



Penelope Papavassiliou
Secretary to the Council of Ministers, Cyprus

Penelope (Poly) Papavassiliou was born and raised in Lefkosia. She attended Kykkos A' lyceum. She holds a BSc in Industrial Economics from the University of Warwick (UK) and an MSc in Business Administration — MBA from the City University Business School (UK).

She has many years of professional experience as a career technocrat in positions of responsibility in both the Cyprus Public Administration and the European Commission, in issues pertaining to the economy, development, labour, European affairs, coordination and design of policies and reforms and in project management.

She started her career in public administration in 1997 as an Officer at the Planning Bureau (now Directorate General Growth, Ministry of Finance) in the technocratic coordination team of Cyprus' accession negotiations with the EU, where she worked until 2004. She then served in the Permanent Representation of Cyprus in Brussels (2005-2006), on Research and Innovation issues and the Digital Agenda, representing the Republic of Cyprus in the respective groups of the EU Council. She served as Head of the Office of the Minister of Finance for 4 years (April 2006 — March 2010) and as a senior member of the Secretariat of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU (2010-2013). She also served as a senior executive member in the coordination team of the government work and implementation of the Cyprus Economic Adjustment Programme (2013-2014) (Directorate General Growth) and Project Manager of the Working Group for the Reform of the Insolvency Framework (March 2014 - August 2015). She also participated as coordinator in the Ad Hoc Group of Preparation for the Implementation of the Community Acquis, in the framework of the negotiations on the Cyprus problem (September 2015 - March 2016). Since April 2016, she worked for the European Commission, at the Directorate-General for Structural Reforms (DG REFORM) in Athens, as Project Manager mainly in the area of business environment and in the project evaluation team.

In March 2023 she returned to Cyprus where she was appointed as Secretary of the Council of Ministers and in addition to the duties of this position, she was appointed as Acting Permanent Secretary of Directorate General Growth, from 1.11.2024 until the permanent post filling.

Her partner is Phidias Vardakis.