



**Report 2013**

**of the Standing Committee on**

**Disaster, Crisis and Trauma Psychology**

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**EFPA General Assembly in Stockholm on**

**July 13-14, 2013**

## **Report 2013**

### **Executive summary**

Since the General Assembly meeting in Dublin, July 1997, EFPA has had a Task Force or working group on Disaster and Crisis Psychology. After the General assembly in Granada, July 2005 a Standing Committee on Disaster, Crisis and Trauma Psychology was established. This report presents the work of the SC since the last GA (between July 2011 and July 2013).

In this working period the SC has concentrated its work on facilitating the formation of Disaster, Crisis and Trauma organizations in member associations, in developing guidelines for training and service provision in the area, in collaborating with European Council for dissemination of knowledge on disasters and training programmes.

The SC believes that it is crucial to have a special structure for disaster, crisis and trauma psychology in each member association. The necessity of psychosocial support to all victims of disasters and the necessary arrangements for this within national disaster management systems is an important area to focus upon. In order to compile the organization and structure of psychosocial support in member countries, a country psychosocial support document is being prepared by our committee. It is also vital to be prepared for cross borders disasters and to set a European based network of disaster and crisis psychologists. Ethical issues in disasters are also an area that has been focused in this working period.

## Introduction

During this period the SC had four meetings and continued to work on training guidelines for disaster, crises and trauma psychology, guidelines for psychosocial support methods and principles following disasters, recovery from various kinds of disasters, focused on the importance of cross-borders disasters, the formation of disaster, crises and trauma structures in member associations, victims and their relation with the media, collaborated with the Council of Europe and continued the training of psychologists from new EU member states, has worked on a document covering the structure of psychosocial support in member countries and updated the web site to include recent work in member associations. Focusing on ethical issues in disasters and developing examples of challenging situations has been another area. The SC has organized a half day workshop in Vilnius, Lithuania and Bratislava, Slovakia, before the SC meetings, to share disaster psychosocial support principles and applications with the local colleagues. The SC will continue to hold panels in European Congresses to facilitate the understanding of the field among psychologists.

## Activities

1. Guided Training of Psychologists in Disaster, Crisis and Trauma Psychology in Eastern European Countries (Project part 2012, Vienna, May 23-25, 2012 - September 12-14, 2012)

1.1. Activity: Providing guided training of psychologists in disaster, crisis and trauma psychology in Eastern European countries. The programme is funded by the Council of Europe, Euro-Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement.

Aims of the training were to support interested Eastern European countries with focused know how transfer in psycho-traumatology, disaster and crisis psychology and special interventions like CISM, to offer specialties later that are seen to be needed (children, acute trauma, psychosocial support), to offer experience in building up useful and practical structures based on the national

needs and backgrounds, and to enable and encourage these experts to form networks with new colleagues within their respective countries.

Achievements:

In 2012 the last two parts of the “Guided Training of Psychologists in Disaster, Crisis and Trauma Psychology in Eastern European Countries” took place in Vienna, in the rooms of the Austrian Psychological Association (BÖP) following the project that started in September 2010.

Finally there were 10 attendants from 7 countries, namely *Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Ukraine*. In 2012 we could again take into consideration (in our budget by saving money in other areas of the budget (meals, room, technics, copies)) to support the participants with 200 Euro each for accommodation and travel expenses. There was a high continuity in participation and that facilitated the concrete outcomes at the end. Another important factor was that in 4 from 7 countries there were 2 participants (a plan we had from the beginning to make transfers easier than when fighting alone).

The trainer/instructor team was again composed of a team of psychologists from the EFPA Standing Committee on Disaster and Crisis Psychology with broad experience either in similar trainings in other countries, in building up structures but there were not taken new presenters in, because in this part of the project the goal was to go into depth based on the broad previous information the participants had multiple examples from all over Europe. Their task was to define their individual possibilities and consolidate their action plans per country following their realistic possibilities.

So the team of trainers Eva Münker-Kramer, Jana Malikova and Ingeborg Porcar Becker stayed and the goal was to do concrete case work and structural work in order finalize the action plans with them to be able to manage the transfer without the further support by the workshops and thus to facilitate the developmental process and to help in the group in networking together and organizational development in their countries. An important reflection of this networking took place before our last SC meeting in Bratislava (5-6 April, 2013), an international conference was organised jointly by our SC and the Slovak

Chamber of Psychologists, on psychological interventions in crises and traumas. There was remarkable participation and interest from the Slovak psychologists. Our SC members delivered presentations on school shootings in Finland, terrorist attacks in Norway and relations with the media (Salli Saari, Marianna Strauma and Eva Munker Kramer) and the trainers from our SC programme (Mirka Zimanyova & Petra Zemanova) also delivered presentations. We thank Hanna Scibranyova, a member of our SC for organizing this conference.

- 1.2. Deliverable: Final report submitted November 2012 ; Conference in Bratislava
- 1.3. Responsible persons: Project coordinator: Mag. Eva Munker-Kramer, Jana Malikova
  
2. Development of minimum standards for european psychologists working in different tasks after disasters
  - 2.1. Activity: The SC has worked on reviewing existing guidelines and standards and developing criteria for minimum standards and competencies for psychologists working in disasters, trauma and emergencies.
  - 2.2. Deliverable: The work is still in progress, a final report will be produced.
  - 2.3. Responsible persons: Salli Saari, Nuray Karanci, Ingeborg Porcar Becker, and Anders Korsgaard.
  - 2.4. Deadline: 2014
  
3. Collection of data on national crisis and disaster structure profiles of European Countries and publishing a book
  - 3.1. Activity: The SC believes that it is important to have collated knowledge on the national crisis and disaster organizations, processes and structures in different European countries in order to gain an understanding of various different structures and to provide a ground for fruitful collaboration. Thus, each member of our SC is in the process of preparing a document containing information on the structure and process of psychosocial support in their own countries. The contributions will be compiled in a book and support for the printing of this book will be requested from Council of Europe, Euro-Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement.

- 3.2. Deliverable: The book “National Profiles Crisis and Disaster Structure European Countries”
  - 3.3. Responsible persons: Magda Rooze, A. Nuray Karanci and Marc Stein /Eds) and all members of the SC.
  - 3.4. Deadline: December 2013
  - 3.5. Priority: High
4. Preparation of short summary and conclusions of research on recovery from different kinds of major disasters
    - 4.1. Activity: The members of our SC have extensive experience on recovery from different kinds of major disasters and psychosocial support processes. These experiences have been shared in our SC meetings and will be presented in the 13th ECP congress in July, 2013. The preparation of a short summary and conclusions of research on recovery from different kinds of major disasters is in progress. Impact of mass emergencies and psychosocial support: on the incident at Utoya, Norway (by Marianne Straume); Support for Spanish passengers of Costa Concordia , Spain (by Ingeborg Porcar Becker); Addressing major emergencies in Germany (Georg Pieper); South-East Asia Tsunami survivors, Finland and Sweden (by Salli Saari and Eva Hakanson) and experiences of support after earthquakes, Turkey (A. Nuray Karanci) and possibly from Greece (Vassiliki Boukouvala) and Italy (Isabel Fernandez) are among the events covered.
    - 4.2. Deliverable: A document summarising the impact of different kinds of disasters, which will be available from our web site.
    - 4.3. Responsible persons: Marianne Straume, Ingeborg Porcar Becker, Georg Pieper, Salli Saari and Eva Hakanson, A. Nuray Karanci, and possibly Vassiliki Boukouvala and Isabel Fernandez.
5. Victims and Media: Preparation of a short document for survivors in the shock stage and longer term phase for their handling and relations with the media.
    - 5.1. Activity: The SC is working on a document to support survivors of disasters and their families in their relations with the media in the short and long

term process. It will provide key points to consider in these interactions, their rights and coping.

5.2. Deliverable: A document offering guidelines to survivors and their families in dealing with the media

5.3. Responsible persons: Marianne Straume, Salli Saari, Eva Hakanson, and Mark Stein.

5.4. Priority: Medium

6. Preparation of the 2nd edition of a “Lessons learned from the European Countries” document and formulation of recommendations on the basis of this overview for the field and for the European Council

6.1. Activity: The SC has prepared a first book on lessons learned from disasters by the member European countries, which has been printed both in English and also translated and published in French. We believe that it is important to share our experiences by preparing a second volume.

6.2. Deliverable: “Lessons learned from the European Countries” Second edition

6.3. Responsible persons: Magda Rooze and all SC members will contribute.

6.4. Deadline: 2014

6.5. Priority: Medium

7. Preparation of simple informative leaflets on various disaster and trauma related subjects

7.1. Activity: The SC is reviewing available leaflets on various disasters and traumatic events with the view of placing those that are approved in our web site, evaluate gaps and develop leaflets for areas that have been neglected. Leaflets on coping with aftermaths of various disasters and traumas, alongside with leaflets on preparedness will also be focused on.

7.2. Deliverable: Various short leaflets on coping with and preparing for disasters, trauma and crisis.

7.3. Responsible persons: All SC members.

7.4. Priority: Medium

8. Update on the website
  - 8.1. Activity: The website of our SC is being continuously updated, with new links, documents, etc.
  - 8.2. Deliverable: An updated web-site
  - 8.3. Responsible person: Marc Stein.
  
9. Graduate programs in crisis, trauma and disaster psychology
  - 9.1. Activity: Our SC is evaluating the existing graduate programs in crisis, trauma and disaster psychology and developing standards and requirements for such programs. A questionnaire on the possible content of master programs has been prepared by Ingeborg Porcar Becker, and our SC members provided feedback. The responses will be evaluated to produce information on standards and content.
  - 9.2. Deliverable: A report on existing graduate programs and potential new programs in crisis, trauma and disaster psychology.
  - 9.3. Responsible persons : Ingeborg Porcar Becker and SC members
  
10. Work on ethical issues in trauma, disaster and crisis
  - 10.1. Activity: The Standing Committee will work on a list of issues peculiar to working with trauma, concerning ethics which are not easily recognizable in the EFPA meta ethics code. The areas can be listed as:
    - Confidentiality: how to deal with confidentiality between intervention groups
    - How to refer to other and complementary services: after an emergency a referral can only be made with the written consent of the affected person; and
    - Contact with media: recommendation to develop good practices.
  - 10.2. Deliverables: A report on situations that are posing challenges in ethics in the field of disaster, crisis and trauma work
  - 10.3. Responsible persons: Ingeborg Porcar Becker, Anders Korsgaard Christensen, and Dominique Szepielak.

11. Future work of the SC

11.1. Activity: Every member of the SC was asked to formulate 3 points for the future work plan. Based on the suggestions by the members future plans were listed.

11.2. Deliverables: List of future activities and tasks for the SC.

11.3. Responsible persons: Nuray Karanci and all SC members.

11.4. Priority: High

12. Contributions to the 13<sup>th</sup> ECP

12.1. Activity: Our SC has proposed one symposia (Crisis and Disasters : Impacts, recovery and psychosocial support) for the 13<sup>th</sup> ECP. Members of our SC will also deliver a pre-congress workshop, “The Nature of the Disaster: The Nature of the Psychological Trauma”.

12.2. Deliverables: One symposia and a pre-congress workshop will be delivered

12.3. Responsible Persons: Nuray Karanci, Salli Saari, Eva Hakanson, Anders Korsgaard Christensen, Georg Pieper, Marianne Vatne-Straume.

## Meetings

1. April 5-6, 2013, Bratislava, Slovakia
2. October 26-27, 2012, Brussels, Belgium
3. March 23-24, 2012, Vilnius, Lithuania
4. October 21-22, 2011, Berlin, Germany

**The General Assembly is asked to take notice of the following:**

1. It is once more concluded by the SC that resources for psychosocial support differ substantially between the different European countries. It is then very important to continue supporting programs for the lower resource countries like for example the “Train the Trainer” program, and having SC meetings in the different countries combined with pre-meeting presentations/conferences by the SC members on behalf of the colleagues in the lower resource countries.
2. The need for psychosocial support in the aftermath of disaster and crises requires that psychologists have a basic knowledge on the aftermaths of disasters and on suitable psychosocial interventions. Thus, our SC believes that it will be very valuable if the EuroPsy includes a course in disaster, trauma and crises psychology into the curriculum content.
3. Children and young people are often caught up in disasters but their psychological needs are not always recognized. Now that there are good evidence-based interventions for individuals and groups to help mitigate the emotional reactions to traumatic events, it is important that countries train personnel to meet these needs. The SC is well placed to facilitate such training across member countries.
4. Changes in climate have resulted in an increase in floods across Europe. There has been little discussion of the emotional impact of these despite there being evidence for an increase in stress reactions as well as mortality in the year following the incident. Again, member countries should be encouraged to develop effective ways of helping citizens caught up in natural disasters as well as terrorism.
5. Psychosocial support after disasters, crisis and trauma is under pressure in the different countries because of the financial crisis and policies of governments. The SC is worried about these developments. The SC asks the GA to bring these worries under the attention of the European Council and Council of Europe to promote the recognition of this need and the allocation of resources.

## Proposals for decisions by GA

### The General Assembly is advised to accept the following proposals:

1. The SC believes that it is important to arrange SC meetings in different countries in order to have the opportunity to meet psychologists working in the area of disasters and traumas especially from less resource rich countries. These meetings also give the opportunity to deliver workshops by our SC to empower psychologists from other countries. Furthermore, support by EFPA to members from some countries with fewer resources to attend the SC meetings will greatly facilitate the involvement of all member countries in our work.
2. Each year different European countries experience minor or major natural or technical disasters, including terrorism and mass violence. It is difficult, if not to say impossible, for each nation to develop extensive expertise for handling psychosocial aspects of disasters. Therefore, The EFPA standing committee proposes to form a psychosocial assistance team that can be called on or sent to the country in question to assist.
3. The SC asks the GA to recommend the integration of a course on basic training in disaster, trauma and crises psychology into the EuroPsy curriculum content.
4. The SC asks the GA to bring the worrisome position of the psychosocial support after disasters, crisis and trauma under the attention of the European Council and Council of Europe. This is especially important in these times of crisis.

## Members of the group

Member	Country
1. Eva Münker-Kramer	Austria
2. Zoran Simic	Croatia
3. Ernie Sismani Papacosta	Cyprus
4. Jana Malikova	Czech Republic
5. Anders Korsgaard Christensen	Denmark
6. Salli Saari	Finland
7. Dominique Szepielak	France
8. Georg Pieper	Germany
9. Vassiliki Boukouvala	Greece
10. Isabel Fernandez	Italy
11. Nida Zemaitienė	Lithuania
12. Marc Stein	Luxembourg
13. Magda Rooze ( <i>Vice-convenor</i> )	The Netherlands
14. Marianne Straume	Norway
15. Hana Scibranyova	Slovakia
16. Robert Masten	Slovenia
17. Ingeborg Porcar Becker	Spain
18. Eva Hakanson	Sweden
19. Katharina Lyner	Switzerland
20. A. Nuray Karanci ( <i>Convenor</i> )	Turkey
21. William Yule	United Kingdom
22. Nefeli Papageorgioy	EFPSA (Greece)