



**EFPA**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS**

**Convenor : RAINER SILBEREISEN**

**REPORT to the  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2003 in VIENNA**

**Report of the Standing Committee on Scientific Affairs, EFPA  
to the 13<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, Vienna**

**12-13 July, 2003**

**Title of the Task Force**

Standing Committee on Scientific Affairs

Convenor, Rainer K. Silbereisen

**1. Executive summary**

The Standing Committee on Scientific Affairs has met on several occasions following the 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly on London, 2001. Primarily it has been involved with work concerning the upcoming congress in Vienna, 2003, and with developments concerning the re-launch of the European Psychologist. With regard to the latter, a new agreement was signed on behalf of EFPA and the publishers, whereby the journal would become the 'Official Organ of the EFPA'. Currently efforts are under way to identify a new editorial team for the Journal and to this end a Call for Nominations has been placed on the EFPA web page, and in the Journal itself. In effect, EFPA's role in European Science of Psychology is being strengthened.

**2. Introduction**

Following the inception of the Committee on Scientific Affairs (CSA) in January 2001, the committee presented a report to the General Assembly of EFPA at its meeting in London, July 2001, which gave an overview of the Committee's mission and its intended means to accomplish its aims. Part of the report detailed a six step plan of action with the aim of strengthening science in EFPA. The first step was realised through the change of the Federation's name from the European Federation of Professional Psychologists' Associations (EFPPA) to the European Federation of

Psychologists' Associations (EFPA). Since the meeting in London, the Committee on Scientific Affairs has met on several occasions, as well as interacting via email and other means of communication. This report is intended to give a brief summary of the work undertaken by the committee during this time.

### **3. Meeting of the CSA, EFPA, Brussels, 17 November 2001**

Following the meeting in London, the following decisions relating to the 6 step plan of action were taken.

- statutes and related documents to be updated to convey EFPA's dual mission for psychology as a profession and as a science.
- the CSA to be included in EFPA's home page on the internet and classified as a Standing Committee
- discussions to be held with the publisher (Hogrefe and Huber) and Editor-in-Chief (Kurt Pawlik) of the European Psychologist concerning possible strategies and means to transform the journal into the official outlet of EFPA. In particular, the Convenor, CSA, to meet Prof. Pawlik and plan the way forward.
- links between the CSA and committees related to the European Congresses of Psychology to be held in Vienna in 2003 to be established. The CSA should also convene and organise activities at the upcoming congress in Vienna, as well as the 2005 congress in Granada and those planned for the near future by other learned societies.
- The Convenor, CSA, to maintain regular meetings with the organisers of the 8<sup>th</sup> ECP on behalf of the CSA, in order to help strengthen the quality and horizon of the scientific program.

#### **4. Meeting of the Scientific Committee, ECP, Vienna, 24 November 2001**

As it is part of the CSA's brief to act in an advisory capacity concerning European Congresses of Psychology (ECP) the purpose of this meeting was to discuss and do initial preparation for the EFPA Congress of 2003. Discussions covered keynote speakers, invited symposia, workshops, paper and poster presentations. The meeting was not, however, felt to be as successful as it might have been owing to the absence of a large number of committee members. The Convenor, CSA, proposed a new round of discussion that lead to a list of potential keynote speakers. He also suggested possible symposia and the idea of offering certificates to successful workshop participants were introduced. Due to the large number of missing members it was decided that further suggestions and the relaying of information would have to be done via email.

Both prior to and following the meeting, there was a high volume of email interchange among the committee members. In addition, the Convenor found himself in the situation of having to act as reviewer for an enormous number of abstracts for the Vienna congress.

#### **5. Meeting of the CSA, EFPA, Madrid, March 16, 2002**

During this meeting the Committee had more discussions concerning the 2003 EFPA Congress in Vienna as well as dealing with other more general business. In particular, however, there was further discussion concerning a potential scientific outlet for EFPA and the advantages of revising the European Psychologist. In particular, the Convenor, reported on progress to date following his meetings with the Editor, Professor Pawlik, and the publishers, Hogrefe and Huber, and on a subsequent letter of intent received from the publishers. With reference to the latter, the Convenor was asked to go back to the publishers and ask for clarification and further information on issues related to transforming the Journal into an official outlet of EFPA. Such issues included the need to have scientific papers amended by a new section on topics related to EFPA's mission, to change

procedures related to the election of editorial offices, to maintain a peer-review system, and also to secure the financial situation of the Journal. This latter point importantly included questions related to EFPA's undertaking to solicit a fixed number of subscriptions.

Again, both prior to and following the meeting, there was a high volume of email interchange among the committee members and with the President.

#### **6. IAAP Meeting Singapore, July 12, 2002**

On the occasion of this congress, the Convenor met with President Tikkanen. Based on the fact that he was obviously pleased by the result of the ongoing discussions with the publishers of the European Psychologist concerning most of the topics covered, it seemed that the final task, and of utmost importance, was to find a way of minimising the risk for EFPA concerning the guarantee of subscriptions asked for by the publisher. Following the suggestion by the Convenor, he approached the publishers again and ultimately was able to receive an offer that would ask for no more than 400 copies and, furthermore, this was not meant to be a guarantee given the structure of EFPA as an umbrella organisation for institutional members.

#### **7. Presidents' Council Meeting (PCM) Brussels, October 25-26, 2002**

At this meeting the possibility of a co-operation between EFPA and the European Psychologist was intensively discussed. To aid discussion the Convenor, CSA, was invited to attend. Prior to the meeting, therefore, he had circulated copies of the proposed new contract and a covering letter from the publishers, Hogrefe and Huber. Following discussion, the meeting endorsed the development of an EFPA journal, and recommended that the EFPA EC should be given authority to sign the revised contract with the publishers. Most importantly subsequent exchanges with the publisher again underscored that the number of subscriptions mentioned in the contract is not guaranteed by EFPA

but simply reflects a serious endeavour by the President to achieve that goal. Incidentally, this goal was already quite easily attained.

### **8. Ongoing activities concerning the launch of the new European Psychologist**

The agreement between EFPA and the publishers came into force as of January 1, 2003 and is valid for 8 years with automatic renewal for subsequent 4 yearly terms unless cancelled in writing with 12 months notice. As part of the negotiations and the resultant new status of the European Psychologist as an 'official organ' of EFPA, it was decided that the Editorial Board would be reconstituted, including the appointment of new Associate Editors. As the current (and founding) Editor-in-Chief, Professor Kurt Pawlik, had declared his intention to step down at the end of 2003, following the completion of Volume 8, and therefore, 8 years service in post, a new Editor-in-Chief is also to be sought. To this end a Call for Nominations was drafted and has already been published on the EFPA web page (<http://www.efpa.be/Home/newpagina.htm>) This means that as of January 1, 2004, the European Psychologist will have a new mandate to be implemented under a wholly new editorial management team.

Following receipt of a number of nominations and self-nominations, the CSA discussed via email possible ways of moving forward. It was recommended that the Convenor would follow a nomination put forward and serves as Editor-in-Chief. Further, it was strongly recommended that he would have the responsibility to search for especially qualified Associate Editors and members of the Advisory Board.

Although no firm commitment to stand as Editor-in-Chief has yet been made by the Convenor, he has begun the process of identifying possible candidates for the various position openings related to the running of European Psychologist. This process is likely to result in a list of suggestions being

sent to EFPA and the publishers very soon. It has also become very clear that the change in the Editorial team has to be compounded by a fresh and competitive outlook concerning format and topics covered. Gaining reputation as the journal on European perspectives in the field will be the challenge for the years to come.

## **9. Conclusion**

Overall, in my view the Committee worked successfully on several of the issues of the six-step plan. To do more at this time was neither possible nor would it have been pragmatic because launching a scientific outlet of EFPA seems to be a major step in the transformation process of the Federation. I should hasten to add that although we have accomplished much, the Committee still has a lot of issues to address, particularly concerning grant proposals EFPA should launch at various institutions, especially those in Europe. Towards this end, it would be helpful also to look for additional blood concerning new membership within the Committee. That is not to say that the Committee is manifesting 'burn-out' but the new tasks require the same level of enthusiasm as those exerted when, for example, the issue of the European Psychologist was tackled.

I should like to thank the President, Tuomo Tikkanen, and all the members of the CSA for their help and co-operation during this time. Finally, I can say that it has been my pleasure to serve both EFPA and the CSA.

Rainer K. Silbereisen