional best-evidence principle still prefers original documents and primary digital records, but secondary copies or printouts are admitted once authenticity is shown. Expert testimony remains the only recognised form of "opinion" evidence. Where a party relies on electronic data, it must disclose the manner of collection and maintain an auditable chain of custody – an obligation now embedded in the Supreme Court's Practice Directions and operationalised through the iJustice e-filing platform.

The court may compel a party – or, in some cases, even a non-party – to produce documents relevant and necessary for the fair resolution of the dispute with the process described above under "Privilege and disclosure". Failure to comply with a disclosure order can result in sanctions, including striking out pleadings or adverse cost orders.

Cross-examination is a fundamental right in civil and criminal proceedings in Cyprus, rooted in Article 30 of the Constitution (right to a fair trial).

The court can compel witnesses to attend and be cross-examined through:

- Summonses (witness subpoenas), ordering individuals to attend court and give oral evidence.
- Directions for cross-examination on affidavit evidence, particularly in interlocutory matters (e.g., interim injunctions).

If a witness fails to appear after being lawfully summoned, the court may:

- issue a warrant for their arrest (in limited cases); or
- exclude their affidavit evidence, especially if cross-examination was requested and denied.

In criminal trials, the prosecution bears the legal and evidential burden and must satisfy the bench beyond reasonable doubt; the accused carries only tactical burdens unless statute expressly reverses them. In civil claims, the persuasive burden normally rests on the claimant, who must prove his case on the balance of probabilities, but Cap. 9 preserves numerous presumptions – such as the authenticity of public documents or proof of debt against a deceased – which may shift the evidential onus.

The contemporary Cypriot law of evidence blends classical common law safeguards with flexible statutory powers and technological capability. Its trajectory – towards relevance, proportionality and digital fluency – aims to preserve the integrity of fact-finding while ensuring that procedure keeps pace with modern litigation realities.

Costs

The management of litigation costs is a pivotal concern for parties navigating Cyprus's judicial system. The traditional "loser-pays" principle, where the unsuccessful party typically bears the successful party's costs, remains the default in civil litigation with the court always retaining discretion and the "final say" as to whom the costs shall be awarded and/or if any costs are to be awarded. Recent reforms have introduced measures to enhance cost predictability, curb excessive fees, and promote efficiency, ensuring that financial burdens align with the principles of fairness and access to justice.

Under the CPR and the New CPR, courts exercise significant discretion in awarding costs, considering factors such as the case's complexity, urgency, value, and the parties' conduct. While the successful party is generally entitled to costs – including expenses for court procedures, legal document preparation, court appearances, witnesses, and related correspondence – the court may award partial costs or require each party to bear their own expenses in exceptional circumstances. Costs are assessed or taxed by the court registrar, approved by the court, and bear legal interest, ensuring timely recovery for the prevailing party. The Supreme Court's regulations provide a scale of minimum and maximum charges based on the claim's value, though these often fall short of actual costs in complex, high-value disputes.

The New CPR place greater emphasis on proportionality, active case management and cost discipline. Courts retain a broad discretion when awarding costs and may take into account the value and complexity of the case, the conduct of the parties, the reasonableness of steps taken and the overriding objective. Recoverable costs remain subject to the applicable court scales and to taxation or assessment by the registrar, and may not always reflect the actual legal fees incurred, particularly in complex or high-value commercial disputes. Digital filing and electronic case management may reduce some administrative costs, but the overall cost of litigation continues to depend on the nature, urgency and complexity of the proceedings.

Under Part 26 of the New CPR, a claimant (or a defendant making a counterclaim beyond set-off) who resides outside the EU or an EU Member State may be ordered to provide security for costs at any stage of the proceedings, even if temporarily residing in Cyprus or the EU. Low-income foreign workers are exempt. The court has discretion to order security even where the claim is based on a judgment, court order, or negotiable instrument. Security may also be ordered where a person sues in a representative capacity (e.g., on behalf of a child or incapable person), or where the claimant is merely a nominal party acting for someone else and appears insolvent. If security is ordered and not provided within the set time, the claim may be dismissed. Security is usually paid directly to the party requesting it, not to the court, unless otherwise ordered.

By integrating digital efficiencies, robust cost-capping measures, and judicial discretion, Cyprus's reformed cost framework ensures that litigation remains financially manageable. These advancements not only reduce the economic burden on litigants but also reinforce Cyprus's appeal as an efficient and equitable jurisdiction for dispute resolution.

Litigation funding

Litigation funding in Cyprus has historically been constrained by traditional restrictions, but recent developments signal a shift towards more flexible and innovative financing models. As the complexity and cost of disputes, particularly in commercial contexts, continue to rise, evolving funding mechanisms are enhancing access to justice and positioning Cyprus as a competitive forum for resolving high-stakes litigation.

Funding for litigation is typically the responsibility of the parties involved, with each financing their own legal expenses. Legal fees are governed by agreements between lawyers and clients. Absent such agreements, fees are assessed based on Supreme Court scales tied to the claim's value, with oversight from the Cyprus Bar Association to address complaints of overcharging. Third-party funding is not inherently contrary to public policy, opening avenues for alternative funding models.

Cyprus has no statute that expressly bars third-party litigation funding, but its courts have not yet ruled on the practice. If the point is litigated, they are likely to draw on English common law precedents for direction. In principle, the option should be open to both claimants and defendants.

The Legal Assistance Law of 2002 (Law 165(I)/2002) provides state-funded legal aid for specific cases, such as human rights violations, cross-border disputes, and family or matrimonial matters, supporting individuals unable to afford legal proceedings.

The evolution of litigation funding is closely tied to Cyprus's broader judicial reforms. Streamlined processes and digital efficiencies reduce case durations, making litigation more attractive to funders seeking shorter recovery timelines. Clearer judicial guidance on cost recovery and funding arrangements provides litigants with greater certainty, mitigating financial risks. By embracing market-based funding solutions and leveraging technological advancements, Cyprus is fostering a more accessible and competitive litigation environment, reinforcing its status as a modern hub for dispute resolution.

Class actions

Cyprus does not yet provide the US-style opt-out class action, but several mechanisms allow many claimants with the same interest to litigate together.

When two or more cases pending before the same court raise common factual or legal issues, the court may order their consolidation or concurrent hearing. This streamlines evidence, avoids conflicting outcomes and reduces costs.

The New CPR introduced an explicit representative action framework in Part 20:

- Rule 20.7 – same-interest representation. Where several persons "have the same interest in a cause or matter", one or more of them may sue or be sued as representatives of all. The court can replace or remove a representative, and any judgment binds the entire group; enforcement against non-parties still requires the court's leave.
- Rule 20.8 – court-appointed representatives. The court may appoint a person to act for classes that are unborn, untraceable, difficult to ascertain, or so numerous that a single representative promotes the overriding objective. The appointment can be made before or after a claim is issued and is subject to the nominee's consent, and any settlement requires court approval.

Together, these rules give Cyprus a true common interest collective action mechanism – a functional counterpart to a class action, tailored to common law principles of fairness and procedural economy.

While Cyprus stops short of a US-style opt-out model, the combined effect of consolidation orders, Part 20 representative actions and emerging consumer group claims equips the legal system with a flexible toolbox for collective redress. These avenues allow similarly situated claimants to pool resources, advance common arguments efficiently and obtain a judgment that binds the whole group, thereby delivering many of the functional benefits of a traditional class action.

Interim relief

Interim relief is a cornerstone of Cyprus's judicial framework, protecting litigants' interests by preserving assets, securing evidence, and maintaining the *status quo* during disputes. Empowered by Article 32 of the Courts of Justice Law, Cyprus courts issue a wide range of interim measures, from freezing orders to disclosure injunctions, to prevent irreparable harm.

Courts grant interim relief at their discretion, provided applicants meet three conditions on the balance of probabilities: a serious arguable claim exists; there is a reasonable likelihood of entitlement to relief; and denying the order would make justice difficult or impossible later, or cause irreparable harm not compensable by damages. Even when these criteria are met, courts evaluate whether granting relief is just and equitable, considering case-specific circumstances. Interim relief supports an underlying claim, not a standalone action, and applicants often provide an undertaking in damages, sometimes backed by a bank guarantee, to cover potential respondent losses if the order is later deemed unwarranted.

Cyprus courts offer diverse interim measures tailored to case needs:

- Mareva Injunctions (Freezing Orders): These prevent respondents from dissipating or removing assets, including worldwide, as recognised in *Seamark Consultancy Services Ltd v. Joseph P. Lasala* (2007). Applicants must show assets in the jurisdiction and a real risk of dissipation.
- Chabra Orders: These freeze third-party assets controlled by the respondent, despite no direct claim against the third party, treating them as the respondent's.
- Norwich Pharmacal Orders: These compel third parties innocently involved in wrongdoing (e.g., banks handling illicit funds) to disclose information to identify wrongdoers or support claims.
- Anton Piller Orders: These mandatory injunctions allow searches of respondents' premises to preserve evidence at risk of destruction, requiring a strong *prima facie* case, serious harm, and clear evidence of tampering risk.
- Bankers Trust Orders: These mandate banks to disclose transaction details, aiding asset tracing.
- Tracing Orders: These identify respondents' asset locations to enhance freezing injunctions.
- Gagging Orders: These prohibit respondents from disclosing *ex parte* proceedings to ensure compliance with disclosure orders.
- Anti-Suit Injunctions: These restrain parties from pursuing conflicting foreign proceedings.
- *Quia Timet* Injunctions: These prevent anticipated wrongs before they occur.
- Other Measures: Courts may appoint receivers, order specific performance, or issue mandatory/prohibitory injunctions.

Interim relief applications are typically filed by summons, with hearings scheduled soon after serving the respondent. In urgent cases, *ex parte* applications – without notice – can be processed within days, provided applicants fully disclose all material facts, including potential defences. Non-disclosure risks order discharge. The iJustice system's electronic filing and automated scheduling expedite these requests, while digital tracking and alerts ensure compliance. Respondents may consent to the order's continuation or oppose it by filing an affidavit and notice within days. Parties can seek supplementary affidavits or cross-examination, with appeals to the Appellate Court possible within 14 days, citing issues like disclosure breaches or legal misapplication. Non-compliance constitutes contempt, punishable by fines, imprisonment, or asset sequestration under Section 42 of the Courts of Justice Law.

Courts support interim relief in domestic arbitrations (Cap. 4) and international arbitrations (Law 101/1987), including pre-arbitration measures. Under Article 35 of the Brussels Regulation, Cyprus courts issue relief for EU proceedings. While no equivalent exists for non-EU cases, courts often grant freezing orders for foreign arbitrations, showing flexibility. This cross-border capability is vital in commercial disputes involving global assets.

Interim relief preserves the integrity of litigation, particularly in cross-border cases where worldwide freezing orders prevent asset dissipation. By integrating digital efficiency, clear standards, and robust measures, Cyprus ensures timely, effective relief, cementing its status as a modern dispute resolution hub.

Enforcement of judgments/awards

Cyprus courts issue enforceable domestic judgments automatically, with methods including writs of execution for seizing movables or immovables, garnishee orders redirecting debts, charging orders on shares, and writs of possession or delivery. Bankruptcy or liquidation proceedings may target non-compliant debtors. Judgments remain enforceable for 12 years, and non-compliance risks contempt penalties, asset seizure, or director arrests for deliberate corporate defiance. Courts can suspend enforcement if new facts emerge, and affidavit-supported enforcement proceeds despite lost case files. The iJustice system's automation expedites processes, reducing administrative delays and costs.

Cyprus recognises and enforces foreign judgments and/or awards via EU regulations, bilateral treaties, multilateral conventions, statutes, and common law.

Regulation 1215/2012 (Brussels I Recast) simplifies EU judgment recognition for proceedings post-January 10, 2015, presuming validity without special procedures, unlike Regulation 44/2001 for earlier cases. Regulation 805/2004 streamlines uncontested claims, bypassing court approval. Bilateral treaties with countries like Russia, China, and Greece, and conventions like Hague (1971) and New York (1958) for arbitral awards, facilitate non-EU enforcement. The Foreign Judgments Law (Cap. 10) and Law 121(I)/2000 cover Commonwealth and reciprocal jurisdictions. Common law actions apply absent treaties. Recognised foreign judgments gain domestic status, enforceable via garnishment, sequestration, or receivership.

Cross-border litigation

Cyprus's strategic position and modernised legal framework make it a prime venue for cross-border litigation, adeptly addressing the complexities of international disputes. With a common law system rooted in English law, adherence to EU regulations, and advanced digital tools, Cyprus ensures efficient, transparent resolution of global commercial conflicts, attracting litigants seeking legal certainty.

Jurisdiction and service

Under Regulation 1215/2012, Cyprus courts determine jurisdiction for EU disputes, prioritising streamlined rules over Regulation 44/2001, including refined *lis pendens* and choice-of-court provisions. Courts assert jurisdiction when defendants are served per CPR or submit voluntarily (e.g., via express agreement or unconditional appearance). For non-residents, court leave is required for service unless service takes place under Regulations 2020/1784 and 1215/2012, in which case no leave is required. Leave is granted if the dispute involves Cyprus-based immovable property, contracts made in Cyprus, or civil wrongs committed locally. Service abroad follows the New CPR and the applicable international or EU instruments. Within the EU, Regulation 2020/1784 on the service of judicial and extrajudicial documents applies, replacing Regulation 1393/2007. Outside the EU, service may proceed through the Hague Service Convention, bilateral arrangements, diplomatic channels or other methods permitted by the applicable procedural rules and the law of the receiving state.

Evidence and discovery

Cypriot courts have updated procedural rules to facilitate cross-border evidence exchange, crucial in multi-jurisdictional commercial disputes. The iJustice system's digital platforms enable secure document sharing and remote examinations, reducing costs and delays. Strict guidelines ensure evidence admissibility across jurisdictions, maintaining procedural integrity.

Interim relief and judicial cooperation

Article 35 of Regulation 1215/2012 allows Cyprus courts to issue interim measures, like freezing orders, to support EU proceedings, even without substantive jurisdiction. Courts also grant relief for international arbitrations under Law 101/1987 and domestic arbitrations (Cap. 4). Anti-suit injunctions and coordination with foreign courts prevent conflicting rulings, with digital interfaces streamlining communication of rulings and documents.

Enforcement and legal framework

Cyprus simplifies enforcement of foreign judgments via the Brussels Regulation for EU decisions and the New York Convention for arbitral awards, minimising formalities. Bilateral treaties with countries like Russia and China, and the Hague Convention, support non-EU enforcement. Regulations like Rome I and Rome II harmonise applicable laws, enhancing predictability.

By integrating digital case management, robust EU compliance, and judicial cooperation, Cyprus offers a stable, efficient platform for cross-border litigation, reinforcing its appeal as a trusted international dispute resolution hub.

International arbitration

Cyprus is a prominent hub for international arbitration, offering a robust legislative framework and modern infrastructure for efficient dispute resolution. Anchored by the International Commercial Arbitration Law (Law 101/1987) and adherence to the New York Convention, Cyprus ensures neutrality and enforceability, making it an attractive venue for resolving complex cross-border disputes.

Recent reforms strengthen the synergy between courts and arbitration. Cypriot courts adopt a non-interventionist stance, limiting involvement to essential support, such as securing evidence or issuing interim measures like freezing orders, as permitted under Section 9 of Law 101/1987 for international arbitrations and Article 26 of the Domestic Arbitration Law (Cap. 4). This judicial restraint, coupled with clear arbitration statutes, encourages parties to opt for arbitration over litigation.

Advanced case management software enhances arbitration efficiency, streamlining hearing schedules, evidence sharing, and interim measure registration. These digital tools, integrated into Cyprus's arbitration centres, reduce procedural delays and boost transparency, fostering confidence in the process. Parties enjoy significant autonomy in selecting procedural rules, supported by courts that swiftly enforce arbitral awards under international standards, including the New York Convention.

Arbitration agreements, valid if written and signed or exchanged via verifiable communication (Article 7 of Law 101/1987), cover diverse commercial disputes, from trade to investments. Cyprus's common law system, EU compliance (e.g., Brussels Regulation), and bilateral treaties enhance its appeal. By combining judicial support, modern technology, and a predictable legal environment, Cyprus upholds neutrality and efficiency, making it a preferred choice for commercial, investment, and construction arbitrations, and solidifying its reputation as an arbitration-friendly jurisdiction.

An application for the recognition or enforcement of an arbitral award pursuant to Law 101/1987 may be rejected only on specific grounds. These include if: one of the parties lacked legal capacity or the arbitration agreement is invalid under the applicable law; the opposing party was not properly notified of the appointment of the arbitrator or the proceedings, or was otherwise denied the opportunity to present their case; the award deals with matters beyond the scope of the arbitration agreement; the arbitral tribunal was improperly constituted or the procedure violated the parties' agreement or the law of the seat of arbitration; or the award is not yet binding, or has been annulled or suspended by a competent court in the country of origin. The court may also refuse recognition or enforcement if the subject matter is not arbitrable under Cypriot law, or if enforcement would conflict with public policy. Additionally, if annulment or suspension proceedings are pending in the country where the award was made, the Cypriot court has discretion to stay the enforcement and may require the respondent to provide security.

Mediation and ADR

Mediation and ADR are gaining momentum in Cyprus as efficient alternatives to litigation, supported by robust legislative reforms and digital innovations. These methods, including arbitration, mediation, and conciliation, offer flexible, confidential, and cost-effective solutions, reducing court backlogs and litigation costs, particularly for consumer, family, and commercial disputes.

The Certain Aspects of Mediation in Civil Matters Law of 2012 (Law 159(I)/2012), aligning with EU Directive 2008/52/EC, governs mediation in civil and cross-border disputes, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary settlements. The Mediation in Family Disputes Law of 2019 (Law 62(I)/2019) addresses family issues like parental responsibility and alimony. Mediators, adhering to the European Code of Conduct, require accredited training to maintain high standards, fostering trust in the process. The New CPR encourage ADR, with courts directing parties, especially in low-value cases, to consider mediation before trial.

Arbitration, regulated by the Domestic Arbitration Law (Cap. 4) for domestic cases and Law 101/1987 for international disputes, ensures privacy and speed, supported by Order 49 of the CPR. Non-arbitrable matters include criminal, family, and public policy issues. ADR centres like the Euro-Mediterranean Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre, Cyprus Arbitration and Mediation Centre, and Cyprus Eurasia Dispute Resolution and Arbitration Centre, alongside ICC arbitration via the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce, provide structured rules and codes of conduct.

Digital advancements enhance ADR efficiency. Modern platforms offer user-friendly features like automated scheduling, real-time video conferencing, and secure document exchange, reducing administrative burdens. AI-assisted tools provide neutral dispute assessments, allowing mediators to focus on resolution. These cost-effective solutions are particularly appealing for business disputes, preserving relationships and cash flow.

By integrating legislative support, professional standards, and digital tools, Cyprus offers a comprehensive ADR framework. This alleviates court pressures and provides parties with swift, confidential, and tailored dispute resolution, reinforcing Cyprus's status as an ADR-friendly jurisdiction.

Regulatory investigations

Cyprus has several independent regulatory authorities overseeing key areas such as competition, data protection, energy, financial markets, anti-money laundering, corporate compliance, and consumer disputes. These include the Commission for the Protection of Competition (CPC), the Office of the Commissioner for Personal Data Protection, the Cyprus Energy Regulatory Authority (CERA), the Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission (CySEC), the Unit for Combating Money Laundering (MOKAS), the Department of the Registrar of Companies and Intellectual Property (RCIP), and the Financial Ombudsman.

These bodies shape the litigation landscape by initiating or supporting regulatory enforcement, which may lead to or substitute private claims – such as follow-on actions for competition violations or civil claims for data breaches. Their decisions often lead to judicial review applications before the Administrative Court.

While they function autonomously, courts in Cyprus – primarily the Administrative Court under Article 146 of the Constitution – exercise legal oversight to ensure such powers are used lawfully. Courts may annul decisions for reasons such as procedural unfairness or abuse of power but cannot reassess their merits. This judicial control helps maintain the rule of law and balances regulatory independence with accountability. Legal professional privilege remains an important limitation on compulsory disclosure powers and investigative measures. Regulators and law enforcement authorities may exercise statutory information-gathering powers, but such powers must be applied consistently with privilege, professional secrecy, proportionality and the right to respect for private communications, particularly where access is sought to material held by advocates or law firms.

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Constantinos Clerides is a Partner at Phoebus, Christos Clerides & Associates LLC, specialising in high-value commercial litigation and arbitration. A Barrister-at-Law (Lincoln's Inn, 2017) with an LL.M. from King's College London, he has handled hundreds of cases before the District, Appeal, Supreme and Constitutional Courts of Cyprus and in various international commercial arbitration forums. Constantinos regularly handles interim relief applications in commercial disputes, including asset freeze and preservation of *status quo* injunctions. His practice spans minority shareholder oppression claims, trustee-beneficiary disputes, creditor-debtor conflicts, and issues arising from distribution agreements. He also advises on jurisdictional challenges and represents clients in recognition and enforcement proceedings involving foreign judgments and arbitral awards. He advises on contracts, shareholder disputes, trusts, insolvency, and corporate structuring, and has led major multi-million-euro acquisitions.

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Alexandros Clerides is a leading expert in criminal law, human rights, EU law, and prison law, with over a decade of litigation experience in Cyprus. He regularly appears before the criminal courts at all levels and is known for systematically securing certiorari orders from the Supreme Court annulling various orders and warrants issued by the police and setting key legal precedents. He has also successfully represented clients before the European Court of Human Rights. Since 2024, he has served as President of the Prisoners' Rights Movement and Secretary of the Criminal Justice Committee of the Cyprus Bar Association. He has published extensively on criminology, human rights, and prison law, and his work has been presented at conferences and cited by Parliament. His work frequently attracts media coverage due to the high-profile and legally significant nature of the cases he handles. He is a third-generation lawyer and Partner at Phoebus, Christos Clerides & Associates LLC.

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Antonis Georgiou is a Partner at Phoebus, Christos Clerides & Associates LLC, specialising in corporate, commercial and cross-border litigation. He has extensive experience in high-value disputes, including defamation, shareholders' disputes, asset recovery, construction claims, land and property disputes, malicious prosecution, liquidation proceedings, lease disputes, family asset division and cases involving public authorities. Antonis has handled significant cases. His notable work includes overturning a first-instance defamation decision before the Court of Appeal to the benefit of the plaintiff, and securing damages of €50,000 in a defamation action against a newspaper with nationwide circulation in Cyprus. He also obtained €50,000 in damages for relatives of missing persons from the 1963 events, arguing that the Republic of Cyprus failed to comply with its procedural obligations under Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights to investigate disappearances effectively and impartially.

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