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Connolly, John; Gifford, Anne; Kanol, Direnç ; Yilmaz, Omur

Document Version
Peer reviewed version

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Abstract

This article addresses the role and opportunities for public administration and public affairs education in North Cyprus. The context of the research is situated within a transnational education partnership between the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and the Management Centre of the Mediterranean (Nicosia, North Cyprus). The dominant narrative of the article is, based on the case of North Cyprus, to provide key insights into why public administration and public affairs education is a force for development in governance and civil society terms. The political context of North Cyprus is such that it is in the midst of significant change based on the twin governance challenges of, first, uncertainty regarding its international status (following the Cypriot coup d'état and Turkish intervention in 1974 that led to North declaring independence in 1983 and becoming the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus) and, second, efforts to accommodate 'acquis communitaire' in order to progress towards EU accession (subject to successful reunification with the South). An underpinning reflective consideration in the article relates to how such educational programmes, based on a franchised model, address aspects of 'good governance' (often based on a Western paradigm) but, at the same time, are also suitably responsive to local civil society and political contexts.

Keywords: public administration, North Cyprus, transnational education, civil society

Introduction

This article addresses how public administration and public affairs education is important for enhancing civil society and administrative development based on the substantive case of North Cyprus (otherwise known as the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus). The case study is underpinned by the experiential learning of the authors in developing a transnational education partnership (TNE) between the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and the Management Centre of the Mediterranean (MCMed) (Nicosia, North Cyprus). MCMed is not only an educational institution - it is a respected multi-faceted organisation that is embedded within a range of policy networks. It delivers education and training programmes and has key interests in civil society development, management, advocacy and policy-making.

The UWS-MCMed partnership is based on a franchised model (i.e. core programme content is shared with the partner and this can be tailored to local contexts). The current franchise includes research-led Masters programmes in Civil Society and Public Affairs, Policy Analysis and Global Governance, and a Masters in Public Administration (MPA). The underpinning theme of these programmes is to equip students to understand how a variety of state and non-state actors come together to address global problems as well as

examining the roles of policy networks in the context of multilevel governance and public policy-making. The Civil Society and Public Affairs degree is part of an Applied Social Science framework and places emphasis on the role of groups, movements, advocacy in the context of civil society and social and political affairs. The Policy Analysis and Global Governance degree, although it shares aspects of course context with Civil Society and Public Affairs, is anchored towards regulatory governance, public policy and administration and crisis management. In some senses it is 'MPA-light' in that it includes aspects of a traditional MPA (i.e. evaluation, policy analysis, and research methods) but is a model that focuses more on those students who are interested in international public policy and governance. The MPA, on the other hand, is more of a traditional model of what would be generally recognised as an 'MPA' and includes input from the School of Media, Culture and Society (the host School) and the UWS School of Business and Enterprise.

North Cyprus is in the midst of significant societal and political change based on the governance challenges of, first, ongoing uncertainty regarding its international status and, second, efforts to accommodate 'acquis communautaire' in order to progress towards EU accession (subject to successful reunification with the South). Negotiations for the reunification of Cyprus have been continuing intermittently following the Greek Cypriot coup d'état and Turkish intervention in 1974, which had led to the North declaring independence in 1983 and becoming the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus (recognised only by Turkey). The most recent round of negotiations between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities culminated in the multilateral conference on Cyprus under the auspices of the UN in Crans-Montana, Switzerland (with the participation of Turkey, Greece, and the UK, in addition to the two communities, and the EU as an observer) in June-July 2017. Although the conference was the first of its kind and reunification seemed to be closest than ever, at least since the failure of the Annan Plan in 2004, talks collapsed once again without reaching an agreement. Independently of reunification prospects, however, the issue of 'public sector reform' has been a part of public discourse and political debate at least since mid-2000s, albeit mostly within the context of external pressure from Turkey. It is within this context that we address the following question: What are the opportunities for public administration and public affairs education in the context of North Cyprus and how might international partnerships represent a mechanism for supporting civil society development? An underpinning reflective issue associated with

this question is the consideration of how such educational programmes, based on a franchised model, address aspects of 'good governance' (often based on a Western paradigm) but, at the same time, are also suitably responsive to local civil society and political contexts.

The structure of the article is as follows. First, the background to the TNE partnership between MCMed is provided including the partnership came about, the key drivers for what we describe as a 'multi-touch' partnership, and why North Cyprus provides key opportunities for public administration education. Second, the theme of 'good governance' within the context of public administration is considered in order to contextualise the case of North Cyprus. Third, the article goes on to identify the ways and means in which public administration education is a force for societal change in light of the current climate in North Cyprus i.e. the politics of re-unification, ongoing talks regarding potential EU membership, and pressure of IMF-style Structural Adjustment Programmes by Turkey. As noted earlier in the article, the discussion is informed by the experiential learning of the authors, both as the educational franchisers and the franchisees, based on their civil society engagement activities within the region. The discussion is also supplemented by data from primary and secondary sources alongside testimonies of key stakeholders who work with civil society organisations and the local municipalities in North Cyprus. This blend of data is appropriate for providing a rich set of perspectives regarding the role of TNE partnerships in the areas of public administration and public administration to support 'good governance' in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus.

Global engagement: TNE partnership-working

Universities world-wide are seeking to 'internationalise' what they do at a number of levels e.g. research, education, and staff/student mobility. UK higher education institutions are operating within a challenging and competitive environment necessitating a drive towards multiple, sometimes conflicting goals, resulting in competition. An added dimension here is that internationalisation is now beginning to be recognised as a mark of quality. For example, Times Higher Education (THE) and QS World Rankings include internationalisation as part of their benchmarking criterion of universities. They focus on different countable measures, including the numbers engaged in international movement and research, as well as ratios of home versus international students, and the composition

of academic staff. While these structural factors lay the foundation for a university's outlook and growth, other features such as overseas partnerships and an overseas branch campus are included in many strategies as internationalisation goals.

The University of the West of Scotland Corporate Strategy 2014-20 (UWS, 2014) describes UWS as an international university that provides a springboard for all its learners to contribute globally. Global engagement is one of the four main themes of the strategy (alongside research, enterprise and engagement; and people, money and infrastructure). In short, similar to many UK universities, internationalisation of the university is vital if it is to achieve the aspirations stated in the Corporate Strategy. Activities and measures of success are summarised in four cross-cutting ambitions: developing UWS as a global brand; internationalising the student body, staff and university culture; internationalising the student experience; and developing strong strategic partnerships - including UWS degrees and professional development through a range of off-shore arrangements. However, global engagement essentially means more than 'global reach' (i.e. international education expansionism *per se*) in the context of civil society development in that 'engagement' instils a sense of 'working with' education partners in regions of the world in order to use university education as a way to promote 'good governance'. Indeed, the School of Media, Culture & Society at UWS has articulated its response to achieving UWS global ambitions through its *Shift to Global* strategy with a view to establishing globally relevant programmes; an internationally-focused culture; an internationally diverse student population; and a reputation for internationally-recognised research. There are four strands to the strategy: Product; Place; Pathways; and Partnership, which are integrated within the collaborative work with international partners. The School's transnational education (TNE) collaboration with the Management Centre of the Mediterranean (MCMed) in North Cyprus has been built on the four pillars of the strategy. The *product* franchised for delivery by MCMed, post-graduate taught (PGT) programmes, is the right fit for the *place*. There is a general consensus among stakeholders in North Cyprus regarding the need to develop skills and expertise in policy-making and governance at this point for its social and political development (more on this later). There is, however, a growing sophistication of approaches to TNE development and management across UK universities resulting in improved benefits for TNE hosts. Partnership approaches with host country partners are becoming more equitable with either an equal distribution of responsibility or a strong focus on joint delivery and ownership. While the UWS-MCMed collaborative

partnership requires UWS as the higher education (HE) institution (with degree awarding powers) to take full responsibility for the quality assurance of our franchised programmes, the course content is contextualised for the local/international environment. Collaboration with UWS offers MCMed a research-underpinned, tailored curriculum that augments the training and development work that they do in the region. MCMed also benefit from co-branding and positioning with a UK HE institution. For UWS, there is the opportunity to provide international scholarly experiences for staff, to co-create an internationalised curriculum, and provide opportunities for UK-based students to engage in study abroad in North Cyprus. Our partnership reflects the move of UK universities into a different type of TNE engagement that puts 'partnerships at the centre' (British Council, 2016).

There are a number of key issues within the TNE discourse. In particular, that TNE may not be adequately addressing the skills gap in the local labour market, depending on the type of programmes being offered. This 'stresses the importance of understanding and addressing information asymmetries that exist between academia and industry as regards the skills gaps needed by employers in the host country' (British Council, 2016: 13). This approach has directly informed the development of the franchised offer in North Cyprus in terms of focusing on civil society, public affairs, governance and public administration education. Good governance is, in fact, an essential criterion for successful civil society development at what is a key period in the country's history and, we argue, that education has a significant role to play as part of this process.

The pursuit of 'good governance' in developing state contexts

There are academic studies focussed on North Cyprus that consider aspects of sustainability based on economic considerations (such as tourism) (Altinay et al., 2002; Yasarata et al., 2010; Alipour et al, 2011), civil society change (Lacher and Kaymak, 2005), cultural and political identities (Constantinou and Hatay, 2010), nationalism (Mavratsas, 1997); conflict resolution (Zartman, 2001; Anastasiou, 2002; Salem, 2016), and peacebuilding (Kanol and Kanol, 2013). However, there is a dearth of research that addresses the role of public administration education in North Cyprus. As will be discussed later in the article, North Cyprus has key interests in developing capacity in public administration given that, like many small-land developing countries, it will continually seek to be competitive within the international political economy regardless of

how the Cyprus conflict and North Cyprus' relations with Turkey develop. As this article demonstrates, key civil society and political actors are committed to public administration education and believe that education itself is a force for societal change in the pursuit of 'good governance'. However, what is 'good governance' in the context of public administration education? The 'good' has connotations with values which are themselves linked with questions about morality, ethical standards and civil society development. Edwards (2014) has argued, in his analysis of civil society, that the 'good society' requires the infusion of norms and values that provide positive directions for institutions but also political action to legitimise such values. In many senses this indicates that political and institutional architectures need to be right in order for good governance to be accommodated and promoted. 'Governance', in the context of public administration, refers to the 'art of the state' (Hood, 2000) and, in a contemporaneous sense, requires the need to manage and navigate the variety of terrains and civil society actors involved in the making of public policy (Richards and Smith, 2002: 15). If the two terms are put together then the meaning refers to the ability of governments to implement change and their level of responsiveness to societal change. This also includes an ability to build capacity, resilience and to appropriately, and flexibly, marshal resources in response to sub-national, national and international challenges (Klinger, 2015:67). It is the case, like many concepts in the social sciences, that there is no agreed definition of what 'good governance' (Bevir, 2008) constitutes. It could be considered to be primarily a project in neo-liberalism and economic integration (this is the view more closely aligned to aspects of economic development e.g. by the World Bank). Alternatively, the emphasis could be placed on socio-political conditions. The priorities of the United Nation's Development Programme, for example, are grouped around ensuring democratic governance and the 'promotion of equity, participation, pluralism, transparency, accountability and the rule of law, in a manner that is effective, efficient and enduring' (United Nations, 2016). In short, Bevir (2008) notes that the common language of good governance concern development and the organisation of the interactions between the state and society.

For students of public administration programmes, it is important to recognise the balance between both the economic and socio-political dimensions of good governance. This is particularly the case for public administration students who are also public servants within developing countries and who seek to translate their education into practice within their jurisdictions. Klinger (2015:67, original emphasis) notes that in developing countries good

governance refers to the fact that governments 'must *establish* the ability to deliver vital public services through core management functions such as budgeting, human resource management, program evaluation whilst simultaneously focussing on more fundamental changes'. Klinger (2015:67) also indicates how public administration is a force for institutional, political and administrative reform. This is highly relevant for contemporary governance in North Cyprus for two reasons. First, the recent United Nations-led negotiations regarding the reunification of Cyprus will undoubtedly require administrative reform to accommodate the outcomes of agreements (and any future agreements) - including the potential for the implementation of power-sharing arrangements between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot constituent states. Second, subject to the success of ongoing efforts to reunify the country, there is the potential for EU membership for the North and this will require the fulfilment of conditions relating to administrative and political reform i.e. strong evidence of good governance. Coupled with these macro-level political matters is that Turkey, upon which the North Cyprus economy is highly dependent for aid and loans due to its otherwise international isolation, has been pushing for IMF-style structural adjustment programmes with provisions for public administration reform that closely follow the New Public Management (NPM) model - relying mainly on privatization and emphasis on curbing government spending.

It is important to be clear, however, about the fact that public administration education is not a value-free pursuit, especially if the discipline is viewed through a 'development' lens. Development is inherently normative and, as a result, instead of pretending to eliminate bias from what development constitutes, it is important to be clear as to the societal outcomes that public administration can help to achieve and how these outcomes will be measured (Klingner, 2015:72). In the spirit of political philosophy, public administration is a mechanism for drawing together perspectives on how governing systems 'ought' to be as well as being rooted in classical topics of political theory including equality, liberty, order and democracy (Bevir, 2008:95). Furthermore, Massey and Pyper (2005:15) note that public administration is not a descriptive account of how central and local government operates but it exists as a subject of education and research regarding 'how' units of the state should be organised in the interests of the public. The 'public interest' dimension is inextricably linked to notions of democracy and accountability because public sector management is 'essentially the study of how

successful and democratic a society is at governing itself and advancing the interests of its citizens' (Massey and Pyper, 2005:18). The advances in the discipline, largely spearheaded in Western political economies, has been concerned with whether there has been a shift from NPM (which emphasises consumerism, modernisation and managerialism in public sector management) (Hood, 1991) to that of an area of post-NPM towards 'public value management' (Stoker, 2006; Connolly, 2016). There are debates about whether such changes represent a paradigmatic shift given that there are elements of different phases present within the discipline and that nothing is ever entirely new; but what is clear is that public administration education remains a means for taking forward opportunities for social, economic, political and civil society development ('public administration' is used hereafter as a short-hand for educational programmes as part of the UWS-MCMed partnership that address public administration, public affairs and management as a whole rather than focusing one specific development within it).

Masters programmes in public administration, governance and public policy and valuable for societal development for developing countries given their focus governance processes themselves at a systems level and the fact that they can aid political and economic advancement. If the public sector suffers from maladministration, corruption, inefficiency, a lack of transparency over decision-making, then this will lead to a lack of social development, inequalities, a lack of economic prosperity and a general state of vulnerability as a result of the absence of stability and democratic governance. The economic interest for good governance emerges from the fact that states will want to become active participants in globalisation but this can only be taken full advantage of if the systems of government and regulatory systems within states are functioning in such a way to facilitate and accommodate the demands of economic globalisation (Kahler and Lake, 2003). The political dimension is equally acute from a state governance point of view given that in order to become a member of supranational political systems (such as the European Union) there are rules within treaties about the political conditions that allow for states to become member states – known as acquis communautaire. In the EU context, for instance, the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam identifies acquis communautaire as the need for prospective member states to be able to accommodate the entire body of EU law, including conventions and judicial decisions (Miller, 2011). These conditions are now represented within 35 chapters of text that covers all aspects of EU public policy and

political priorities (examples include the free movement of goods, capital and people; the economic and monetary union; agriculture; health and consumer protection; social policy and employment, environment; external relations – to name some of them). What this points to is the importance of sound public administration for countries seeking to join the EU i.e. the need to demonstrate the execution of 'good governance'. The next section of the article considers the specific case of North Cyprus.

North Cyprus: Public Administration and Civil Society Issues in a Historical Context

After existing under the rule of different empires for centuries, Cyprus gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1960. At that time, there was a unique situation considering that there was no wide support for independence on the island. EOKA (*Εθνική Οργάνωσις Κυπρίων Αγωνιστών*) organisation was established by the majority community - Greek Cypriots - in 1955 to unite the island with Greece rather than fighting for independence. This caused the minority community on the island, Turkish Cypriots, to reciprocate the Greek Cypriots' unilateral efforts by demanding partition of the island (*Taksim*) and unification of the Turkish part with Turkey. The United Kingdom, Turkey and Greece led the development of a power-sharing agreement between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and the Republic of Cyprus was founded as a consociational state in 1960. The sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus was guaranteed by other states (i.e. the United Kingdom, as the colonial power; Turkey, as the 'motherland' of Turkish Cypriots; and Greece, as the 'motherland' of Greek Cypriots). Such an arrangement was an indication of a lack of readiness for a common state in Cyprus.

The power-sharing arrangement lasted only three years and the Turkish Cypriots started living in enclaves from 1964 until 1974. In 1974, the military junta in Greece and extreme nationalist Greek Cypriots embarked on a coup in Cyprus, overthrowing the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios III. Citing its rights as a guarantor state, Turkey intervened and eventually occupied about 37% of the island. First, Turkish Cypriots established the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus in 1975 with the stated goal of governing the northern part of Cyprus until a federal solution was found. However, the two communities on the island failed to agree on a federal arrangement and the Turkish

Cypriots unilaterally declared the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983. Since this was a unilateral move, the TRNC was not recognised by the international community. To date, the TRNC has maintained control in the northern part of Cyprus with the help of Turkey. There are still about 35,000 Turkish troops stationed in Cyprus and a significant portion of the Turkish Cypriot budget, ranging from 12% to 14% of GNP during 2010-2014 (SPO 2015: 23), is financed by Turkey.

TRNC covers a total area of 3,355 km2. According to the 2011 census, it has a population of 286,257, however, this number has been increasing at a fast rate. According to the State Planning Organisation, GDP per capita in 2016 was $13,428 and unemployment rate was 6.4% (SPO, 2017). TRNC is located in the Southeast Mediterranean Sea, south of Turkey, and east of Syria. Compared to neighbouring countries, TRNC scores quite high on Freedom House's democracy index. In 2017, its score was '2' out of a 1 to 7 scale, where '1' implies that a country is fully democratic. Nevertheless, non-recognition has hampered TRNC's democratic process with too much reliance on Turkey resulting in outside intervention in decision-making processes (Kanol and Köprülü, 2017).

North Cyprus in the post-1974 era could best be described as an 'illusionary welfare state' (Sonan 2007: 11). There exists a cumbersome public sector with public expenditures exceeding 50% of GDP (mostly for wages, pensions, and non-social transfers, such as payments to public economic enterprises and subsidies to agriculture sectors) and budget deficits reaching 15-20% of GDP, covered almost exclusively by grants and loans from Turkey (World Bank 2006; SPO 2015). Yet there is widespread discontent with the quality of public services provided. As the TEPAV Report (the Economic and Policy Research Foundation of Turkey) illustrates, based on a 2011 household survey, '[r]esources used by the state have not given way to results and does not reflect on citizens receiving quality public services'. This is has negative implications for the confidence of citizens and perceptions about public administration as a whole' (TEPAV, 2016: 43). Private healthcare and education services rate at least two times higher than their public counterparts in reputation scores. While 32% believe that public institutions follow relevant laws and regulations, 15% believe that public institutions function efficiently, only 12% believe that there is no favouritism, 17% believe that senior public officials can be held accountable for their actions, and only 15% believe that citizens are able to find recourse when their rights are violated (TEPAV, 2016: 45).

The public administration system in North Cyprus is characterised by entrenched politicisation, which constitutes the core of governance problems in the country. This politicisation reveals itself in the form of public resources being used as tools for both wielding and consolidating political power. Sonan identifies the Turkish Cypriot public administration system as 'constituency clientelism', whereby the state (as the patron) distributes class-specific public goods in the form of subsidies and protected markets with the intention of building and maintaining the loyalty of certain social classes (the clients) to the state (2007: 9). Policy development is typically the product of political influence, referred to by Yasarata et al. (2010: 345) as 'ego-driven politics', also noting that public resources have been used as instruments of political power and that personal interests have had implications for the politicisation of the public sector. Distribution of public resources for political gain also takes the form of public sector employment, which has resulted in a swollen public sector with serious qualification and capacity problems. According to the TEPAV Report, 75% of households surveyed believe that favouritism has 'a lot of influence' in the selection of public employees (TEPAV, 2016: 35). Furthermore, 55% indicated that they find the knowledge and qualifications of public employees to be either 'not sufficient' or 'very insufficient' (TEPAV, 2016: 34). Perhaps even more detrimental to the quality of public services, however, is the political appointment and removal of high-level bureaucrats with every cabinet re-shuffle (governments in North Cyprus are short-lived with an average of around two years in office). Not only are department and agency heads appointed and removed with political discretion alone (requiring three signatures – the relevant minister, prime minister, and the president), these departments and agencies are also regularly redeployed by decree across different ministries. This prevents the accumulation of institutional memory and capacity (TEPAV 2016: 14).

Although there is a general recognition among the public of these public administration problems, the extensive politicisation of the public sector in North Cyprus has given rise to a common misconception. This is that politicisation is assumed to emanate from the political regime and solutions are typically sought in changing the parties in power or proposing changes to the governmental and electoral systems (TEPAV 2016: 22). The problem is that a general understanding of public administration as a separate discipline and mechanism of institutions, structures, and processes of policy formulation and public service delivery is largely missing (Pyper 2015: 14). These problems have persisted over

decades regardless of the political parties in power and unfulfilled campaign promises of 'public sector reform'.

Particularly since early 2000s, Turkey has been attaching conditions to the grants and loans it provides to North Cyprus, resembling IMF-style structural adjustment programmes. Public sector reform objectives stipulated by these programmes include fiscal discipline and austerity measures, such as the reduction of the number of public employees and their overall share in the budget (TCYH 2009: 32). They also include 'good governance', including measures to enhance coordination, build capacity, increase transparency and accountability, and develop quality standards for public services (TCYH 2012a: 21). However, 'public sector reform' attempts have revolved primarily around amendments to the Public Sector Law with a focus on reducing government spending, thus avoiding crucial good governance issues. These programmes have been largely perceived by the Turkish Cypriot community as 'impositions' that do not take into account local needs and interests (Pakete Tepkiler Sürüyor, 2011). Reduction of government employee wages and benefits, and the privatisation of public economic enterprises and public services (such as telecommunications, electricity, water and the administration of ports) have been particularly contentious issues. These programmes have been so politically controversial that coalition governments have been built and broken around disagreements about them (Berberoğlu 2000; Özuslu 2016). In the end, the Turkish Assistance Committee (*TC Yardım Heyeti*, TCYH) itself acknowledged in its 2012 report that the biggest obstacle for the implementation of these programmes has been the lack of 'sense of ownership' by the local community (TCYH 2012b: 6).

It could be argued that reaction against Turkey's interventions in the internal affairs of North Cyprus has been transformed into, or has been used by some factions as an excuse for, suspicion and resistance against reforms in general. Nonetheless, awareness about the need for public administration reform has been growing and positive developments have taken place in recent years. The Good Governance Law was passed in 2014, instituting protections and rectification against abuses of power by the administration. This was a homegrown law, drafted by a young, first-time legislator (an associate professor of law with a civil society background), Tufan Erhürman, who since then has become the leader of the largest opposition party - Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi (CTP). The amended Right to Information Law was also passed in 2014, expanding the rights of citizens as well as foreign residents and legal entities to demand information from public administration

bodies and providing for legal action if access is blocked. Another positive development in terms of accountability has been the appointment of a highly respected Supreme Court judge to the position of Ombudsman - an ombudswoman in fact - in 2015. This position was empty since 2012 and had generally been defunct before that due to partisan appointments. The new Ombudsman has been highly active in investigating and publicly reporting on various high-profile cases of potential corruption. According to the Centre for Migration, Identity and Rights Studies (a local civil society think-tank that conducts public opinion surveys every three months) the Ombudsman has become the most trusted institution in North Cyprus (Ernur 2016).

Civil society could play a pivotal role in the development of public administration. Therefore, understanding the state of civil society is important to understand the state of public administration and public affairs in any society, and how to improve the system. Empowering civil society to effectively take on this role is also important. Investigations conducted by MCMed with the international civil society network 'CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation' (2005: 2011) are still the only comprehensive sources for understanding the state of civil society in North Cyprus. Their 2005 report drew a slightly pessimistic picture of the state of civil society in the TRNC. In 2011, findings indicated improvement, albeit still with a long way to go for the non-profit sector. The 2011 report found that despite a limited number of socially and politically engaged non-governmental actors, the intensity of engagement was quite high. Compared with 2005, some Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have shown signs of institutionalisation. Overall, CSOs rely on multiple forms of financial sources, signalling a high chance for survival. Most CSOs report their finances publicly, which is a vital requirement for a healthy non-profit sector. Notwithstanding these positive aspects, the number of people engaged in civic life remained low. The practice of civic values such as non-violence and tolerance by CSOs were not widespread and the perceived corruption within civil society was also high. Their policy impact was quite low. This can be partially explained by path dependency logic as historically Turkish Cypriot CSOs have been engaged more with the provision of social services than lobbying (CIVICUS, 2011). Exceptions would be labour unions and business associations, which actively lobby and affect the nature of policies. Networking activities among civil society actors also remained limited.

The amendment of the CSO Law in 2016, after 25 years, has been a great achievement for civil society in North Cyprus. Throughout the policy amendment procedure, many civil

society actors were directly or indirectly involved. The president of the TRNC, Mustafa Akıncı, did not sign the first version of the bill at least partly due to the collective reaction of several CSOs, which argued that the new law would grant too much power to the state to meddle with the CSOs. Some CSOs also complained that the state deliberately included some organisations and excluded others during the policy-making process. The president sent the bill back to the parliament, where necessary changes were made and the amended version was passed. The president signed the amended bill into law, which became effective from 17 May 2016. This helped mitigate the problem of excluded CSOs. The Cyprus Civil Society Organisations Network, which included 15 CSOs and of which MCMed was a leading member, played a prominent role in this reform. The new law allows young people below the age of 18 to become CSO members as long as consent has been given by their parents. Under the new law, CSOs can form official networks. Although networking existed informally before the law became effective, networks could not officially register, and thus, could not apply for funding or conduct activities which require registration. The new law also allows international CSOs to open their own offices and conduct activities freely in the TRNC with a permit from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This context is important for highlighting the journey towards North Cyprus seeking to offer academic programmes in public administration and public affairs education. With its many years of experience in civil society development, advocacy and lobbying in North Cyprus, MCMed has specifically targeted the three programmes - Civil Society and Public Affairs, Policy Analysis and Global Governance, and a Masters in Public Administration (MPA) - with its partnership with UWS as a purposive commitment to contribute to good governance in the country. Civil society actors interviewed in North Cyprus, before the launch of these programmes, further confirm the need, value and contribution of such education. For example:

> Non-profit Organisations definitely need these programmes. ...In Cyprus we have a very weak civil society. Civil society comprises of volunteers only who work during their free time and there is not much professionalism. I think that these programmes can teach people how to write and manage projects.

> (Emete İmge, President of the Universal Patients' Rights Association).

> As you know, all of the doctors already have qualifications for the particular areas they work in. I think a master's degree like this is needed in Cyprus because the

doctors have qualifications for their own areas but having a professional education for example to be a head doctor [administrator] would make our doctors more professional while they are managing the hospitals or health centers.

(Dr. Filiz Besim, President of the Turkish Cypriot Medical Association).

I believe that Master of Public Administration programmes would be a great opportunity. Offering civil servants professional education would make them able and well-trained. Also, these programmes would benefit Turkish Cypriot institutions. I think that these programmes would be in demand since civil servants can take time off to pursue their degrees and get a raise if they hold Masters or PhDs when they come back

(Mehmet Harmancı, the Mayor of Nicosia Turkish Municipality, with background in both civil society and business).

Finally, it is worth noting that North Cyprus has a rapidly growing higher education sector with foreign students constituting around 28% (close to 24,000) of all university students (MEB 2016: 57). These students come mostly from the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa. Another 47,000 (56%) come from Turkey. Hence, the UWS-MCMed partnership in North Cyprus has the potential of benefiting many developing countries by delivering internationally accredited, innovative public administration and public affairs education tailored for developing countries and local contexts. Incorporation of a specific module - Civil Society and Peacebuilding - in the curriculum of programmes offered in North Cyprus is one example of this tailored approach. This module is not only particularly relevant for the niche group targeted by these programmes and the context of Cyprus, but it also utilises the knowledge and expertise accumulated by MCMed throughout the years.

Conclusion

This article has highlighted the experience of UWS in implementing its internationalisation strategy through TNE partnership working in North Cyprus. Although there are few UK-based universities who do not have a global research/engagement or internationalisation strategy, the learning from this reflective piece is that efforts to building partnerships are not just about meeting performance indicators for UK institutions, rather, it is possible to orientate internationalisation activity around 'the common good' and ethics when it comes to public administration and public affairs education. North Cyprus has presented considerable opportunities for education to be a mechanism for contributing to state and

civil society development. The article has shown that North Cyprus is at a critical point in terms of its constitutional, political and civil society development as a result of potential reunification of North and South Cyprus. This issue was brought into the media spotlight in 2017 when resolution talks were held in Geneva under the purview of the UN (EurActive, 2017). Although no final agreements were reached, the political momentum has made reunification closer than ever (subject to referenda in each territory). Yet even before the outcomes of potential agreements are ratified, which are likely to require adjustments to state governance, the existing situation in North Cyprus is such that public administration education has important roles to play in addressing, *inter alia*, aspects of accountability, clientelism and trust in public institutions. MCMed, as a respected education, research and training organisation in the region is, in partnership with UWS, ideally positioned to make further important contributions to state and civil society development. Public administration and public affairs education will continue to have a very important role to play as part of this process.

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