



**Fédération Européenne
des Médecins Salariés**
European Federation
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CYPRUS TURKISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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Cyprus Turkish Medical Association Country Report

In the north of Cyprus, as in the whole world, normal life has been interrupted due to the pandemic. Since March 10, 2020, when the first case was seen in the country, a total of 18 798 people have been infected, 75 people have died due to COVID-19. A total of 13 physicians and more health workers were infected. We have lost 1 of our physicians due to COVID-19.

With the effect of 2 lockdowns along with the pandemic, economic contraction and impoverishment reached a serious level in the country. According to official figures, the economy contracted by 16.2% in 2020. This contraction is the highest among all European Union member and candidate countries. Consumer price index is also rising rapidly. In the northern part of Cyprus, the inflation level has been 14.9% since the beginning of this year, while the 2020 inflation has been announced as 20.54%. Whereas, inflation in Euro Zone countries in the same period was measured as 3%. Rapidly increasing prices and the shrinking economy also negatively affected the labor market. The unemployment rate reached 10.1%. This rate is around 6.9% in EU countries. The crisis that emerged after the COVID-19 pandemic has caused more significant setbacks, especially for women. While unemployment among the female population is 12.2%, it reached much higher rates among the youth. Unemployment, which is calculated as 29.3% among young people, reaches 34.8% among young women. Under the COVID-19 conditions, the economy contracted drastically, prices rose rapidly and unemployment increased. As a result of these economic developments, the per capita income in the Turkish Cypriot community has now been calculated as 10 055 USD while it was 12 649 USD in 2019.

Vaccination against COVID-19 in the northern part of Cyprus started on January 15, 2021, and a total of 415 000 doses of vaccine have been administered to date. According to this, although the rate of fully vaccinated people in the community is 53%, since the first vaccines were Sinovac vaccines donated from Turkey, the same people are currently receiving 3rd dose mRNA vaccines. Although a smaller number, approved vaccines from the EU and Turkey were also donated and implemented. However, vaccination cannot be continued at the desired rate due to vaccine hesitancy. Informative statements are not made enough by the Ministry of Health to eliminate the hesitancy of the society about vaccines. Data on vaccine side effects have not been collected and disclosed by effective methods. Despite this, we, as the Turkish Cypriot

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Medical Association, continue our work with the aim of informing and raising awareness of the society.

Today, the demand for healthcare from public hospitals is increasing due to the impoverishment of the society and the pandemic. Despite this, there are shortages of healthcare workers, as well as drugs, medical equipment and devices in hospitals. The scale of the deficiencies is at a level that threatens the public's right to health and public health.

The biggest problems in front of us at the stage we have reached in the pandemic are disinformation , low health literacy, anti-vaccine movements and vaccine hesitancy, which especially spread over social media.

We believe that we need to work together to overcome this issue.

We respectfully commemorate all our colleagues and people we have lost due to COVID-19 all over the world to date. We convey our feelings of solidarity to fight together against all the problems, in the coming days.

Cyprus Turkish Medical Association