

Friendship programme receives over 200 applications

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More than 200 applications have been received for the 2016 bi-communal Cyprus Friendship Programme (CFP), compared to around 160 over the two previous years.

Sotia Adamidou, Greek Cypriot coordinator of the CFP attributes the growth in numbers to two factors.

“For the first time, we have let teens know through Facebook,” she said on Friday, “and we also had the support of the government for the first time.”

On February 11, the ministry sent a memo to all public high schools and technical schools informing them about the aim of the programme and encouraging them to facilitate presentations by the non-profit organisation.

“The percentage for the state schools is nearly as high as the private schools, 45 per cent,” Adamidou said. “This is positive considering the memo was sent a bit late for this year’s programme.”

“This year we have 206 applications in all, half and half with Turkish Cypriot applications. I was very happy to receive applications from all over Cyprus, I had teens calling from Emba in Paphos, from Paralimni, from Athienou, from Limassol, Larnaca, from everywhere,” she added.

The CFP is an all-volunteer peace building bi-communal project for young Greek and Turkish Cypriots and their families. Each year, a bi-communal team of Cypriot co-ordinators selects an equal number of teens from both communities. Each teen then chooses another of the same gender from the other community with whom he/she believes they can be friends.

Every year in July five groups of four to seven pairs travel to various locations in the US and are hosted for one month by families who cover all the expenses during the teens’ stay.

Interview day for the programme, which aims at breaking down barriers between Greek and Turkish Cypriot teenagers, is March 5. Teens will be interviewed between 9am and 3pm at the Home for Cooperation.

For more info: <http://www.home4cooperation.info/>