



Report 2013

of the

Board of Educational Affairs

Convenor : Stephan Dutke

EFPA General Assembly in Stockholm

July 13-14, 2013

Report 2013

Executive summary

The Board of Educational Affairs was assigned to monitor and assess developments in teaching psychology in Europe and to give advice on these issues to the GA and the EC. At the date of this report the Board has been working for 14 months, met three times in Brussels, and the members evaluate their collaboration positively. The report described the Board's activities, in particular (a) the development of a common reference frame, (b) exploring potentials for the development of psychology after the Bologna reform, and (c) exploring the practice of teaching psychology to students of other academic disciplines and professionals of other domains than psychology. With regard to the short time the Board has been working, no proposals for decisions by the GA were submitted.

Introduction

In 2011 the General Assembly of the EFPA decided to found a Board of Educational Affairs (BEA). The EFPA president Robert Roe described the assignment in his presentation at the Board's first meeting (February 2012) as follows:

- "EFPA needs a permanent body ('Board') that will monitor and assess developments in the teaching of psychology, develop standards, and give advice on issues of concern to students and teachers.
- The focus shall be on the academic education of psychology at all levels (BA, MA, PhD, post-graduate), but the teaching of psychology to other professions and the general public shall also be included"

At the date of this report the Board has been working for 14 months and met three times in Brussels. The members collaborate in a highly cooperative way. However, the intensity of cooperation is not as high as we all hoped: Some of the active members were unable to attend the meetings (or did not attend all meetings) because the organizations they represent were unable to fund the travel costs. Our continuous communication via email, the EFPA Community Forum and other internet resources could only partially substitute face-to-face communication – especially when the group was beginning to work. We will further explore the possibility of video conferences.

Despite this problem the members are satisfied with the work already done and are looking forward to continuing this work. We would like to express our thanks to Robert Roe and the staff in the EFPA head office for supporting us very efficiently.

Activities

The GA asked the Board to start developing:

- “an inventory of issues related to the implementation of the Bologna system in the field of psychology;
- an inventory of issues related to the teaching of psychology to other professions” (president’s communication at the Board’s first meeting)

The Board’s activities described in the following were aligned with these goals.

1. Developing a common reference frame

1.1 Activity

Impressed by the diversity of the national educational systems and the role psychology is playing in them the Board members felt that it was necessary to arrange a common reference frame for the internal (and later also for the external) communication. Based on the EFPA reference model we identified seven different paths on which (a) psychological knowledge may reach people in their everyday life and (b) people might learn about psychology, be educated in psychology, or become psychologists.

These seven paths are depicted in the context of the EFPA reference model (Figure 1) and briefly described in Table 1. They illustrate the Board’s conceptual distinction between *education in psychology* (paths 1-4) as the internal perspective and *psychology in education* (paths 5-7) as the external perspective. In line with the Board’s assignment both perspectives are evaluated as equally important.

1.2 Achievements

- The Board now possesses a common reference frame that facilitates the communication about the main aspects of education in psychology and about different roles psychology is playing in educational processes of other academic disciplines. A first sketch of this reference frame has been communicated in the Board’s work plan 2012/13 and is continuously revised. A coherent text representing the exemplified framework will be available by the end of 2013.
- The Board members agree on the general goal to strengthen the perspective of *psychology in education*. Under the impression of the Bologna reform the internal perspective (*education in psychology*) was emphasized. Many resources were invested to reorganize and modernize psychology study programs. Understandably, psychologists discussed the possible consequences of Bologna primarily with regard to psychology as a major subject. From the Board’s point of view, the time has come to focus also the external perspective: the role of psychology in educational processes of other disciplines and professions (see Section 3).

2. Developing an inventory of issues related to the implementation of the Bologna system in the field of psychology

2.1 Activity

The Board discussed these issues intensively and generated the following appraisal. With regard to psychology, in most European countries the Bologna reform has been implemented. Universities, psychology departments, and psychologists' associations did their best to conserve the core values of the discipline while simultaneously accommodating study programs to the Bologna framework—considering also the local conditions. The Board members agreed that these structures will need some time for consolidation and that it would be unproductive to reiterate the possible disadvantages and dangers for psychology that might result from this reorganization.

Instead the Board would like to highlight the positive potentials for psychology related to the Bologna reform. For this purpose we initiated a round table discussion at the ECP in Stockholm, 2013. We expect this discussion to produce new ideas of how psychology can benefit from the new opportunities provided by the Bologna system. The results of this discussion and our own evaluation will be integrated and communicated to the EC. This paper will also include criteria for evaluating where and to what extent psychology has benefited from these opportunities.

One of the criteria already discussed relates to the extent the bachelor and the master degree and the EuroPsy are “clearly described, delineated and publicly accepted” (minutes of the BEA meeting April 27, 2012). Based on selective evidence the BEA agrees that the qualifications of psychology bachelors are undervalued “when it is solely perceived as the foundation training for professional psychologists” (minutes of the BEA meeting April 27, 2012). A bachelor degree in psychology may also be seen as substantially fostering psychological literacy of those who are going to continue with other master studies (see path OP I) or work in other professional fields (see paths OP II and PL). Psychology bachelors not following the paths EP or R may nevertheless profoundly contribute to using and disseminating psychological knowledge and skills in diverse contexts. Based on these considerations the BEA decided to contribute to a more positive positioning of psychology bachelors by emphasizing their qualifications and their possible influence in not genuinely psychological contexts of work or private life.

2.2 Achievements

- Preparation of a round table discussion on the possible benefits of the Bologna reform for Psychology to be held at the ECP in Stockholm 2013. A report on the results will be available by the end of 2013.
- A description of the knowledge and skills of psychology bachelors relevant to various aspects of life to improve the positioning of psychology bachelors also with respect to their employability. Drafts will be available by the end of 2013, the final paper is planned to be presented at the ICAP in Paris, 2014.

3. Developing an inventory of issues related to the teaching of psychology to other professions

3.1 Activity

The Board's superordinate criterion for identifying topics to be discussed and elaborated is the efficiency with which psychological knowledge can be transferred to work and private life or societal processes. We are convinced that (a) increased visibility of psychology as science and scientifically based practice can lead to more realistic expectations toward psychology and psychological services and (b) increased usage and appreciation of psychological knowledge would be beneficial for several domains of human behavior. In this process non-psychologists' knowledge about psychology, its methods and potentials is pivotal. This knowledge is partially generated when psychology is taught in programs or selected courses for non-psychology students or non-psychologists. Thus, it is important to collect information about where, how, to which extent and with which concepts psychology is taught to students of other academic disciplines or to professionals in other domains than psychology. Unfortunately, this issue is usually not in the focus of the member associations' attention. Thus, at the European level no reliable information about teaching psychology to other professions is available. Therefore, the Board decided to conduct a Europe-wide online-questionnaire study concerning this issue.

3.2 Achievements

- Construction of an online questionnaire about teaching psychology to non-psychologist. The questionnaire has been online since the beginning of April 2013

(<http://tinyurl.com/cp26hho>).

- Questionnaire data from European universities are currently collected. First results are expected by July 2013. We expect this study to help us compile information about interesting and instructive examples of how psychology can be efficiently taught to non-psychologist and what curriculum content will best support them. This information can be considered for optimizing existing programs or setting up new programs. Drafts of the report will be available by the end of 2013, the final paper is planned to be presented at the ICAP in Paris 2014.

4. Presentation of the Board's work

4.1 Activity

Information about the work of the Board of Educational Affairs is represented in the Board's work plan 2012/13 and in this report. Thematic reports are in preparation. At the EFPA president's suggestion, the Board is preparing a symposium about teaching psychology in Europe to be submitted to the ICAP in Paris, 2014.

4.2 Achievements

- Work plan 2012/13
- Annual report 2013
- Symposium on teaching psychology in Europe to be submitted to the ICAP 2014.

Meetings

- 1) February 2, 2012, Brussels
- 2) April 27, 2012, Brussels
- 3) October 4, 2012, Brussels

Information & recommendations for GA & Member Associations

At the current state of the Board's work, we have no information for GA and MAs beyond the content of this report.

Proposals for decisions by GA

At the current state of the Board's work, it seems to be premature submitting any proposals for decisions by the GA.

Members of the group:

See Table 2.

Table 1: Important paths for transferring psychological knowledge to everyday live contexts and societal processes

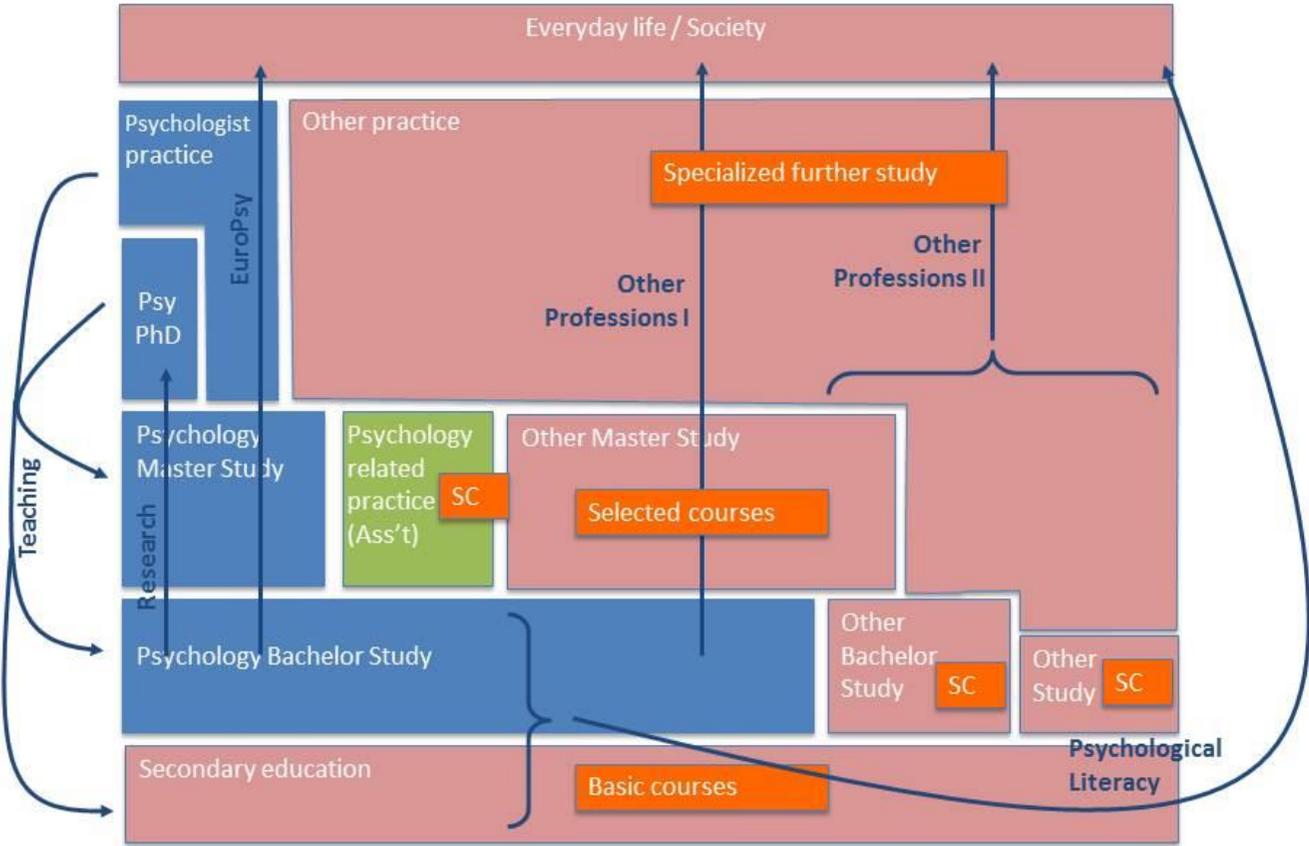
	Path	Psychology taught in...	Target group	Societal benefit
1	EuroPsy (EP)	Bachelor, master, post-graduate education	Psychology students, psychologists	Professional psychological services for individuals and organizations
2	Research (R)	Bachelor, master, PhD	Psychology students, psychologists	Research in psychology or psychology-related domains
3	Teaching I (T I)	EP path	Psychology students, psychologists	Competence of teaching psychology in HE institutions and other organizations
4	Teaching II (T II)	R path	Psychology students, psychologists	Research results contribute to the development of psychology curricula in schools, HE, and FE
5	Other professions I (OP I)	Bachelor	Psychology bachelor students who continue in non-psychology master studies	Substantial psychological background knowledge for different professional services
6	Other professions II (OP II)	Selected courses (bachelor and/or master)	Non-psychology students	Contextualized basic psychological knowledge for different professional services
7	Psychological literacy (PL)	Basic courses (bachelor and/or master), Secondary schools	Non-psychology students, secondary school students	Basic psychological knowledge influencing private and professional life

Note: HE: higher education; FE: further education

Table 2: Members of the Board of Educational Affairs

Name	First Name	Status	MA	Affiliates	from	to
Epler	Kadi	affiliate		EFPSA	Feb. 2012	
Schrempf	Renate	affiliate		EFPTA	Feb. 2012	
Trapp	Annie	affiliate		EUROPLAT	Feb. 2012	July 2012
Reddy	Peter	affiliate		EUROPLAT	Aug. 2012	
Bakker	Helen	active	Netherlands		Feb. 2012	
Dutke	Stephan	active	Germany		Feb. 2012	
Gullestad	Siri	active	Norway		Feb. 2012	June 2012
Morrison	Catriona	active	United Kingdom		Feb. 2012	
Penezic	Zvjesdan	active	Croatia		Feb. 2012	
Stuchlikova	Iva	active	Czech Republic		Feb. 2012	
Zani	Bruna	active	Italy		Feb. 2012	
Coombs	Dorothy	corresp.		EFPTA	Feb. 2012	
Danielsen	Eva	corresp.	Norway		Feb. 2012	
Mampaey	Els	corresp.	Belgium		Feb. 2012	
Ollikainen	Teemu	corresp.	Finland		Feb. 2012	
Roe,	Robert	EC Liaison				

Figure 1: Important paths for transferring psychological knowledge to everyday live contexts and societal processes



Based on the EFPA Reference Model