Costas, 66, Printers, Limassol

**1. Can you tell me a few things about yourself? For example, when and where you were born? Did you study for anything? Have you travelled or lived overseas?**

*My name is Costas, I’m 66 years old and I’m one of the owners of this print shop. My brother is my partner; he’s not here at the moment. I’ve got two children and one grandchild. We opened the shop with my brother in 1984 and we’re still here, even though there isn’t as much business anymore.*

**2. Have you ever owned another business in the past? How long have you been an owner of a business? How many businesses have you owned in the past?**

*I’ve worked in quite a few other jobs in the past but I was just an employee. I’ve never owned another business. When I was younger I could set my mind to any type of work but I’m not like I used to be.*

**3. Can you tell me about the history behind your business?**

*We started this business with my brother in 1984 when we had decided to go into business together. Actually, by brother approached me first because he wanted someone he could trust as his partner and, of course, to put up some of the capital. When he told me what he had in mind I was a little sceptical about it because I knew nothing about the business. My brother knew how a print shop works because he was already working for someone else in the same business. Even after all these years, he certainly knows more than I do. So we decided to open up the shop together and we found this place here for rent. We had quite a lot of work because the area is quite good. Just think there are another two print shops near here which opened about seven or eight years ago. We still have business because our customers are regulars who have been coming to us since before the other shops opened.*

**4. What advantages did you see in continuing your business? Why don’t you retire?**

*Well it’s something that isn’t very tiring and it’s something that we like. Over the years you get to know your neighbours, you make friends with the other shop owners and regardless of whether we rent the shop here, it’s our place where we have been coming for the past 34 years [the phone rang just once and stopped, it was a signal from the coffee shop owner that coffee was on its way]. I work here about nine hours a day but five days a week, because my brother is responsible for looking after the out of office jobs. We both get a good pension, we’re not complaining but there are other expenses too. I have a daughter who got married a couple of years ago and she is trying to build her house. On weekends I go and help on the building site but she needs financial support. You see, even with if I got a large pension I would still be here.*

* **So when you have no more expenses for your daughter’s house, are you thinking about retiring?**

*No, it’s what I was telling you before. Even if I had a large pension and I didn’t have any expenses, I would still work just because I like it. My time passes doing something that I enjoy so why should I stop? There’s no reason.*

**5. Are you facing any obstacles or problems in keeping your business going?**

*Business isn’t what it used to be. Between 2012-2013, when the country went through the economic crisis, everything went downhill. From 2000 to 2011 everything was fine, with ample customers and a decent income thank God. But after the crisis things got worse, our customers are Cypriots; are tourists going to come here to print something? Other shops are working through the internet but we don’t know how to do something like that. So we only work with our old customers.*

**6. Considering the experience that you have built up over the years but also the experience that you are going through now, would you say that you are still able to maintain the business and deal with the problems that affect it?**

*At the end of the day, I’m doing something that I enjoy doing and whatever we make out of it in income is welcomed. I share the profits with my brother and up until now we aren’t making a loss which is good. I’ve got a few olive trees just outside Limassol and I spend my afternoons there. Maybe when I’m 80-85 and I’ve built a small house there to stay in, I might stop working once my children have built their houses and there are no more expenses.*