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Leftist leader wins Cyprus vote

By Tabitha Morgan
BBC News, Nicosia

Left-wing Cypriot leader Demetris Christofias has won the presidential election, defeating rival right-winger Ioannis Kasoulides.



The new leader is likely to find that progress will be slow and difficult

Incumbent President Tassos Papadopoulos lost in the first round of voting.

It was a sign that most Cypriots had rejected Mr Papadopoulos's inflexible attitude towards negotiations on reuniting the island.

Both Mr Christofias and Mr Kasoulides, promised to reactivate the diplomatic process if elected.

But the new president is likely to find that any progress will be slow and difficult.

Many sensitive issues remain unresolved including the return of refugees, security and the constitution.

Furthermore, in order to boost his chances of winning, Mr Christofias made an alliance with the party of the defeated Mr Papadopoulos - the man who firmly rejected the last UN plan to solve the Cyprus problem.

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