

The Cyprus Family Planning Association and the Cyprus State: A Review of a 50-Year-Old Relationship (1971-2021)

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Abstract

This paper analyses the relationship between the Cyprus State and the Cyprus Family Planning Association (CFPA) for all the CFPA's existence in Cyprus (1971 to date). By reviewing relevant documents and interviewing people in the CFPA and the State, it argues that even though aspects of the relationship have changed through the years, it had never been confrontational; on the contrary, there was collaboration on a number of issues, in particular in providing services and information to various social groups, including workers in the government. One contentious issue was the introduction of sexuality education in schools, which was being discussed for several years. The CFPA used a variety of lobbying strategies, and despite a positive occasional response, the topic was not introduced in schools until 2012 when a variety of factors, such as government determination for educational reform, key people, and social attitudes, all contributed to its eventual introduction.

Keywords: Cyprus State, Cyprus Family Planning Association, relationship, sexuality education, lobbying

Introduction

As institutional actors that function within states, organized social groups (OSGs) often need the support, assistance, or at least acceptance of the State to achieve their objectives. A positive attitude on the part of the State, which could include supporting OSGs financially, providing technical assistance or allowing them to work towards their aim unhindered, can have a positive effect on OSGs functioning. The role of the State is especially important in countries where the State has traditionally played a central role in public affairs.

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The kind of relations that develop between the State and OSGs evolve and vary of course between societies and historical periods. On the one hand, an OSG may use various strategies when approaching the State and on the other hand the State may respond in different ways across societies and time periods. These interactions may be of interest to social scientists as they can shed light on the different ways that social actors and state structures interact.

This paper analyses the relationship between the Cyprus Family Planning Association (CFPA) and its relationship with the Cyprus State in the 50 years the organization has been operating in Cyprus (1971 until today). The analysis aims to uncover the ways through which these two entities interacted, the strategies they used and each other's responses as well as the outcomes of their interactions. By doing this, it adds to the discussion encouraged by this special session about the ways in which organised social groups approach the State in Cyprus.

The paper is organized as follows. First, a literature review section outlines key theories and observations relating to the interactions between states and organised social groups. Then, a methodology section explains how information relating to the research aim was collected. After that, a findings and discussion section presents the main findings along with some comments about them. A final concluding section brings the main findings together and concludes the discussion.

Literature Review

State and OSGs

The State is the principal unit for exercising public authority in defined territories in modern times. It is also the central structure in international relations. The State consists of:

- (a) institutions or rules which regulate political, social and economic engagement across a territory and determine how public authority is obtained and used (e.g., constitutions, laws, customs).
- (b) organizations at the national and the sub-national level which operate within those rules (e.g., the executive, legislature, judiciary, bureaucracy, ministries, army, tax authorities).²

OSGs or civil society organizations (CSOs) on the other hand include 'pressure groups, non-governmental organisations, charities, religious groups and other pri-

² Department for International Development, *Building Peaceful States and Societies* (2010), available at <http://gsdrc.org/docs/open/con75.pdf> (last accessed, 25 July 2021), 12

vate non-profit distributing, organisational actors that are neither business nor government institutions, and which are involved in the promotion of societal interests, causes and/or goals.³ In other words, civil society, plays two important societal roles: service delivery, mainly via private, non-profit organizations in sectors like education and health care; and expression, via organizations that are active in civic advocacy or stand up for a cause (like human rights or the environment), or that play a representative role (like unions or consumer organizations).⁴

Changes in state functioning and CSOs

One important change in relation to state functioning in the last few decades is what many analysts have called ‘new public management (NPM)’^{5 6}. This was an attempt by the state to become more ‘business-like’. Its main aim was the improvement of the three ‘E’s’ of public services: its economy, efficiency and effectiveness^{7 8} and it emphasized the centrality of citizens who were the recipient of the services or customers to the public sector.⁹ The core techniques in the NPM-discourse are ‘contracting out, decentralizing, granting greater discretion to managers, increasing citizen or customer choices, deregulating, organizing so that there is competition, and determining effectiveness according to outcome measurement’.¹⁰

In relation to CSOs, a first major change is their number, which has been growing in the last few decades. In the time since the last couple of decades of the 20th century, a period called ‘postmodernity’,¹¹ ‘liquid’ modernity,¹² ‘reflexive’ modernisation¹³,

³ Crane, A. Matten, D. (2010) *Business Ethics*, 3rd ed, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 441

⁴ Anheier, H. (2014) *Nonprofit Organizations. Theory, Management, Policy*, New York: Routledge, 82-83

⁵ Hood, C. (1991), ‘A Public Management for All Seasons?’, *Public Administration*, 69(1), 3–19

⁶ Metcalfe, L., Richards, S. (1990), *Improving Public Management*, SAGE

⁷ Eliassen, K. A., Sitter, N. (2008) *Understanding Public Management*, Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications

⁸ Fattore, G., Dubois, H. & Lapenta, A. (2012), ‘Measuring New Public Management and Governance in Political Debate’, *Public Administration Review*, 77(2), 218–227. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02497.x>

⁹ Juneja, P. (2021) *New Public Management Model*, available at <https://www.managementstudy-guide.com/new-public-management.htm> (last accessed 23 December 2021)

¹⁰ Frederickson, H. G., Smith, K. B., Larimer, C. W., Licari, M. J. (2012), *The Public Administration Theory Primer (2nd ed)*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press. p.128

¹¹ Lyotard, J.F. (2010), *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, (G. Bennington & B. Massumi, Trans.) (Reprint), Minneapolis, Minn: Univ. of Minnesota Press

¹² Bauman, Z. (2000), *Liquid Modernity* (Reprinted 2006), Cambridge: Polity Press

¹³ Beck, U., Giddens, A., Lash, S. (1994), *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, Stanford, Calif: Stanford Univ. Press

‘risk’- society¹⁴, or ‘network society’¹⁵, traditional structures have become less fluid and individuals have more choice to build their own path. In this context, ideological, religious or cultural identification has become more varied and new movements are being initiated. This characteristic of societies, in addition to the more reflexive nature of states¹⁶ has changed the relationship between the state and CSOs. Essentially, decision making in different areas is often the result of power struggles and debate between different stakeholders, including CSOs.

The role of CSOs in different societies

In general, input from civil society creates added value to the policy planning and implementation process, enhancing the legitimacy, quality, understanding and longer-term applicability of the policy initiative¹⁷. CSOs contributions for policy development and implementation include¹⁸:

- (i) **Campaigning and advocating:** CSOs raise issues, concerns and needs for a specific issue, point of view or a general public interest that is not yet covered by legislation or other policy documents.
- (ii) **Information and awareness building:** they share new findings and knowledge gathered by CSOs with authorities, act as channels for reaching citizens, and signalling new trends.
- (iii) **Expertise and advice:** CSOs provide insights, experience and understanding resulting from their wide range of activities, from user involvement to service provision.
- (iv) **Innovation:** they develop new solutions and approaches, demonstrating how these can be functional and supported by a wide opinion-base in the public.

¹⁴ Beck, U. (1992) *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, (M. Ritter, Trans.), London: SAGE Publications

¹⁵ Castells, M. (2010). *The Rise of the Network Society: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture*, John Wiley & Sons

¹⁶ Esmark, A. (2009), ‘The Functional Differentiation of Governance: Public Governance Beyond Hierarchy, Market and Networks’, *Public Administration*, 87(2), 351–370, <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9299.2009.01759.x>

¹⁷ Pompidou Group, Council of Europe (2015), *Government Interaction with Civil Society. Policy paper on government interaction with civil society on drug policy issues: Principles, Ways and Means, Opportunities and Challenges*, available at <https://rm.coe.int/government-interaction-with-civil-society-policy-paper-on-government-i/168075b9d9> (last accessed, 9 Oct 2021), 7.

¹⁸ Ibid.

(v) Service and resource provision: CSOs are engaged in service provision and they can be in the position to contribute resources to collaborative activities with public authorities.

(vi) Monitoring and evaluation: CSOs follow up and document policy implementation, in particular quality standards and best practice.

(vii) Networking: CSOs provide extensive contacts, platforms and other mechanisms for co-operation on local, national and international level.

It must be noted here though that the role civil society has played in different societies differs considerably between countries.^{19 20} As a number of authors have pointed out, both ‘external’ factors such as the political context and ‘internal’ factors such as CSOs expertise, networks and mobilisation capacity influence CSOs influence on public policy.^{21 22} For instance, in countries like Germany, The Netherlands or Belgium, civil society has played a more prominent role^{23 24} compared to, say, Eastern Europe^{25 26} where CSOs in these post-communist countries still suffer from limited citizen participation and a lack of financial resources and operate in an environment affected by widespread mistrust in institutions and fellow citizens.²⁷ A similar situation may be observed in China, even though as Greenwood (2004) argues CSOs there exercise ingenuity in increasing their role.²⁸

¹⁹ Salamon L. M., Sokolowski S. W., List R. (2003), *Global Civil Society*, Bloomfield: Kumarian Press

²⁰ Smith S. R. and Grönbjerg K. (2006), Scope and Theory of Government–nonprofit Relations, in Powell, W. Steinberg, R. (eds), *The Nonprofit Sector – A Research Handbook*, (2nd edn). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 221–242

²¹ MacDonald, T. (1997), *Supporting Civil Society: the Political Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Central America*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

²² Lewis, D. (1999), *International Perspectives on Voluntary Action: Reshaping the Third Sector*, London: Earthscan

²³ Dekker P. (2004), The Netherlands: From Private Initiatives to Non-profit Hybrids and Back? in Evers, A., Laville, J. (eds), *The Third Sector in Europe*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 144–165

²⁴ Zimmer, A. (1999), *Corporatism Revisited. The Legacy of History and the German Non-profit-Sector*, *Voluntas* 10(1): 37–49

²⁵ Jenei, G., Kuti, E. (2007), The Third Sector and Civil Society, in Osborne S (ed.) *Third Sector in Europe: Prospects and Challenges*, London: Routledge, 9–25

²⁶ Wijkström, F., Zimmer, A. (eds) (2011), *Nordic Civil Society at the Crossroads: Transforming the Popular Movement Tradition*, Baden-Baden: Nomos

²⁷ Fioramonti, L., Heinrich, V. F. (2007), *How Civil Society Influences Policy: A Comparative Analysis of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index in Post-Communist Europe*, CIVICUS – World Alliance for Citizen Participation, <https://www.civicus.org/view/media/CIVICUS.ODL.Fioramonti.Heinrich.pdf>

²⁸ Greenwood B. (2004), ‘Survival Strategies for Civil Society Organizations in China’, *The International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law*, 6(2)

In some countries CSOs have been rather active in interacting with government on important social issues, such as the delivery of social services (e.g., Czech Republic and [North] Macedonia), the protection of children (e.g., Romania) and the protection of women (e.g., [North] Macedonia), and the opposition to torture and unlawful detention (e.g., Georgia). However, when it comes to monitoring government and holding the State accountable on broader policy issues, the overall watchdog and advocacy capacity of CSOs appears rather low in all countries mentioned above.²⁹

How do social groups approach the State?

Two of the main strategies social groups use to approach the State are advocacy and lobbying. The main difference between advocacy and lobbying is that advocacy involves taking various types of actions to bring change, while lobbying involves attempts to influence the decisions, actions, or policies of legislators or members of regulatory agencies.³⁰ In other words, lobbying is a form of advocacy, but not all advocacy is lobbying.

Lobbying strategies refer to how groups try to exercise influence in the political sphere.³¹ The most common differentiation is between inside and outside strategies. As the above authors (p. 502) explain: ‘Inside strategies imply close consultation with decisionmakers³² as groups aim to gain access or make direct contact with policymakers.^{33 34} In terms of specific tactics, this can entail private meetings or contact with policymakers or civil servants, attending events organised by policy makers, or participation in advisory groups. Outside strategies, on the other hand, aim to attract attention to the issue, either by changing public opinion through media-oriented

²⁹ Fioramonti and Heinrich (n 27)

³⁰ Hasa, *What is the Difference Between Advocacy and Lobbying* (2021), available at: <https://pediaa.com/what-is-the-difference-between-advocacy-and-lobbying/> (last accessed, 13 December 2021)

³¹ Colli, F., Adriaensen, J. (2020), ‘Lobbying the State or the Market? A framework to Study Civil Society Organizations’ Strategic Behavior’, *Regulation & Governance*, 14: 501-513 <https://doi.org/10.1111/rego.12227>

³² Beyers, J. (2004), ‘Voice and Access: Political Practices of European Interest Associations’, *European Union Politics*, 5, 211–240

³³ Chalmers, A. W. (2012), ‘Trading Information for Access: Informational Lobbying Strategies and Interest Group Access to the European Union’, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 20, 39–58

³⁴ Dür, A, Mateo, G. (2013), ‘Gaining Access or Going Public? Interest Group Strategies in Five European Countries’, *European Journal of Political Research* 52, 660–686

strategies or through direct mobilization of the public.^{35 36} Common tactics are advertising in public media, issuing press releases, protesting, including conducting strikes and demonstrations, initiating (online) public debates and petitions, and organizing press conferences³⁷. These strategies are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Inside and outside lobbying strategies

Inside	Outside
Private meetings or contact with policymakers or civil servants	Letter/email campaigns to politicians
Attending events organized by policymakers	Initiating (online) public debates and petitions
Participation in advisory groups	Providing citizens with information about government regulations
	Advertising in public media
	Organizing press conferences
	Issuing press releases
	Protesting, including conducting strikes and demonstrations

Adapted from Colli, and Adriaensen (2020)

Some related comments relating to the above observations include the following: First, studies of CSO strategies recognize that groups’ choices among strategies are ‘not binary, but one of combining tactics so as to maximise the chances of success, given limited resources’.³⁸ Second, many NGOs form coalitions in order to pool resources and work more efficiently.³⁹ Third, a major reason for CSOs’ hesitations to engage governments on delicate matters is their desire to obtain public funding. This often prevents them from taking a critical stance towards public authorities.⁴⁰

To increase the chances of lobbying success a few ideas have been put forward. First, it is helpful if an NGO has access to sufficient funds. Since, as it has been not-

³⁵ Kollman, K. (1998), *Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ

³⁶ Binderkrantz, A. (2005), ‘Interest Group Strategies: Navigating Between Privileged Access and Strategies of Pressure’, *Political Studies* 53, 694–715.

³⁷ Dür, A, Mateo, G. (2010), ‘Irish Associations and Lobbying on EU Legislation: Resources, Access Points, and Strategies’, *Irish Political Studies* 25, 107–122.

³⁸ Dellmuth, L. M., Tallberg J. (2017) ‘Advocacy Strategies in Global Governance: Inside versus Outside Lobbying’, *Political Studies*, 65(3): 705-723, 708, doi:10.1177/0032321716684356

³⁹ Gray, V., Lowery, D. (1996), ‘A Niche Theory of Interest Representation’, *The Journal of Politics* 58, 91–111.

⁴⁰ Fioramonti and Heinrich (n 33)

ed by Fioramonti and Heinrich (2007), this is sometimes challenging to do, partly because of the declining foreign donor commitment due to the accession of some countries to the EU and low levels of citizen participation, these authors suggest that CSOs could strive to broaden their membership, work on a stronger relationship with the State and between CSOs and the strengthen dialogue and interaction with the private sector.⁴¹ Another idea that can help is the use of informal contacts since, as has been noted by Burt (1992), they play a prominent role and provide CSOs with more concrete avenues to impact on public policy than institutionalised channels.⁴² Also, as Mahoney (2007) noted, whether a focusing event occurred on an issue can also play a role in the likelihood of lobbying success.⁴³ Finally, as Smith et al (2013) point out, Family Planning advocates need to map out their audiences and tailor the messaging, formats, and forums to the audience.⁴⁴

Relationships between the State and CSOs

State-civil society relations are ‘interactions between state institutions and societal groups to negotiate how public authority is exercised and how it can be influenced by people’ and are ‘focused on issues such as defining the mutual rights and obligations of state and society, negotiating how public resources should be allocated and establishing different modes of representation and accountability’.⁴⁵ The State sometimes views NGOs with suspicion or even hostility.⁴⁶ One main reason for this is that some NGOs are engaged in conflictual issues⁴⁷. For example, it is more likely that NGOs’ and government actions are closely linked in areas such as human rights, civil rights, the elderly, women’s issues, and the environment.⁴⁸

⁴¹ Fioramonti and Heinrich (n 33)

⁴² Burt, R. S. (1992), *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

⁴³ Mahoney, C. (2007), ‘Lobbying Success in the United States and the European Union’, *Journal of Public Policy*, 27(1), 35-56, doi:10.1017/S0143814X07000608

⁴⁴ Smith, E., Godbole, R., Musila, R., Murunga, V., Zulu, E. (2013), *Evidence for Family Planning Advocacy, An Assessment of Decisionmakers’ and Advocates’ Needs and Strategies in East Africa*. Washington, DC: Futures Group, Health Policy Project.

⁴⁵ Department for International Development, Building Peaceful States and Societies (2010), available at <http://gsdrc.org/docs/open/con75.pdf> (last accessed, 25 July 2021), 15

⁴⁶ Brinkerhoff Derick W. (1999), Exploring State–Civil Society Collaboration: Policy Partnerships in Developing Countries, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 28(4):59-86, doi:10.1177/089976499773746438

⁴⁷ Mahoney (n 42)

⁴⁸ Mahoney, C., Baumgartner, F. (2008), ‘Converging Perspectives on Interest Group Research in Europe and America’, *West European Politics*, 31:6, 1253-1273, doi: 10.1080/0140238080237268

A typology often used to describe relationships between government and non-governmental organizations is a model developed by Coston (1998). The model and typology describe these relationships on an 8-point continuum considering government's resistance or acceptance of institutional pluralism, the relative balance of power in the relationship, and the degree of formality and the level of government linkage. The eight types of relationships and their main characteristics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Types of relationships between the State and NGOs

Type of relationship	Summary of Key features
Repression	No NGO linkage with government, government policy highly unfavourable (probably outlawing NGO)
Rivalry	Probably sluggish provision of supportive services, government policy unfavourable
Competition	Government policy unfavourable to neutral, NGO seen as unwanted critics and competitors for power
Contracting	Government policy contingent with NGO, division of labour based on competitive advantage
Third party government	Government policy contingent with NGO, greater diversity of services than contracting
Cooperation	Increasing NGO influence, Information sharing
Complementarity	Moderate to high linkage with government, NGO autonomy, resource sharing, potential NGO participation in planning and policy, technical financial and geographic complementarity
Collaboration	High linkage with government, government policy favourable, joint action, NGO participation in planning, policy and implementation, relationship: partnership, mutual strategy and coproduction

Adjusted from Coston (1998)

These relations can take different forms depending on the role of the State in different societies^{49 50} and the societal group.^{51 52} In Bulgaria, for example CSO representatives can take part in various forums, including district councils for regional development; however these forums have a very restricted composition and an almost

⁴⁹ Brinkerhoff (n 44)

⁵⁰ Fisher J. (1993), *The Road from Rio: Sustainable Development in the Non-governmental Movement in the Third World*, Westport CT Praeger publishers

⁵¹ Frishtak, L. (1994), *Governance Capacity and Economic Reform in Developing Countries*, Washington DC: World Bank technical of paper No. 254

⁵² Rothchild D. (1994), 'Structuring State Society Relations in Africa to Work in Enabling Political Environment' in Widner, J. (ed) *Economic Change in Political Liberalisation in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Baltimore John Hopkins University press, 201-227

non-existent influence on policy.⁵³ In China, CSOs consider their relations with relevant government authorities relatively positive, characterized by cooperation rather than friction.⁵⁴

It has also been noted that in many cases the government does not provide reasons why certain NGOs are subsidised and others are not. Often, there are no clear rules regarding application procedures and selection criteria.⁵⁵ This lack of transparency often causes mistrust between the state and NGOs and influences negatively their relationships since trust is important in state-civil society partnerships.^{56 57}

Methods

A combination of methods was used for collecting data and information for this paper. Initially, a review of key documents of the CFPA were studied. These included policy papers, historical documents and annual reviews. Annual reviews were particularly useful as they provided information about the activities of the organization each year and this provided an overview of aims, policies and actions.

Then, interviews were conducted with key people in the organization and state institutions. From the part of the Association, interviews were conducted with the two people who were leading the organization, one from 1979 until 2009 and the other from 2009 until today. Two interviews were also conducted with individuals working in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth. As it will be argued in the following section, the interaction of the CFPA with the State took primarily the form of interacting with different ministries, out of which the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth was a prominent one because of the central role that the introduction of sexuality education in schools had all these years in the aims of the Organization. For this reason, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth was chosen. One of the participants has experience on relations between state structures and CSOs and the other experience on the relationship between the Ministry and the CFPA.

⁵³ Fioramonti and Heinrich (n 27)

⁵⁴ Greenwood B. (2004), 'Survival Strategies for Civil Society Organizations in China', *The International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law*, 6 (2)

⁵⁵ Fioramonti and Heinrich (n 27)

⁵⁶ Fowler, A. (1997) *Striking a Balance: A Guide to Enhancing the Effectiveness of Non-governmental Organisations in International Development*, London: Earthscan

⁵⁷ Lewis, D. (2000), 'Building "active" partnership in aid-recipient countries: lessons from a rural development project in Bangladesh' in Osborne, S. P. (Org.), *Public-private Partnerships: Theory and Practice in International Perspective*, London: Routledge, 252-264

Finally, the personal experience of the author also informed some of the analysis. The author has been member of the CFPA for 25 years and member of the Board for eight years, two as president. This provided a wealth of experience in relation to the actions of the organization but also the response of State institutions. In particular, the author was President of the Board at a time when the decision about sexuality education introduction in schools was taken and had a number of meetings especially with officers of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, including the minister himself. This gave him the opportunity to experience first-hand communication and actual responses from state officials.

Findings

A review of the history of the CFPA and its relationship with the State

The Cyprus Family Planning Association was founded in 1971, 19 years after Margaret Sanger, the American birth control activist and sex educator who opened the first birth control clinic in the United States and established organizations that evolved into the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, visited Cyprus in 1952 and had meetings with a number of prominent Cypriots from the fields of Health, Education, Psychology and Sociology. The time gap between the visit and the founding of the Association probably shows the mentality of society at the time (even though political developments may also have played a role).

Even though at the time the CFPA was founded Cyprus was a conservative society and issues relating to sexual and reproductive rights were not openly discussed, the Association was generally positively received by wider society. Many women welcomed it as it provided information about contraception and clinical services at very low prices; parents' associations because it offered seminars that informed children about sexuality; and, to some extent, even the government because it probably had seen that it could play a role that complemented government services.

During the first years of its operation, Cyprus was included in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), which meant significant funding for the Association by the IPPF. In the first few years of its operation, it could afford five members of permanent staff and relatively easy funding for its operations, which included providing information sessions for parents and children, giving lectures in schools and specific groups, e.g., rural women, and providing clinical services. The funding of the organization changed drastically when it was moved to the European network region when funding was

significantly decreased and the Association had to look for other sources of income from the beginning of the 80s. This was done mainly in two ways. First, more government funding was sought; second, applications for funding specific programs were submitted to various organizations. After entry of the Cyprus in the EU in 2004, this included various EU funded projects.

In the years 1971-1974 the Association was bicomunal. There were both Greek and Turkish Cypriots on its Board and the Association addressed the needs of both communities on the island. This changed with the war of 1974 which separated the two communities. The association continued its functioning in the areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus. The Board consisted of Greek Cypriots and the Association addressed primarily the needs of the Greek Cypriot community.

In the period that followed the war a priority of the Association was addressing some of its effects such as assisting women who had been raped during the war. During this time the law regarding abortion was changed in Cyprus and became somewhat more liberal. Whereas before the war abortion was illegal, it was now allowed in specific cases. Members of the association also visited refugee settlements for information sessions on family planning.

In 1979, a national survey showed that parents and educators were in favour of the introduction of sexuality education in schools, a long-standing aim of the CFPA. The request was not materialized however due to reluctance of the political establishment for an educational change of such scale and reaction mainly by the Church. Despite this, however, the Association was very active in providing informational, educational and clinical services to a number of different social groups and parts of the government that belonged to various ministries. These included:

- Ministry of Health: information on contraception to young mothers at hospitals and mothers to be, seminars to student nurses
- Ministry of Justice: Information sessions on family planning to members of the police (police cadets)
- Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance: Lectures to children on social welfare, provision of clinical services to women under the care of the Ministry, member of the committee on Population Policies
- Ministry of Agriculture: Lectures to female peasants (rural women)
- Ministry of Education: Lectures in public schools in cooperation with specific teachers, private schools in cooperation with the school authorities. Seminars for teachers at the Pedagogical Institute and other parts of Cyprus

- Planning Bureaux: Actively participated in the reform of NGOs, took part in overseas development aid (ODA) programs

At the same time, seminars with international speakers were organized and individuals or groups from different ministries took part.

Relationship with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, was, as described by one of the interviewees ‘a love and hate’ relationship. On the one hand, in (almost) every meeting with new ministers of Education – the Association had a policy of meeting every new minister of Education – there were positive comments about the work of the Association and about the possibility of introducing sexuality education in schools; however, in most cases – except the period 2010-11 when sexuality education was indeed introduced – they remained, to a large extent, empty promises.

A representative of the Association—typically the Executive Director—has been participating in meetings of the parliamentary committees of Human Rights, Health and Education for many years. The Association has also been on the Advisory Committee on the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence and the National AIDS Committee. It has also fostered a close relationship with the Commissioner of Children’s rights. One strategy that has been employed in recent years is that of a collaboration with other organizations. It was mentioned for example that in the advocacy efforts to change the abortion law, a close collaboration was formed with organizations such as Mediterranean institute of gender studies and the Cyprus women’s lobby. Working with partners is a strategy used extensively by the respective Swedish Family Planning Association, RFSU, with success.⁵⁸

Lobbying strategies and actions of the CFPA

This section attempts to summarise the lobbying strategies and actions of the CFPA for policy development and implementation. Table 3 presents some comments about the lobbying strategies used by the CFPA. As it may be seen in the table, all inside strategies and some outside strategies have been used quite extensively. This is in line with international data that show that 70% of NGOs at the UN use at least one inside and one outside strategy commonly or very commonly.⁵⁹ Regarding inside strategies, private meetings or contact with policymakers or civil servants have been very common throughout the Association’s existence, the Association attended events organ-

⁵⁸ IPPF (n.d.), *Riksförbundet för Sexuell Upplysning – Sweden*, available at: <https://www.ippf.org/about-us/member-associations/sweden> (last accessed, 25 July 2022).

⁵⁹ Dellmuth and Tallberg (n 37).

ised by policymakers frequently and consulted the State on various occasions, in particular in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Regarding outside lobbying strategies, issuing press releases, traditional media and more recently social media are being used extensively. Letters/email campaigns to politicians, initiating (online) public debates and petitions, and providing citizens with information about government regulations have been used less frequently while advertising in public media had been used even less frequently (and that during the first years of the organization’s existence when funding was more plentiful). ‘Protesting, including conducting strikes and demonstrations’ was, in general, not used. Only in the last few years the Association has taken part in activities initiated by other organizations (e.g., as members of the women’s lobby or taking part in Pride parade).

Table 3. Lobbying strategies used by the CFPA

Strategies	Comments
<i>Inside</i>	
Private meetings or contact with policymakers or civil servants	Very common strategy throughout the life of the association
Attending events organized by policymakers	Frequently
Consulting the state	Yes, in particular in relation to sexual and reproductive rights and sexuality education
<i>Outside</i>	
Letter/email campaigns to politicians	Yes, on some occasions. For example, a questionnaire is sent to Cypriot candidates for the European Parliament
Initiating (online) public debates and petitions	Occasionally, for example on sexuality education or abortion
Providing citizens with information about government regulations	Sometimes, for example on a new government law about sexual rights
Advertising in public media	Not often (it occurred primarily when there were available funds mostly in the first few years of the organization’s life)
Organizing press conferences	Occasionally, usually to present research data, launch a program or an awareness campaign

Issuing press releases	Frequently, e.g., for a position on a current issue relating to sexual and reproductive health
Traditional media	Frequently. In general, good relationships exist with TV and radio stations and CFPA representatives are invited often to comment. Also, interviews/articles in newspapers appear quite often.
Social media	Very frequently (once or twice a week) on Facebook and Instagram. Postings include campaign videos, interviews, debates.
Protesting, including conducting strikes and demonstrations	In general, not used. Only occasionally in the last few years in collaboration with other organizations (e.g., as members of the women’s lobby or taking part in Pride parade).

Table 4 summarises CFPA’s actions for policy development and implementation. As may be seen from the table, all actions for policy development and implementation have been used by the CFPA to a significant extent. ‘Networking’, ‘campaigning and advocating’, and ‘information and awareness building’ have been extensively used while ‘expertise and advice’ have been utilised in areas of the Association’s expertise such as AIDS awareness campaigns and sexual and reproductive health more generally. Information and awareness building was also used with success in other cases, such as in Indonesia when an increase in the budget for Family Planning was sought.⁶⁰ ‘Innovation’ has also been utilised across the association’s life. To a large extent because of the sensitivity of the topics of the Association’s specialty, innovative ways of talking about them have always been sought. An example here is the adoption of games, role plays, outdoors events etc. that have been used to reach especially young audiences. The use of games and role plays are used frequently in discussion of sexuality with young people (for example in Canada ⁶¹). ‘Service and resource provision’ was used in the first four decades of the Association’s functioning (until 2011) through the provision of clinical services and resource provision occasionally throughout its life. ‘Monitoring and evaluation’ is generally done (used more comprehensively in funded projects and applied more formally in the last two decades when formal strategic plans are more in place).

⁶⁰ Family Planning 2020 (n.d.), *Advocating for change*, 2012-2013 FP2020 Progress Report, available at: <http://2013-2014progress.familyplanning2020.org/advocating-for-change> (last accessed 25 March 2022).

⁶¹ Alberta Health Services (n.d.), *Instructional Methods*, available at: <https://teachingsexualhealth.ca/teachers/sexual-health-education/understanding-your-role/get-prepared/instructional-methods/> (last accessed 25 March 2022).

Table 4. CFPAs actions for policy development and implementation

(i) Campaigning and advocating: CSOs raise issues, concerns and needs for a specific issue, point of view or a general public interest that is not yet covered by legislation or other policy documents.	Yes, used very frequently in particular in relation to sexuality education and sexual and reproductive rights.
(ii) Information and awareness building: they share new findings and knowledge gathered by CSOs with authorities, act as channels for reaching citizens, and signalling new trends.	Yes, a lot. Through traditional media (articles in newspapers and magazines, discussions on television and radio), and by reaching out to the public through lectures, seminars, printed information and recently social media.
(iii) Expertise and advice: CSOs provide insights, experience and understanding resulting from their wide range of activities, from user involvement to service provision.	Yes. For example, very active in AIDS awareness campaigns.
(iv) Innovation: they develop new solutions and approaches, demonstrating how these can be functional and supported by a wide opinion-base in the public.	Yes. For example, innovative ways to talk about sexuality in youth campaigns, activities on special days (for example Valentine's Day), awareness raising in malls, streets.
(v) Service and resource provision: CSOs are engaged in service provision and they can be in the position to contribute resources to collaborative activities with public authorities.	Health services provision for the first four decades of the organization's life. Resource provision (for example information leaflets or condoms) takes place occasionally.
(vi) Monitoring and evaluation: CSOs follow up and document policy implementation, in particular quality standards and best practice.	Generally, it is being used (more so for projects that are funded and in the last couple of decades when more formal strategic plans are in place)
(vii) Networking: CSOs provide extensive contacts, platforms and other mechanisms for co-operation on local, national and international level.	Definitely, both at local level with other NGOs with similar goals, for example organizations for children's or young people's rights and internationally primarily with the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

State Response

The interviews with the participants working for the government revealed interesting findings relating to the way in which the State views NGOs and deals with their requests or proposals. Initially, a comment was made by the first interviewee that higher hierarchy is generally more reserved towards NGOs for three main reasons.

First, there are sometimes concerns about NGOs' agendas. Government agencies/representatives may be worried that an NGO's aims may go against government policy or be suspicious that an NGO's aims may be presented in a more appealing way and then, when applied, certain policies may not be in line with the Government's or a Ministry's objectives. Second, there could be reactions from other social groups or stakeholders who may have opposing views, and if an NGO's ideas are accepted other groups may react. This reason for state officials' reluctance to accept proposals of family planning groups has also been noted other cases, for example, those of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Malawi, where some elected officials feared that doing so could decrease their public support.⁶² Third, there could be concerns about an NGO's quality. The NGO's aims in other words may be seen as broadly in agreement with the government's policies, but state officials may be concerned that the NGO may not be able to deliver to the appropriate standard what it aims to do.

The second comment made by the first participant was that there is more diversity in lower ranks of state officials. Government workers vary in the opinions they hold about different NGOs and, depending on the position and the freedom to choose collaborators, they may choose to collaborate more closely with some NGOs. In addition, it was noted that, not only lower ranked officials had some freedom to decide on policy issues but they could also influence higher ranking officials to change somewhat their approach towards some NGOs. For example, in the period before the introduction of sexuality education in schools a number of workers in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport had been volunteers of the CFPA and their experience in the Association and their values may have influenced both the attitude of the Ministry towards the Association and the inclusion of material—at least supportive cases, exercises etc—in the curriculum. Overall, lower ranked officials seem to play a noteworthy role in how the State apparatus behaves towards NGOs. This observation has also been made in other countries, for example, in the case of Uganda where it was noted that advocacy at the lower levels of government was a critical factor in the establishment of the National Population Council.⁶³

Another factor that contributes to diversity in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth was the Cyprus Pedagogical institute. The Institute's mission is to 'ensure the continuous training of teachers of all levels, to inform them about current trends in education, to document research and theory of the educational policy to

⁶² Smith et al (n 43)

⁶³ Family Planning (n 60).

be followed and to facilitate teachers in their efforts for professional and personal development'.⁶⁴ Since the Educational Reform in June 2008, the Centre for Educational Research and Evaluation (KEEA) was established and a Scientific Council was appointed which has the mission to advise the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth on issues related to the continuous professional development of teachers, research and more generally on issues that fall within the responsibilities of the Pedagogical Institute. This has added to the autonomy of the Pedagogical Institute and made the collaboration with NGOs such as the CFPA easier. The Institute has had more flexibility to offer training on issues related to sexuality education, especially when these trainings are not compulsory (therefore not appearing as officially required training by the Ministry). When sexuality education was formally introduced in schools, members of the CFPA were called to provide training to teachers on related topics.

Another significant point that was made by the first of the interviewees from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth was that pressure from the EU was an important factor that has been influencing the Ministry's response to NGOs in general and the CFPA in particular. It was mentioned for example that suggestions by the EU for consultation with key stakeholders was a factor that decreased the Ministry's tendency not to consult with stakeholders when making decisions and probably considering their positions more carefully.

A final comment that was made by the interviewees in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth was that two other factors that influence positively the chances of an NGO having an impact on government policy are political influence and technical knowledge. The first factor contributes to the voice of the NGO be heard more clearly in the political arena and, depending on the strength of the political support, to get its aims transformed into policy. The second factor increases the power of the NGO, and if the expertise it has is of value to the government, the State might utilise it. A related comment made by the second of the interviewees is that the ministry should examine the academic and educational knowledge of an NGO before it decides to collaborate. The fact that an NGO deals with a subject does not necessarily mean that the proposed projects are based on evidence based practices.

⁶⁴ Cyprus Pedagogical Institute General Information, available at: https://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=329&Itemid=161&lang=en (last accessed 24 December 2021)

In addition to the above, it must also be noted that the Minister himself/herself plays an important role in how the Ministry views a specific NGO. In the case of the CFPA, for example, there was a marked difference in how the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth dealt with the issue of introducing sexuality education in schools and the CFPA itself when Andreas Demetriou, became a minister of Education and Culture in 2008. His determination to push forward the reform was probably the main factor in its introduction in the curriculum and his positive attitude towards suggestions and material produced by the Association influenced the content of the curriculum.

CFPA – State relations in Cyprus

Having in mind the above analyses, and acknowledging the difficulty in arriving in a clear-cut description of the relationship between the State and the CFPA, some summary comments are presented in Table 5 and discussed briefly below. As may be seen from the table, ‘repression’ was probably never the type of relationship between the State in Cyprus and CFPA. The government was not at any point highly unfavourable or considered outlawing the NGO. Characteristics of ‘Rivalry’ and ‘Competition’ were probably present in the 80’s when the attitude of the government was rather unfavourable and the Association was seen as antagonistic, in particular in relation to the introduction of sexuality education in schools. Characteristics of ‘Contracting’, ‘Third party government’ and ‘Cooperation’ seem to have existed in projects such as contraception seminars to women at the early stages of the Association’s life or AIDS awareness campaigns, where the government utilized the Association’s expertise on the topics and cooperated through information sharing. Finally, it may be argued that elements of the last two relationships existed in the case of designing and delivering the sexuality education programs in schools where the CFPA was consulted on several occasions and many of the materials produced were the result of resource sharing, with the CFPA having participation in planning and implementation. The relationship can thus be described as partnership with mutual strategy and coproduction.

Table 5. Types of relationships between the State and CFPA

Type of relationship	Key features	Comments
Repression	No NGO linkage with government, government policy highly unfavourable (probably outlawing NGO)	Did not happen

Rivalry	Probably sluggish provision of supportive services, government policy unfavourable	Probably during the 80's
Competition	Government policy unfavourable to neutral, NGO seen as unwanted critics and competitors for power	
Contracting	Government policy contingent with NGO, division of labour based on competitive advantage	On projects such as AIDS awareness campaigns or contraception seminars to women
Third party government	Government policy contingent with NGO, greater diversity of services than contracting	
Cooperation	Increasing NGO influence, Information sharing	
Complementarity	Moderate to high linkage with government, NGO autonomy, resource sharing, potential NGO participation in planning and policy, technical financial and geographic complementarity	In relation to sexuality education in the last decade
Collaboration	High linkage with government, government policy favourable, joint action, NGO participation in planning, policy and implementation, relationship: partnership, mutual strategy and coproduction	

Conclusions

This research sought to study the relationship between the State and the Cyprus Family Planning Association in Cyprus during its time of operation. It looked at the ways through which the Association approached the State, how the State responded and what the overall relationship between them entailed. In relation to the first topic, the CFPA used a variety of lobbying strategies to approach the State. The most common ones were private meetings or contact with policymakers or civil servants, attending events organised by policymakers and consulting the State, in particular in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights. It also used traditional media such as magazines, newspapers, TV and radio to present and advance its positions, issued press releases and, more recently, has been using social media quite extensively. The extensive use of inside strategies is in agreement with Dellmuth and Tallberg, (2017) who argued that NGOs primarily seeking political influence have more incentives to rely more extensively on inside strategies.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Dellmuth and Tallberg (n 37)

CFPAs actions for policy development and implementation have included networking with other NGOs with similar goals; campaigning and advocating primarily in relation to sexuality education and sexual and reproductive rights; providing information and raising awareness through traditional media (articles in newspapers and magazines, discussions on television and radio), and by reaching out to the public through lectures, seminars, printed information and recently social media. It has also provided expertise and advice, for example in AIDS awareness campaigns; provided clinical services and resources; and used innovative methods in talk for example about sexuality to youth.

In relation to the response of the State a few main points have been made. First, higher hierarchy is generally more reserved towards NGOs because of concerns about their agenda, reactions from other social groups or stakeholders who may have opposing views, and an NGO's quality. There is more diversity in lower ranks of state officials however, and they have some flexibility to divert somewhat from the official policy on some, probably more minor issues, and also influence higher ranked officials. The importance of the EU has also been noted. EU priorities and encouragement for citizen participation and consulting do influence the way the State views NGOs, by giving them more voice or at least a forum to be heard. To get their agenda adopted though factors such as political influence, technical knowledge play a role.

Overall, the relationship between the State and the CFPA has not been negative. Even though not always positive, there have been several phases of cooperation, even collaboration. The State recognised the Association's expertise in the areas of sexual and reproductive health rights and has been open to utilise them in a number of occasions, in particular in offering the Association the opportunity to provide training to various sections of the government in different ministries. In the case of sexuality education, the relationship has been more complicated. There was reluctance for its introduction in schools for various reasons and the Association had to use various forms of lobbying to achieve it. In the end, factors such as curriculum reform, individual decisions and probably societal change influenced the outcome. Looking at the relationship between the CFPA and the State as a whole, it may be argued that it has had some characteristics of the relationship in Eastern Europe, where there is limited citizen participation and a lack of financial resources and an environment affected by

widespread mistrust in institutions,⁶⁶ but also in Western Europe where it played a more important role and influenced public policy.⁶⁷

Overall, it seems that historical inertia in government policy makes the government relatively inflexible in introducing new policies and NGOs need to work hard to achieve meaningful change. Having said this though, factors in the State, for example changes in government policy or people in key posts, in NGOs, such as a consistent lobbying strategy, changes in societies values and external factors such as the EU make change more feasible. But for its achievement, a multitude of factors interplay and its timing cannot be predicted.

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⁶⁶ Fioramonti and Heinrich (n 26)

⁶⁷ Dekker (n 22), Zimmer (n 23)

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