



## **Report 2013-2015**

**of the**

### **Board of Educational Affairs**

**To the EFPA General Assembly in Milano on  
July 11-12, 2015**

Point to note:

1. This report covers a period of 2 years, from the General Assembly 2013 till the General Assembly 2015.
2. Reports will be included in the material to be received and read by the Delegates to the General Assembly.
3. Apart from exceptional cases, to be decided upon by the Executive Council, there will be no oral presentations of committee reports to the General Assembly. Instead, Committees are invited to prepare a 2-minute video file that will be made available to delegates.
4. All reports will be accompanied by written recommendations of the Executive Council.
5. Proposals for decisions to be taken by the General Assembly need endorsements of the Executive Council.
6. Committees will be informed about decisions of the General Assembly affecting their remit or activities.

**Please send the Report by April 30 to EFPA Head Office at [headoffice@efpa.eu](mailto:headoffice@efpa.eu)**

# Report 2013-2015

## Executive summary

In this report five topics are highlighted: (a) impact of the Bologna process on education in psychology, (b) education and qualification of psychology bachelors, (c) teaching of psychology to other professions, (d) teaching of psychology in secondary schools, (e) joint activities with EUROPLAT and EFPTA, and (f) activities to improve the visibility of the Board's work. The General Assembly is asked to take notice of (a) the Board's suggestions concerning the potentials of the Bologna process for psychology, (b) the MAs' responsibility for the pervasiveness and quality of teaching psychology in secondary schools, and (c) the Board's recommendation to explore the needs of non-psychology students when developing psychology curricula for these target groups.

## Introduction

This report covers the activities of the EFPA Board of Educational Affairs (BEA), performed during the period July 2013 – April 2015. In 2011, the General Assembly described the Board's assignment 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.*

Our report is based on the Board's work plan for 2014/15 and our report on the Board's activities in May 2013, which has been approved by the General Assembly in July 2013. The EC did not ask for specific activities to be performed.

## Activities

### 1. Activity as planned:

#### **Reviewing the impact of the Bologna process on education in psychology**

In most European countries, the Bologna process caused fundamental changes in the education in psychology. To what extent these changes were beneficial or detrimental is still being debated. BEA organized a roundtable discussion on these issues at the European Congress of Psychology in July 2013. The discussion generated ideas of how psychology benefitted or can benefit from the new

opportunities provided in the Bologna process. The results of this discussion and our own evaluation were planned to be integrated in a text.

### 1.1. Activity as performed

The text (EFPA Board of Educational Affairs, 2014) was completed in spring 2014 and published on the Board's website (see section 6 of this report). BEA's convenor and members pointed to this publication at several public events and invited psychologists to discuss and consider the Board's evaluations.

### 1.2. Achievements:

The text describes important consequences and potentials of the Bologna process for education in psychology and includes suggestions about how psychology might benefit from this process. The suggestions refer to (a) length and scope of psychology study programmes, (b) the European Certificate in Psychology (EuroPsy), (c) student mobility, (d) Bachelor-master combinations of psychology and other academic disciplines, (e) transparency of psychology bachelor qualifications, and (f) administrative requirements related to the Bologna process.

## 2. Activity as planned:

### **Evaluating education and qualification of psychology bachelors**

Based on selective evidence BEA agreed that the qualifications of psychology bachelors are often undervalued "when it is solely perceived as the foundation training for professional psychologists" (minutes of the BEA meeting in 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 or work in other professional fields. We began compiling competencies of psychology bachelors, which were planned to be integrated in a text about psychology bachelors' qualifications and their role in professional life. It should make clear that education in psychology not only generates psychological professionals according to the EuroPsy framework but also psychologically educated academics with competencies that are useful in diverse professional contexts beyond psychological core fields.

### 2.1. Activity as performed:

During working on this task, the aim was slightly modified. In cooperation with EUROPLAT, we collected information about the following aspects of psychology study programs in 16 European countries: (a) popularity of studying psychology, (b) admission to psychology studies, (c) level of graduation in psychology, (d) professional destinations of psychology graduates. This information was condensed and discussed in the context of

liberal education and psychological literacy. The results were published (Reddy, Dutke, Papageorgi, & Bakker, 2014), in the BPS magazine *The Psychologist* in December 2014. This papers deviates from the earlier intended paper in that we discussed the “bachelor problem” in a broader context. Qualifications of psychology bachelors have been covered in a more abstract way. Thus, the compilation of concrete psychology bachelor’s qualifications remains on the agenda and will be included in the Board’s work plan for 2016.

## 2.2. Achievements:

The article covers important differences in the education of psychologists among European countries and discusses three major challenges for the future development of education in psychology:

- “Self-reflection: Where and how is the growth of education in psychology desirable for psychology?” (p. 931)
- “Self-presentation: Where and why do we give rise to false expectations in young people [...] interested in psychology?” (p. 931)
- Self-balance between “studying psychology (a) as preparation for a profession, (b) as individual development (liberal education) and (c) as ‘psychologising’ society (psychological literacy) (p. 931)

BEA and EUROPLAT members are invited to publish translations of this article in their own countries – permitted by the editor of *The Psychologist*, given that the original source is mentioned.

## 3. Activity as planned:

### **Assessing teaching of psychology to other professions**

To a substantial extent, psychology’s image in the public is influenced by how psychology is taught to students of other academic disciplines and to professionals in other fields. In summer 2013, BEA conducted an online survey among psychology departments in Europe on their study programs for non-psychologists. We planned to compile the results to provide a picture of the role teaching of psychology to non-psychologist plays for psychology departments.

#### 3.1. Activity as performed:

We analysed the data and presented the results at a national conference (Fachtagung Psychologiedidaktik und Evaluation, May 2014 in Witten, Germany and at the International Congress of Applied Psychology, July 2014 in Paris). A Paper on this topic (Dutke & Epler, 2014) was published and is available on the BEA website.

### 3.2. Achievements:

The publications demonstrate that psychology departments spend a substantial amount of their resources on teaching other target groups than psychologists. BEA appreciates these efforts. For psychology's public image it is important that non-psychologists learn about psychology under the guidance of psychologists active in research and teaching. On the other hand deficits were identified. Most importantly, psychology curricula for non-psychologist seem to have no reliable conceptual framework, are often characterized by a local demand-supply rationale, and are often composed ad hoc without international or interdisciplinary collaboration. BEA sees great challenges for developing this domain of teaching psychology in the future. Therefore, this issue will be included in the work plan for 2016.

## 4. Activity as planned:

### **Promoting teaching of psychology in secondary schools**

We appreciate that EFPA feels "responsible for stimulating the teaching of psychology at secondary schools throughout Europe as to educate the general population" (EFPA, 2013, p. 11). We share this aim with the European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations (EFPTA). Together with EFPTA, we planned to engage in disseminating this aim and supporting local initiatives directed at this aim.

#### 4.1. Activity as performed:

We have established regular contact between BEA and EFPTA, and two EFPTA representatives are members of BEA. EFPTA compiled data about where, how, to which extent, and by whom psychology is taught at the pre-tertiary level (Williamson, Coombs, Schrempf, & Sokolová, 2011). This information was presented in the BEA symposium on *Teaching Psychology in Europe* at the International Congress of Applied Psychology 2014 in Paris and a research poster on the pre-tertiary curriculum in Europe was presented in the pre-conference program *Teaching Integrative Psychological Science* at the International Convention of Psychological Science 2015 in Amsterdam (Williamson, Coombs, Schrempf, & Sokolová, 2015). At BEA's request, EFPTA provided a 'fact sheet' giving an overview of all their activities relating to pre-tertiary psychology in Europe (EFPTA, 2014). Moreover, BEA helps to establish relations between psychology teachers and EFPTA in countries in which no psychology teacher association exists. For example, the next BEA meeting will take place in Zagreb in connection with a meeting between Croatian psychology teachers and EFPTA representatives.

#### 4.2. Achievements:

First, we appreciate EFPTA's efforts to present a comprehensive picture of psychology as a school subject. One problem seems to be that in many countries psychology teachers at schools and academic psychology are insufficiently networked. Therefore, BEA and EFPTA are jointly taking action to illustrate the situation of psychology teachers at schools. Furthermore, BEA has been trying to establish links between national psychology teachers' associations and psychologists' associations. Other questions identified by EFPTA research, for example, related to psychology teacher education and psychology curricula at schools have not yet been tackled and will appear in BEA's work plan for 2016.

#### 5. Activity as planned:

##### **Supporting EUROPLAT activities**

EUROPLAT has substantially contributed to networking among psychologists in Europe who are engaged in improving the quality of teaching psychology. BEA evaluates the cooperation with EUROPLAT as an important option of disseminating the idea that improving teaching of psychology is a core task of psychology as a science.

##### 5.1. Activity as performed:

We have established regular contact between BEA and EUROPLAT, and a EUROPLAT representative is member of BEA. We discussed EUROPLAT's efforts for further funding and organizing another EUROPLAT conference. BEA offered support in terms of consultation, networking, and collaboration in the organisation of a new conference on teaching psychology. Moreover, EUROPLAT will contribute a symposium to the EFPTA Conference being held in Prague April 2016. This is likely to be a half day event, but if a funding bid is successful (confirmed in November) this will be extended to one day.

##### 5.2. Achievements:

EUROPLAT's EU funding application is going to be completed and contacts to potential conference organizers are established. Currently, it is very likely that another European conference on teaching psychology will take place in 2017 – with EUROPLAT, BEA, and EFPTA as cooperation partners.

#### 6. Activity as planned:

##### **Improving the visibility of the Board's work**

The Board members wished to improve the presentation of their work's results to EFPA, MA's, and colleagues. A number of activities announced in the work plan for 2014/15 were dedicated to this issue.

### 6.1. Activity as performed:

In May 2013 we submitted the proposal for a symposium on *Teaching psychology in Europe – Perspectives of the EFPA Board of Educational Affairs* to the International Congress of Applied Psychology 2014 in Paris. Our proposal was accepted and we informed in this symposium about the Board's work in four contributions:

- Coombs, Mampaey, Schrempf, & Stuchlikova: Psychological literacy: Teaching psychology at the secondary school (pre-tertiary) level.
- Bakker, Morrison, & Stuchlikova: Psychology Bachelor's Qualification in Europe.
- Reddy: Employability - BSc psychology in the UK. Preparing for and entering the graduate world.
- Dutke, Epler, & Zani: Psychology in the academic education of non-psychologists.

Furthermore, members of the Board contributed to national conferences (Psychologiedidaktik und Evaluation 2014 in Witten, Germany and Congress of the Croatian Psychological Society 2014 in Rovinj, Croatia) and published two papers on the Board's work (Dutke & Epler, 2014; Reddy et al. 2014).

To increase the accessibility of our work, we set up a BEA website under the roof of the EFPA website which informs about mission and members of BEA. We uploaded all completed papers including our report 2013, abstracts of the contributions to congresses, and publications. We thank the EFPA Head Office and Paul Hinnermann (University of Münster, Germany) for helping us to administrate this website.

### 6.2. Achievements:

The visibility of the Board's work has been increased and a complete compilation of our papers can be freely accessed. We appreciate the EC's initiative to make the EFPA groups' reports available in a new magazine.

## Meetings

- 1) February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Brussels
- 2) June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Brussels, Convenors' Meeting
- 3) July, 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Paris (International Congress of Applied Psychology)
- 4) March, 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Brussels

## Information & recommendations for GA & Member Associations

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

- a. The Board would appreciate consideration and discussion of its suggestions concerning the chances and challenges of the Bologna process for education in psychology as summarised in EFPA Board of Educational Affairs (2014).
- b. The Board asks the MAs to increase their responsibility for the pervasiveness and quality of teaching psychology at secondary schools. This includes, for example, counselling in the development of curricula and engagement in the education and continued professional development of psychology teachers in pre-tertiary schools. The Board of Educational Affairs will contact the MAs for further information about the relationship between academic psychology and psychology in schools in their respective countries.
- c. The Board appreciates that psychology departments invest their teaching resources not only in educating prospective psychologists but, to a substantial amount, also in educating non-psychology students. However, we suggest increasing efforts to explore the needs of different target groups (e.g., teacher candidates, medical students, or prospective engineers) and systematically adapt curricula for non-psychology students to their specific needs.

## Proposals for decisions by GA

The General Assembly is advised to accept the following proposals: No proposals submitted

## Members of the group:

Name	First Name	Status	MA / Affiliates
Bakker	Helen	active	Netherlands
Dewart*	Hazel	active	United Kingdom
Dutke	Stephan	active	Germany
Golu	Florinda	active	Romania
Kravtsova	Elena	active	Russia
Mampaey	Els	active	Belgium
Papageorgi	Ioulia	active	Cyprus
Reddy	Peter	active	EUROPLAT
Schrempf	Renate	active	EFPTA
Stuchlikova	Iva	active	Czech Republic
Vlahović-Štetić	Vesna	active	Croatia

Zani	Bruna	active.	Italy
Coombs	Dorothy	corresp.	EFPTA
Danielsen	Eva	corresp.	Norway
Podlesek	Anja	corresp.	Slovenia
Ritola	Ville	corresp.	EFPSA
Epler	Kadi	cooperation	Estonia
Morrison	Catriona	cooperation	United Kingdom
Roe	Robert	EC Liaison	

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\* Hazel Dewart died in October 2014. The members of the Board of Educational Affairs appreciate her activities for the Board and grieve for her. Hazel's death is not only a great loss for her family, friends, and colleagues but also for EFPA.

## References:

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EFPTA (2014). Information for the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA) Board of Educational Affairs (BEA). Retrieved from <http://www.efpta.org/home/index.asp?SID=12#37>

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Williamson, M., Coombs, D., Schrenpf, R., and Sokolová, L. (2011, May) *Pre-tertiary psychology education in Europe: a survey of approaches to teacher education and continuing professional development of school psychology teachers*. Poster session presented at the British Psychological Society Annual Conference, Glasgow, UK. Retrieved from <http://tinyurl.com/jvtfwj1>.

Williamson, M., Coombs, D., Schrempf, R., and Sokolová, L. (2015, March). *The psychology curriculum in European secondary schools: what should we teach?* Poster presented at the International Convention of Psychological Science, Amsterdam. Retrieved from <https://osf.io/p457g>.