

MEET THE ELRA'S LAND REGISTRY ASSOCIATIONS DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEYS OF CYPRUS



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ELRN Contact Point

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As Cyprus assumes the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, could you briefly explain when the Department of Lands and Surveys was established and how it has evolved to meet its current responsibilities?

The Department of Lands and Surveys of Cyprus (DLS) under the Ministry of Interior, established in 1857, is an important pillar of socio-economic development in our country, as it deals with immovable property, which is one of the leading factors for progress, prosperity and development in the Cypriot economy. With its present operational structure and responsibilities, through a wide range of procedures, Laws and Regulations, the Department is one of the most essential services of the Public Sector, making immense contributions to all sectors of activity of the Cypriot society.

The DLS – operating a Title based system – provides the basis for the design of all development programs

relating to immovable property, offering services to many public sector entities, such as local authorities, bodies governed by public law, banking and other organizations and more generally all citizens.

What are the main responsibilities and key tasks of your organization within Cyprus's land registry system, and how do these support the priorities of the Cypriot Presidency?

The DLS, as an “umbrella” organization has the exclusive responsibility for the provision of services in relation to all rights of immovable property including registration, valuation, general assessment (for tax purposes), tenure, IT and digital transformation, land consolidation, surveying, cartography, geodesy, hydrography, as well as the management of all property belonging to the State. An important strategic aim of the DLS is the consolidation of its multidimensional role and its modernization / transformation into a productive and



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modern organization; there are growing expectations that the Department, as a key economic factor for stimulating economic growth, is in a position and actually plays a leading role in implementing new emerging strategies in many areas.

In addition, undoubtedly, the DLS is the main source of data (both LR - Legal / Fiscal and Cadastre / GIS related / Cartographic) relating to immovable property. The data in conjunction with the procedures generating and supporting them, are the main core assets of the Department. Their further use and utilization are an imperative need, as these data in order to be productive, should first of all be structured correctly and at the same time, through interoperability, be available primarily horizontally, across the Public Sector, to other bodies, businesses, researchers and ultimately the citizen. The Department collects a plethora of data relating to immovable property manuscripts of over 150 years and computerized data of more than 30 years.

The DLS is a leader in technology and IT / Digital Transformation / Emerging Tech initiatives throughout EU. Its integrated Land Information System (LIS) is of a unique kind making it a prototype. The Administration of the Department has set as a primary objective, the implementation of a new IT Strategy, the “DLS IT Strategy”, which has been prepared for upgrading the Information Technology in the Department. With the preparation of the Strategy, the Management of the Department has at its disposal a powerful tool to coordinate and direct its future decisions. The New Strategy is one of the

major keys for success and for a new vision of change in the Department. A central point of reference of the whole philosophy is the upgrading of the existing LIS, focusing on the citizen, and the daily increasing needs for information and services. The DLS IT Strategy shall promote automation of re-engineered business processes, integration of information and processes from other government and local authority systems based on an open, flexible and interoperable architecture and shall change the view of the DLS land registration system as a “Closed Register” to an “Accessible and Open Register” while maintaining the requirement of the provision of information to the public on a need and entitlement basis.

A medium-term outcome of this strategy is also the implementation of the new Internet e-services platform of the Department, the “DLS PORTAL” since 2016. The DLS PORTAL is one of the most important factors to the success of the new vision of change in the Department, shifting the focus to the citizen and the daily increasing needs for information and services. Using the Web Platform, the Department is no longer perceived as a closed box, offering a wealth of information to the public. It is the first and largest electronic library of geographical, as well as descriptive (Land Registry / Valuation) data for all immovable property in Cyprus.





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All of the above-mentioned responsibilities are aligned with the priorities of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The Cyprus Presidency amongst other strategic priorities will work to advance a balanced innovation landscape which fosters excellence, reduces innovation gaps across Member States and drives single market integration. The Presidency will also promote open innovation ecosystems underpinned by advanced digital technologies such as AI, high performance data infrastructures, fostering synergies across EU partnerships and initiatives.

How does your organization’s work within ELRA align with both ELRA’s objectives and the broader goals promoted during the Presidency of the Council of the EU?

Under the motto “An Autonomous Union. Open to the World.”, Cyprus assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the second time, from 1 January to 30 June 2026.



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The EU is facing acute geopolitical upheaval and unpredictability. This moment is not without precedent. Europe has previously faced complex and existential crises and managed to respond to the demands of the times by evolving and stepping up.

What is new is the intensity, plurality and complexity of the challenges, and what this moment asks of our Union. Autonomy is the necessary next step of our evolving European integration project. A Europe without divisions.

A more autonomous Union will demonstrate the necessary internal strength to cooperate with external partners whenever possible, while also acting independently when necessary. Autonomy yields strength, and from that strength will spring greater autonomy.

The Cyprus Presidency will act as a responsible, honest broker, to ensure that challenges are transformed into opportunities, and that ambition is matched with action and tangible results.

The Cyprus Presidency, amongst other goals, will prioritise secure and resilient connectivity while advancing the EU’s competitiveness and digital sovereignty in an open and inclusive manner. It will promote efforts to simplify digital and data frameworks, and drive innovation in key technologies such as AI and cloud computing. It will strengthen cooperation on cybersecurity to protect critical infrastructure and reinforce collective resilience across the Union.

Cyprus and more specifically DLS has been a member of ELRA for many years now, being part of ELRA’s culture of uniformity and interoperability amongst Member States founded in its Statutes, enhancing trust and contributing economic growth and social peace. DLS fully encompasses all ELRA’s statutes giving more emphasis during the EU Presidency in the vital and unique role of Land Registries, where:

- Registries, endowed with public faith, provide accurate information with legal effects, generated

by the labor of experts which perform a previous legality check of the documents – the Registrars.

- Data is a core strategic asset for Land Registries and vital for the economy.
- In the field of private procurement, Registries enhance trust and contribute to economic growth and social peace.
- In a world under permanent technological changes, Land Registrars should adapt to new IT solutions without subordination to them, keeping their sovereignty on decision making.

From your perspective, what benefits does your organization’s membership in ELRA bring to European citizens, particularly in the context of Cyprus holding the EU Presidency?

The priorities of the EU Presidency state that only a more competitive Union can yield a more autonomous Union. Europe’s competitiveness is the basis for resilience and autonomous action. A more competitive Europe will be better placed to secure sustainable growth and deliver on its strategic objectives. We must seize this generational opportunity, acting decisively and with urgency to boost our competitiveness in the world.

Strengthening Europe’s digital sovereignty and reducing external dependencies are necessary for securing the Union’s digital leadership. The Presidency will therefore



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focus on key technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), cloud infrastructure and cybersecurity, all essential to ensure that Europe can shape its own digital future.

A solid Land Registry System in any Member State is one of the most important and critical foundations for the smooth operation of the property and housing markets which itself are the key pillars of the development of our economies. Land Registrars as stated in ELRA’s Statutes should contribute to a more harmonized, transparent and secure interoperability of LR information between Member States, making it more accessible to all stakeholders and promoting legal certainty, thus contributing to the growth of the EU economy. In addition, through our ELRN Contact Points, we are stressing out the importance to enhance the effective and practical application by Registrars of Community instruments and Conventions in force between Member States and moreover, enhance the smooth operation of procedures with cross-border impact and the facilitation of cooperation between Registrars in Member States and also with relevant EU authorities.

During Cyprus’s Presidency of the Council of the EU, what key land registration or property-related issues do you consider most important at European level?

As the CY EU Presidency priorities state, the strength of our autonomous Union lies in its people and in the active involvement of every European. An autonomous



Union leaves no citizen behind: it exists to protect our shared values, empower participation, and create an enabling environment in which all can thrive.

What binds us together are the core values embedded in the Rule of Law, fundamental rights, and democracy - prerequisites for the flourishing and the full participation of all Europeans in our shared society. The Cyprus Presidency will work to strengthen the Rule of Law across the Union, building on existing tools and mechanisms whilst advancing a spirit of trust and cooperation among all Member States.

A truly autonomous Europe depends on strong social cohesion, where no person or region is left behind. This means tackling poverty and ensuring access to affordable housing and energy. In this regard, the Cyprus Presidency will focus on affordable housing - a key property-related issue - promoting the implementation of the European Affordable Housing Plan with full respect for the principle of subsidiarity and national competences, contributing to efforts to meet the fundamental need for a safe and stable home.

As stated recently by our Minister of Interior, Mr. Konstantinos Ioannou, our Presidency, is committed to respond effectively to the housing crisis and especially on four key thematic areas:

- First, affordable and sustainable housing for all. Access to decent, affordable, sustainable and accessible housing must be ensured across the Union, with particular attention to low and moderate-income households, young families, single-parent families, young people, older persons and groups in vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities and

those at risk of poverty or social exclusion. Our policies must be inclusive and ensure that no one is left behind.

- Second, enabling investment. Initiatives such as the Pan-European Investment Platform can improve access to funding, and encourage the use of tailored financial instruments, including revolving funds.
- Third, increasing the supply of affordable housing. Addressing shortages in housing supply is central to our efforts. This can be achieved through innovative and environmentally sustainable construction, the renovation of existing buildings and the repurposing and reuse of under-utilised housing stock, particularly in urban areas, in line with the green and digital transitions.
- Fourth, knowledge exchange and high-quality data. Effective housing policy must be evidence-based. We will promote the exchange of best practices among Member States and across national, regional and local levels of governance, with a view to identifying successful solutions that can be adapted elsewhere.

Finally, we would like to note that the DLS is organizing the Permanent Committee on Cadastre (PCC) meeting in Cyprus between the 5-7 May 2026 under the EU Presidency. The title of the meeting / conference is "Building a Future Ready Geospatial Information Ecosystem: Resilience, Innovation, Interoperability and Digital Unity in Cadastre, Land Registry and Land Administration". We are very honored that ELRA will be joining our meeting with our dear colleague, Ms Elena Prada, Treasurer and Member of the Board of Directors, who will be giving a keynote presentation on behalf of ELRA. □