

Cyprus and the EU: The Road to Accession

**Edited by Constantin Stefanou
Ashgate (Aldershot, Hampshire, 2005) 294 pp.**

Every time a country becomes a member of the European Union there is a flurry of books describing the history of its application and progress towards membership, reviewing the agreed terms of accession to the EU and analysing the impact of membership on itself and the EU.

The book on “Cyprus and the EU: The Road to Accession” provides a bit of the history but focuses mostly on the agreed terms of accession and the required adaptation of the Cypriot laws and policies.

It contains chapters dealing with important issues of accession, mirroring to a large extent the organisation of the accession negotiations themselves, such as agriculture, transport, competition and state aid, movement of capital and monetary union, movement of services, intellectual property, social policy and employment, and justice and home affairs.

It is not obvious why other issues such as movement of workers, regional policy or budgetary issues are not covered. The latter two have been particularly contentious for Cyprus. Perhaps the reason is that almost all contributors are lawyers and their analysis, naturally, concerns the adaptation of Cypriot law. In this sense the book complements with extensive technical information the account of the accession negotiations written by the former President George Vassiliou who was the Chief Negotiator of Cyprus. Mr Vassiliou has written a forward to this book as well.

While the various chapters are exhaustive and competently written, my only gripe is that they are mostly descriptive. For a book that aims to assess the “successes and failures” of Cyprus it does not offer enough of its own assessment and independent analysis. The exception is the chapter on justice and home affairs.

I also believe that the book should have given particular attention to how Cyprus, a very small state, has coped with the demands and obligations of membership. A methodology or approach should have been developed and followed across all chapters. The small size of Cyprus and its public administration are mentioned in several chapters but only in passing and without in-depth investigation of the consequences of small size and the solutions that have been found. The exception

here is the last chapter written by Stefanou himself. This chapter touches on important aspects of the necessary adaptation of a country that accedes to the EU but which is not subject to the formal negotiations [e.g. the training of civil servants]. There is also a chapter on the role of Cyprus as a small state but that looks at its external relations rather than at its domestic legal, political and economic system.

On the whole the book is a valuable contribution to understanding what Cyprus had to do to enter the EU.

Phedon Nicolaides