

Situation on Psychotherapy in Cyprus

Cyprus has no law on psychotherapy. Anyone can use the title “Psychotherapist”. This over years created confusion to the public, professionals and politicians.

A law on psychologists does exist and up until 2012 the main claimants of the title “psychotherapist” had been groups within the two psychology Associations (and some Psychiatrists) in Cyprus each group vying for supremacy over the other. The common ground between them however seems to be that psychotherapy is not an autonomous profession. It is important to note that not all psychologists (or psychiatrists) agree with this idea and that most of PAP’s members are psychologists (and now two psychiatrists).

The first official attempt for a law proposal on psychotherapy was made in June 2012 via the Council for the Registration of Psychologists (SEPs), the professional body appointed by the Ministry of Health (MOH) for the regulation of psychologists, by a small number of psychologists from one of the two main psychology associations in Cyprus. This proposal was opposed by the other psychology association within SEPs (and other groups) and was overturned. This event saw the beginning of the creation of the ‘Pancyprian Association for Psychotherapists’ (PAP). PAP was finally founded on the 6th of February 2013, became the EAP’s NUO/NAO in 2015 and is to date the only accredited professional body in Cyprus for all psychotherapists.

Much of PAP’s time and energy since its creation has gone into averting such other moves for legislation on psychotherapy. The latest one was made by the same group of individual psychologists within SEPs (2 of which regrettably also EAP members) on the 16th March 2016. This proposal was overturned at a meeting at the House of Parliament after it was opposed by PAP and other groups. Following this event PAP met with the Health Minister several times and has made a law proposal in March 2017. We are hoping for further developments and the start of official negotiations at the Ministry of Health with the other representative parties.

There are three main professional bodies, active in promoting a law on psychotherapy:

- PAP which holds the position of psychotherapy as an autonomous profession.
- One of the two main psychology associations, which holds the position that psychotherapists should be holders of the European Certificate of Psychology (EuroPsy) with a specialization on psychotherapy. EuroPsy as we understand has a representation in Cyprus but as far as we know there are no psychologists in Cyprus who hold the European Certificate of Psychology with a specialization in psychotherapy.
- The other main psychology association who seems to hold the position that psychotherapy should be annexed to one of the other main caring professions.

A picture in numbers:

There is an estimated number of 200 individuals who practice as psychotherapists in the Cyprus Republic. These may be psychologists, Counsellors, Psychiatrists, Hypnotherapists etc. There are 16 ECP holders out of which 13 are PAP members. A large number of individuals practicing psychotherapy have no accreditation from a European professional body.

The Pancyprian Association for Psychotherapists (PAP) represents

- **56 Individual Members:**

- 35 Psychotherapists - accredited by PAP (out of which 13 are also ECP holders)
- 5 Associate members
- 16 Trainee members

• **3 Psychotherapy Training Organizations (PTOs):**

- a. The Systemic Institute of Cyprus (SIC) (Systemic-Training)
 - Accredited by the EAP (EAPTI),
 - Number of trainees 50 (estimated)
 - www.sic.com.cy
- b. Institute of Psychotherapy and Professional Development (IPSEPA)
 - Accredited by PAP at National level (NAPTO) (CBT-Training)
 - Number of Trainees 30
 - <https://www.ipsepa.com>
- c. Center for Personal Development and Psychotherapy (KE PA PSY)
 - Accredited by PAP at National level (NAPTO) - (Systemic Training)
 - Number of Trainees 32
 - <https://www.kepapsy.com/>

• **2 Psychotherapy Professional Organizations**

- a. Cyprus Society of Family Therapy (CySoFT)
 - Representatives of EFTA in Cyprus
 - About 20 Regular Members and 30 Associate members
 - <http://www.familytherapycy.com/en/>
- b. Cyprus Association for Person-Centered Psychotherapy and Counselling (CAPCPC)
 - EAP member
 - PCE/WAPCEPC member
 - 12 members
 - <http://www.capcpc.org/>

In addition there are three Training Institutes without a National (PAP) accreditation:

- Cyprus Institute for Integrative Psychotherapy
- Cyprus Center for Biosynthesis
- Cyprus Psychoanalytic Society

Finally there is the psychotherapy situation at the Turkish occupied northern part of Cyprus. Although PAP over the years has developed a collaborative relationship with our Turkish Cypriot colleagues we have no clear information on the numbers there. An added difficulty in obtaining the information is the unresolved political situation. We all hope that this will change.

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