

EUROPEAN FEDERATION
OF PSYCHOLOGISTS'
ASSOCIATIONS
EFPA



ACTIVITY REPORT

2007 – 2009

of the Executive Council of EFPA

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Activity Report of the Executive Council of EFPA to the General Assembly, Oslo, 2009

I Introduction

The General Assembly (GA) follows the 11th European Congress of Psychology, which is organised in Oslo, Norway, under the auspices of EFPA by the Norwegian Psychological Association. This report summarises the work of the Executive Council (EC) covering the period 2007 - 2009, starting from the GA in Prague July 2007.

(i) EFPA and its Member Associations

EFPA, the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations, was founded 28 years ago, in 1981. Today it includes representatives from 34 European countries. The members of EFPA are national Psychological Associations or Federations, one from each country. There are 26 European Union members plus eight other European countries. Only one EU member state (Romania) is not represented in EFPA. It is the aim of EFPA to have Member Associations from all European countries. There is still potential for EFPA to expand in those ten European countries that have not yet been able to join the Federation. The Oslo General Assembly will decide on an application from the Russian Psychological Society.

At this moment, the EFPA Member Associations have a total of over 200,000 individual members. In addition, the student organisation EFPSA, the European Federation of Psychology Students' Associations, is an affiliate member of EFPA. The EFPSA Member Associations and the associations with an observer status in EFPSA have about 250,000 members in 25 countries.

(ii) The Executive Council

Since the last GA, the EC has met twelve times: Prague, July 2007 (following the GA); Brussels, October 2007 (related to the Presidents' Council Meeting); Brussels, December 2007; Oslo, February 2008 (related to the meeting with the Oslo ECP organisers); Brussels, April 2008; Brussels, June 2008; Berlin, July 2008 (related to the Presidents' Council Meeting); Brussels, October 2008; Brussels, December 2008; Brussels, January 2009 (related to the 1st EuroPsy workshop); Brussels, April 2009 (related to the Presidents' Council Meeting); Brussels, June 2009 (related to the 2nd EuroPsy workshop). The venues were chosen to consolidate the office in Brussels and to visit the association that would be hosting the European Congress of Psychology.

These meetings have been well attended, and the tasks and liaison duties have been shared between the EC. The workload has been growing, and at times the workload has exceeded the resources available in the EC and the Head Office. The working atmosphere has been open and democratic. As a rule, the final decisions taken by the EC have been unanimous. The members of the Executive Council are listed on the front page.

(iii) The Presidents' Council

The Presidents' Council was constituted formally by the GA in 1997 to meet at least once a year. It has met three times in the period (twice in Brussels and once in Berlin). The Presidents' Council is an important and valuable consultative and advisory body for EFPA and for the Executive Council. The Presidents' Council also plays an important role for EFPA by informing about matters in Member Countries and by sharing common interests and thus creating an understanding for the benefit of integration in EFPA.

In April 2009, the Presidents' Council discussed and contributed to the Activity Plan for the period 2009 – 2011. A revised draft Activity Plan will be presented to the General Assembly in Oslo.

II General Policy direction of the Executive Council

The EC has been working towards the following ten goals (according to the Activity Plan of 2007 - 2009, accepted by the General Assembly in Prague July 2007):

1) Preparing for the formal launch of the European Certification in Psychology (EuroPsy).

The European Certificate in Psychology (EuroPsy) has remained the most important goal for EFPA, since it will secure a high quality standard of education and training for European Psychologists. By focussing on quality, consumer protection and mobility, EuroPsy will serve as a means for mutual recognition of qualifications in all EFPA Member States. The EuroPsy standard has been agreed upon in 2005 at the General Assembly in Granada and it will be formally launched at the General Assembly in Oslo, 2009.

At the General Assembly in Granada 2005 the basic principles of the EuroPsy were decided. The next phase of the EuroPsy process was to experiment with the practical and organizational procedures in six countries: Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain and United Kingdom. The experiments have been steered by the EuroPsy working group and were presented first at the EuroPsy Workshops and second at the General Assembly in Oslo.

In order to guide Member Associations in the process of implementing the EuroPsy, the booklet: 'EuroPsy Manual: How to implement EuroPsy in your country' has been produced. In ten chapters it describes how Member Associations should conduct the process of evaluating applications for the EuroPsy and setting up National Awarding Committees, and how this should be linked up with the EFPA register. The first draft of the booklet was presented in Brussels, January 2009 at a workshop for Member Associations, and a revised version was presented at the second workshop in Brussels, June, 2009. At this workshop the final reports from the six experimental gardens were presented along with the final preparation of the EuroPsy procedures.

On approval by the General Assembly, EuroPsy formally comes into existence. At the same time the formal establishment of the European Awarding Committee (EAC) will be decided. The EAC will supervise the National Awarding Committees.

A European Implementation Group (EIG) was formed in order to facilitate the practical matters concerning the EuroPsy. This group has members from national secretariats, the head office, the EuroPsy WG and the Executive Council and has presented at the EuroPsy workshops.

After the General Assembly Member Associations will start setting up National Awarding Committees following the procedures set out in the 'EuroPsy Rules & Procedures' and the European Awarding Committee will start receiving proposals from the National Awarding Committees who have completed the procedures. The task of the European Awarding Committee is to ensure that the proposals for each country meet the EuroPsy standards.

Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications 2005/36/EC

EFPA has continued its close contact with the European Commission in order to receive acceptance of the EuroPsy standard from the European Commission, EU Member States and other European governments. The EuroPsy Certificate and a EuroPsy Professional Card would be a visible and useful product of value to the individual members of EFPA Member Associations. EFPA has decided to promote EuroPsy and has received acceptance from relevant offices in the Commission to participate in a meeting at the European Congress of Psychology. EFPA has also had closer contact with The European Committee for Standardization (CEN) in order to facilitate building a European Internal Market of professional qualifications/services by using the EuroPsy. EFPA has engaged in establishing contact with European Patient's Forum.

2) Recognition of specialist expertise in various fields.

The General assembly in Prague, 2007, reiterated that the procedures followed with regard to Psychotherapy should comply with the standards of the EuroPsy and it was also decided to accept national letters of recognition in psychotherapy. The Executive Council has noted from the report from the Standing Committee on Psychotherapy that a two step process has been used. First, it has been evaluated whether the applicant met the criteria of having completed a five year university training programme plus one year of supervised practice, i.e. the EuroPsy requirements. Second, it has been evaluated whether the applicant fulfils the demands for Specialist Expertise in Psychotherapy.

At the EuroPsy Workshops, the criteria for recognizing a EuroPsy Certificate with Specialist Expertise in Work and Organizations Psychology and for Psychotherapy have been presented. It has been noted by the presenters that these fully comply with the rules of the EuroPsy.

As concerns the identification of consumer needs to facilitate the development of the EuroPsy with Specialist Expertise in various fields of psychology, closer contacts with the European Commission, and in particular closer relations with the Director General for Health and Consumers has been formed. In general EFPA and the Executive Council have established a number of contacts to relevant officers in the Commission via new staff members.

3) Legal matters concerning psychology and psychologists

The Executive Council has received communications from Member Associations on national legal developments concerning practice of psychologists and the Executive council has provided support as requested. The protection of the title and the profession goes well in many countries, but it is also quite clear that in some countries there are threats in the future.

Regarding European regulations, the Executive Council has noted that the primary focus in the European Parliament has been on establishing regulations for patients moving across borders, whereas the recognition of professional qualifications will be addressed in the second half of 2009. It has also been noted that the existence of the EuroPsy Certificate already has had impact on curricula in some countries, and the expectation – and hope – is that the formal launching of the EuroPsy certificate at the GA in Oslo 2009 will lead to EuroPsy being considered as the quality mark for Psychology in Europe.

There have been a number of lobbying contacts and participation in events in Brussels by Pierangelo Sardi (EC member with responsibility for lobbying), Sabine Steyaert (EFPA Director) and Marianne Kant-Schaps (in her role as part-time EFPA employee).

4) Capacity Building

The Network of Secretary Generals has contributed to the formation of the European Implementation Group (EIG) by providing the convenor of that group. In addition, the Network will be meeting in Bulgaria in October 2009 where they will be providing a workshop to help MAs to develop their practice.

There has been one formal approach to join EFPA from the Russian Psychological Society and Finland is acting as the proposing country to act as their guide.

5) Linking academic and practical psychology

The SC Scientific Affairs did not have the necessary capacity among its members to identify suitable grant opportunities so the EFPA Head Office employed Marianne Kant-Schaps to carry out this task instead, leading to the submission of three grant proposals: €38,550 for the Europe for Citizens Programme in November 2008; €260,173 for the Transversal Programme of the Lifelong Learning Programme; €142,115 for the ESPIL Programme in February 2009. The first two submissions were not funded and a decision is awaited for the third. However, it is important to note that the overall success rate on the second programme was just 20%. In addition, EFPA was a partner in the “Psychological Aid for the Victims of Terrorism” project (€330,000).

The SC Scientific Affairs are unclear as to how major research findings in psychology can be best brought to the attention of the European community given the limited resources available within EFPA. Proposals are made in the Activity Plan 2009 – 2011.

6) Developing the European Psychologist

The European Psychologist continues as a high ranking peer-reviewed journal. Professor Rainer Silbereisen became Editor-in-Chief in 2004 and is in large part responsible for this success. Although academically successful, subscriptions to the European Psychologist from MAs are now substantially below 400 copies with the total number of subscriptions for next year just 320. In April 2009 at the Presidents’ Council Meeting, the Executive Council urged the Presidents to review their MA’s subscriptions. Further proposals will be made at the GA.

At the end of 2009, the Editor-in-Chief, Professor Rainer Silbereisen, will end his term. His position as Editor-in-Chief will be taken by Professor Alexander Grob of Basel University, Switzerland.

7) European and international contacts.

The general goal is to increase the influence of EFPA on the European Union (EU) and other European and international organisations. The following actions have been taken:

- meetings with representatives of official bodies
- publication of Standing Committee and Task Force reports on the EFPA website
- co-operation with other organisations

- work at the EU level directed towards the goal of ensuring that psychology as a discipline and a profession is sufficiently taken into consideration in various EU policies and activities.

The EFPA Executive Council has maintained close contacts with the European Union, having informal contacts with Pamela Brumter-Coret, Head of Unit for Regulated Professions and with Robert Madelin, Director General of the Health and Consumers Unit. As concerns the contact to the European Commission Internal Market's Unit of Regulated Professions, our concern has been the development of the European Certificate in Psychology and its relation to the Directive 2005/36/EC. EFPA now has been invited to further discussions about EuroPsy with Pamela Brumter-Coret. There are a number of interesting possibilities in the Directive, in particular the reference to Professional Cards.

EFPA organises the Forum of European Psychology Associations, which meets every two years at the European Congress of Psychology. The Forum brings together the European topical psychological associations (for example EAWOP, EHPS, EARLI, EAPA, and EAPP), and enables exchange of information, co-ordination of congress dates, and other communication activities. The European Forum meeting will be taking place during the Oslo ECP in July 2009.

There is an application for membership of EFPA from Russia that will be considered at the GA in Oslo.

8) Communication and public relations

The visibility of EFPA as the only organisation entitled to speak for European psychologists has been promoted via the following channels:

- Direct communication with the European Union authorities and European professional organisations
- The European Congress of Psychology
- The Head Office in Brussels
- The EFPA website: www.efpa.eu

Electronic communication

The general goal has been to increase and improve internal and external communication, by facilitating communication between the member associations of EFPA and with other national and international bodies (both psychological associations and other bodies). This has been carried out primarily through the use of electronic communication. Electronic communication has been very active in the last two years with the Member Associations receiving a total of 51 Electronic Member Circulars from July 2007 until June 2009. The Executive Council and the Standing Committees and Task Forces have worked via special electronic mailing lists created for them.

EFPA website

The EFPA Director took responsibility for the redevelopment of the EFPA website. The renewed website has raised the profile and visibility of EFPA and improved communication. It contains contact information (email addresses, websites) of all the Member Associations where this is available. All professional documents accepted by EFPA that have been edited into a publishable form have been put on the website. All basic documents, including EFPA Statutes, latest Activity Plan and Activity Reports and all EuroPsy material can be found on

EFPA website. The renewed website has been a great success providing a high-quality web experience and now receives 3,000 visitors per month.

9) European Congresses of Psychology (ECP)

After the 11th European Congress in Oslo in 2009, the next congress will take place in July 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey and the EFPA Executive Council has signed the relevant contract. The call for bids to arrange the ECP 2013 has been sent to the EFPA Member Associations, and the General Assembly in Oslo will decide on this matter. The Congress itself is now well established. It provides an opportunity for EFPA to gather together psychologists from all European countries and beyond to promote scientific and professional research, developments and perspectives. The Congress aims at high-quality scientific and professional presentations and provides an opportunity to debate and discuss research and professional matters. The 2009 Congress in Oslo has been prepared and marketed with a perspective to attract wide participation.

The European Congress of Psychology also permits collaboration with IAAP and IUPsyS - bodies that have collaborated with, and supported, the Congress since 1995. The support for each others' Congresses was formally agreed upon in the cooperation agreement signed by IAAP, IUPsyS and EFPA in Singapore, 2002.

Since 1995, the Aristotle Prize has become an integral part of the European Congress. In 2009 it will be awarded to Professor Claus Bundesen (Denmark). The Prize Committee consists of three EFPA Executive Council members and two other distinguished European psychologists.

The Wilhelm Wundt – William James Award for Exceptional Contributions to Transatlantic Psychology will be given for the fourth time in Oslo 2009; the recipient is Professor Norbert Schwarz (Germany). The Award Committee consists of three EFPA Executive Council members, two other distinguished European psychologists and two representatives of the American Psychological Foundation (APF).

The Comenius Early-Career Award will be awarded for the second time in Oslo 2009. The recipient is Dr. Katie Elizabeth Slocombe (UK). The Award Committee consists of the EFPA President, EFPA Secretary General, a member of the Union of Psychologists' Associations of the Czech Republic (UPA CR), a member of the European Federation of Psychology Students' Associations (EFPSA), a member of the Czech Association of Students of Psychology (CASP), a member of the EFPA EC, and one other person - preferably the last winner of The Comenius Early-Career Award.

10) Developing the Head Office and economy of EFPA

The efficient functioning of EFPA has tremendously improved both in its administration and in all other areas. The development of the Brussels Head Office has been of crucial importance in the process by which EFPA has become more politically active, present in Brussels and sharing information with other organisations in Europe. We also aim to provide more and better services, information and communication to the Member Associations and to other bodies. This has required more resources at the Head Office and they have been provided with the appointment of a part-time administrative officer and an hourly-paid worker who has identified grant opportunities and facilitated the appointment of an intern.

The Head Office was purchased together with the Belgian Federation of Psychologists in 2002 with EFPA reserves. The EFPA Head Office in Brussels is located right in the centre of the city. This has enabled the permanent presence of the Federation in the European Capital. Also, a long-term archive and resource collection has been built for the Federation. The Executive Council, Task Force and Working Group meetings have taken place at the Brussels office. The Office has improved efficiency and communication with Member Associations, and will be further used to develop links and lobbying with the European Union and its organs.

III Evaluation of the Work

EFPA has a wide range of goals and tasks. Much more time, personnel and resources would be needed to accomplish everything. In particular, the activities connected with the EuroPsy standard and Certification would require significantly more resources than are available at present.

The goals and tasks included in the Activity Plan require that the whole Executive Council participates in sharing the workload and its internal co-operation works well. The work of the EC takes much more time than the meetings and necessary preparation with most of the actual work done between meetings. The EC electronic mailing list has become a frequently used channel of communication. This has also contributed to the increasing workload of the EC. As all the members have many additional responsibilities in their own countries, international work requires extra motivation and energy.

The EC has worked hard and the working atmosphere has been good. Communication and administration have been greatly facilitated by the development of electronic communication. The functioning of EFPA is dependent on both the functioning of its many different sub-groups and the efforts of the Member Associations. Since the activities in many key areas have been delegated to the Standing Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups, the effectiveness of their work is of crucial importance. Without their active contribution the EFPA EC would not be capable of executing the tasks decided by the General Assembly or fulfilling the expectations of the Member Associations.

Most of the goals and tasks presented in the Activity Plan of 2007 - 09 are still being worked upon. The present EC completes its work and presents a proposal for an updated Activity Plan of 2009 - 11 to be discussed and accepted by the General Assembly.

Finally, we would like to offer our thanks for the opportunity to work for EFPA to wish the next EC the best of success.

EFPA Executive Council
June 2009