

One in three families mulling Greek exit



One in three Greek families are considering moving abroad due to the repercussions of the debt crisis, according to the results of a survey carried out on primary and secondary school pupils by the Children's Ombudsman.

Out of 1,211 pupils from 22 schools around the country who were questioned in the survey, 82 percent said that their parents' employment situation had worsened in recent months, with one in five reporting that one or both of their parents were jobless and 29 percent saying that the family was considering relocating to another country in the hope of better prospects.

Most of the children questioned said the economic crisis had had a negative impact on their lives, with 70 percent of respondents referring to "negative changes," 59 percent saying they no longer received pocket money and 33 percent reporting that tighter household budgets meant they had been forced to stop lessons at private tuition centers.

NEWS FROM CYPRUS

Mouflons up for grabs



Cyprus' Forestry Department is looking at increasing the sale of moufflon, deer, wood for burning and seeds for various plants in an effort to boost state coffers.

The department has released a new catalogue with prices lists for such things as Christmas trees, charges for renting camping-site spaces or even staying in local hotels, and of course, the Cyprus moufflon.

"The moufflon has been on sale for years now," said Senior Forest Conservator for the Forestry Department, Andreas Christou. "To clarify though, the moufflon is not for sale to any members of the public, it must be an organisation looking to buy," he added.

According to Christou the decision to put the moufflon up for sale came after they increased in number over recent years, resulting in their own endangerment.

Moufflon cost €1,200 each, not including VAT but will only be available for export as the department wants to avoid the goat-like animals being taken to zoos or farms and reproducing and multiplying without checks.

Digging for the missing

THE COMMITTEE on Missing Persons (CMP) has begun digging for possible burial sites within a fenced Turkish military area in the occupied areas, said Aristos Aristotelous, the Greek Cypriot member of the CMP.

Speaking to the Cyprus News Agency, Aristotelous said the Turkish authorities recently gave their consent for excavations to take place, following a request from the CMP. The former AKEL MP welcomed the decision, adding that he hoped the CMP would also be able to carry out excavations in other Turkish military areas which have long been linked to possible burial sites.

Until now, Turkey has resisted requests to open up military areas where many of the missing are believed to have been buried in mass graves, based on witness accounts given to the CMP.

Aristotelous said digging for the remains of missing persons began on Tuesday in a fenced military area southwest of the Kyrenia district, based on information given long ago to the CMP.

As a result of interethnic conflict in the 1960s and the Turkish invasion of 1974, 1,464 Greek Cypriots and 494 Turkish Cypriots were reported missing.

Since then, according to the CMP, to date, human remains representing over 900 individuals have been exhumed from different burial sites located across the island.

The CMP team of scientists has visited and opened over 600 potential burial sites so far, the majority in the north of the island, of the total number of sites, 373 did not contain any human remains.

As of August 2012, a total of 330 missing persons (264 Greek Cypriots and 66 Turkish Cypriots) were identified and returned to their families for burial.

Exhumations are carried out on both sides of the buffer zone by bicommunal teams (six teams in the north and two teams in the south) made of over 55 Cypriot archaeologists and anthropologists.

Bicommunal teams are now autonomous after having been trained by international experts from the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF) during the first 18 months of the project.

Greek players flee local soccer league



Greek soccer players are leaving the country's league in droves, with the most high-profile examples in the last few days being the departures of Greek internationals Vassilis Torosodis and Nikos Spyropoulos.

The discredited and devalued Greek championship – with the huge decline in sponsor and television rights revenues, salaries, attendances, competitiveness and interest – is losing its stars faster than apricot trees lose their leaves in fall.

Roma swooped for Olympiakos utility man Torosodis and added him to his roster immediately, even though its original plans had been about taking him to the Italian capital this summer.

Spyropoulos will also continue his career in Italy. Reports suggested on Tuesday that Panathinaikos has accepted a bid by Chievo Verona for the Greece left-back and that Panathinaikos midfielder Lazaros Christodouloupoulos may well take the plane to Italy, too, in the next few days.

Another example is former AEK winger Panayiotis

Lagos, who has resorted to moving to Ukraine's Vorskla Poltava.

His former teammate, Mavroudis Bougaidis has been chased by Italy's Parma this week but the bid has met AEK's denial. The young central defender has pleaded with his club to reconsider Parma's offer, but AEK is probably determined not to let him go.

If Bougaidis does move to Parma he will join another Greek there, Sotiris Ninis. The Greece midfielder joined the Italian club last summer and stated in September that "in Greece there is no soccer, and one can also realize this through the way they speak about us abroad.

"In the Greek league the level is very low, while abroad you learn how to play soccer. Greek players should go abroad if they can," said Ninis, who has not yet hit good form with the «Parmensi».

On the other hand, while a significant number of Greeks are also plying their trade in Cyprus, the island's growing financial crisis seems to be stemming the players' flow from Greece to Cyprus.