

**CONSTITUTION OF
The European Community Psychology Association (ECPA)
(translated from the original legal Dutch document)**

The signatories:

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Declare, by this document, the founding of a non-profit organization, under the Belgian law of 27/6/1921, as amended by the law of 2/5/2002, which defines non-profit organizations as legal entities, including international non-profit organizations and those foundations, of which the constitution is composed as follows:

I. **Name – Seat (i.e. the location where the organization is officially based) – purpose – duration**

Article 1

The name of the association is: European Community Psychology Association, abbreviated ECPA

Article 2

The association's seat is located at: Grasmart 105, bus 18, 1000 Brussels, in the legal arrondissement¹ of Brussels. The seat can only be transferred by a decision of the general assembly, in line with legislation for changing the constitution (refers to common law), and in line with any further provisions as set out in this constitution.

Article 3

The ECPA will continue the activities and collaboration of the “European network of Community Psychology (ENCP)”. This association (ENCP) was formed during the first “European Congress of Community Psychology” of 1995 in Rome, Italy. It has organized conferences in Lisbon, Portugal (1998), Bergen, Norway (2000), and Barcelona, Spain (2002), as well as meetings and symposia in Vienna, Austria, in Stirling, Scotland, in Lecce, Italy, and in Leuven, Belgium. The ENCP had the following members, between September 2003 and Sept 2004:

C Arcidiacono (Italy), G Berentzen (Norway), J Bergold (Germany), U Boehm (Austria), S Degirmenciogla (Turkey), P Duckett (England), C Ehmayer (Austria), D Francescato (Italy), D Fryer (Scotland), B Gelli (Italy), E Iversen (Norway), S McKenna (Scotland), T

¹ An “arrondissement” is a legal region comparable to a county, and has a regional court of law which is responsible for the area containing the seat

Mannarini (Italy), E Marta (Italy), G Musitu (Spain), J Orford (England), J Ornelas (Portugal), M Prezza (Italy), A Sanchez (Spain), A Skutle (Norway), W Stark (Germany), E Tazoglou (Turkey), S Van den Broucke (Belgium), B Zani (Italy).

ECPA's purpose is to introduce and support community psychology in both academic and practical applications of psychology, in Europe and beyond.

The objectives of ECPA are to promote:

- awareness of, education, training, and research, as well as practical applications, of community psychology in the general body of psychology.
- critical debate of key issues in community psychology and related issues.
- progressive influence of community psychology on practice and policy.
- personal health, human development and social justice.
- dismantling of disabling societal barriers and psychologically damaging contexts and practices.
- solidarity, collaboration and mutual respect between community psychologists and marginalized, disempowered or oppressed people.
- social change to nurture and sustain psychological, collective and physical wellbeing.

In addition to these, it is empowered to engage in any activity to promote/achieve these goals. The association may engage in commercial activities, but only to the extent that the profits thereof are used to further the association's goals.

Article 4

The association is founded without limits to the duration of its existence; it can be disbanded at any time.

II.

MEMBERS

Article 5

There is no upper limit to the number of members the association may have; the minimum number is six. The signatories of this document are the first effective² members. Effective members are those who have signed the constitution; their name is included in the register of members, which shall be kept at the association's seat, and of which a copy will be submitted to the Court of Commerce, in complying with article 26, paragraph 1, point 3, of the current legislation regarding non-profit organizations. In the event of changes to the association's members, a copy of the register of members shall be submitted no more than one month after the anniversary of the date on which the constitution has been submitted.

² This is a literal translation of the Dutch term – see next sentence for definition – this category of members is needed to comply with legislation

Article 6

Any person may join the association, any natural person or legal entity, who supports the goals and principles of the ECPA, who has paid the required membership fee, and who is accepted by the general assembly, as recommended by the ECPA board. A request to join the ECPA must be made in writing to the board. Only these members may vote at the general assembly; only they are entitled to the rights of members.

Membership is valid for one calendar year, starting on January 1st. If the membership is not renewed by the sixth month of the next calendar year, membership will become void and the person is no longer entitled to any benefits for members.

Article 7

The executive committee may, under rules that it has formulated, admit a person to become an honorary member, protective member, supporting member, or an advisory member. These will be considered members who have joined. Their rights and duties are detailed in the association's regulations³.

Article 8

The membership fee is determined by the general assembly on a yearly basis; its maximum is 500 EUR.

Article 9

Any member may leave the association at any time. The request to do so must be submitted in writing or by e-mail, to the executive committee

Article 10

Former members, or members that have been excluded from the association are not entitled to the association's properties. They will never be entitled to a refund for either membership fee or any other money they may have spent for the association.

III.

THE BOARD

Article 11

The association is governed by a board, consisting of at least 5 individuals, all member of the association: the president, treasurer, and at least three other members. If the general assembly has only three members, the executive committee will only consist of two members. Irrespective of the previous provisions, there will always be fewer members of the board, than there are members of the general assembly.

³ This refers to a separate document, which does not need to be submitted to the state

Article 12 duration of term for the board

The board will be appointed for an unlimited duration. Only the president and the treasurer will have a tenure of two years; they may be reappointed.

Article 13 procedures for nominations; expenses related to the board.

The board is elected by the general assembly, by a simple majority, irrespective of the number of members who are either present or represented. The board will perform their functions without payment⁴. The minutes regarding the appointment of the board shall be submitted to the Court of Commerce, and shall be published within 30 days in the Belgian State Journal⁵.

Article 14 termination of membership of the board.

The term of a member of the board will end either by a decision of the general assembly, by voluntary termination, by the term coming to an end, in case of death, or in case of criminal incompetence.

Dismissal by the general assembly will be decided by simple majority, of those members presented or represented. However, it must be specifically mentioned in the agenda of the general assembly.

Any member of the board who wishes to resign voluntarily, must report this in writing to the board. The term will end immediately, unless if this would reduce the size of the board to below the minimum number, as set forth in this constitution. If this is the case, the board shall provide for the general assembly to meet within two months. The general assembly will appoint a replacement for the position in the board, and shall inform the previous person of his/her replacement. Those parts of the regulations that deal with termination of the board shall be submitted to the Court of Commerce, no less than 30 days later.

Article 15 Activities of the board.

The board manages the association's affairs, and represents it both legally and otherwise. It is authorized for any actions, except what is guaranteed by law to be under authority of the general assembly. In case of legal issues, the board will function as plaintiff or defendant; it decides on any legal course of action.

The board appoints and dismisses the personnel of the association; it decides on their wages.

The board exercises its powers as a group.

⁴ This refers to wages, not expenses

⁵ This is the official legal journal of the Belgian state

A decision by the board is valid only if the majority of the board was present when the decision was made. Decisions are made by a simple majority vote. In case of deadlock, the deciding vote will be that of the president, or that of his/her representative. The members of the board may be physically present, or may be present by conference call or video conference.

A member of the board may be represented by another member of the board. A member of the board may represent one (and no more than one) member of the board.

Article 16

Meetings of the board can be called for either by the president, or by two other members of the board. The board will meet at least twice a year⁶.

Meetings of the board are chaired by the president. In case of his/her absence, he or she will appoint a replacement to chair the meeting.

Article 17

A record will be made of any meeting by the board. These records will be signed by the president and the secretary, and the records will be kept in a register. If the president and/or secretary are not present to sign, two other members of the board may sign in their place.

Article 18

The board formulates the internal regulations (body of rules separate from this document).

The board may, if they deem it necessary, appoint a delegated president or director, for the day to day workings of the association. This individual may conduct all the daily workings of the association, engage in its correspondence, and is authorized to conduct financial transactions for the association, with regards to public or private financial institutions, and any other institutions.

Article 19

Members of the board, while acting in their function, are not required to provide proof that they are authorized to do so, towards any third party.

Article 20 - persons authorized to represent the association, with regards to article 13, point 4, of the laws regarding non-profit organizations

⁶ This may also be in the form of a conference call or video conference

The board may transfer any of their authority, or responsibilities, to any member of the board or any other person, who may or may not be a member of the association.

This appointment is decided upon by simple majority, and will be valid if the majority of the members of the board is present when the decision is made.

Termination of such an appointment can occur:

- a) on a voluntary basis by the appointee, after submitting his resignation in writing to the board.
- b) by decision of the board, by a majority vote which is valid only when the majority of the members of the board is present. The person will be informed of the decision of this vote, no less than 7 calendar days later, by recorded delivery.

The regulations regarding the appointment, and the termination thereof, of persons authorized to represent the association, shall be submitted to the Court of Commerce. They will be published in the Annexes of the State Journal within 30 days after the registration of the association.

Those authorized to represent the association will perform their activities either individually, or together.

Article 21 - Persons authorized to deal with the daily working of the association, according to article 13, 1st point of the law dealing with non-profit organizations.

The board may appoint a body to deal with the daily workings of the association.

Their appointment is decided upon by the board, by simple majority; this vote is valid when the majority of the members of the board is present.

The termination of their appointment can occur:

- A) on a voluntary basis, when a member of this body informs the board in writing.
- B) by decision of the board, by simple majority; this decision is valid when the majority of the members of the board is present at the vote. The relevant person(s) will be informed in writing, by recorded delivery, within 7 days of the vote.

Any regulations regarding this body, their appointment and their dismissal, will be submitted to the Court of Commerce, and will be published within 30 days.

Decisions of this body, which shall work as a group, are made on the basis of internal discussion.

IV.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 22

The general assembly is composed of all (effective) members, and is presided by the president of the board, or by the person appointed by the president.

A member may be represented by another member. A member may only represent two other members. Every member has one vote for the general assembly.

Article 23

The general assembly is authorized exclusively for the following:

- amendments of this constitution
- to appoint and dismiss the board, and individual members thereof
- to appoint and dismiss commissioners; to determine their wages, if they are to receive wages
- to approve the work of the board and commissioners
- to approve the association's budget and finances⁷
- to voluntarily disband the association
- to decide on applicants for membership
- to appoint, or dismiss, new members
- to determine the association's membership fees
- to express the association's social role
- any other matters as required by this constitution

Article 24

The general assembly will meet, in a valid way, when called to meet by the board, as required by the goals of the association.

It is required to meet at least twice a year, at a suitable location in Europe, to approve the financial records of the previous year, and to decide on the next year's budget.

Article 25

The general assembly will meet no more than 6 months after the closing of the association's financial year

⁷ This implies that the financial records must be made available to members, and they have to vote to approve them as a measure of confidence in the treasurer's handling of finances

Article 26

The board will organize a general assembly, whenever so requested by at least 20% of the association's members; the request will be made in writing to the board, and must contain an agenda for the meeting. In this situation, the board will ensure that the general assembly meets no longer than 15 days later. The agenda will contain any points as have been made at the time of the request.

Article 27

The invitation to a general assembly will be signed by the president, or two members of the board, in order to be valid. The invitation will be sent to all effective members, either by recorded delivery or as a normal letter, at least 8 working days (ie w/e-days or holidays excluded) prior to the date of the meeting.

Article 28

The letter of invitation will contain the location, as well as the date and time of the meeting, and the agenda which has been composed by the board. Any item which has been requested by at least 20% of the members will also be included on the agenda. These items must be supported by at least 20%, as indicated by their signature, and must be submitted to the president of the association at least two working days prior to the meeting. Items not included on the agenda will not be discussed at the general assembly.

Article 29

Any ordinary vote is decided by simple majority of those present at the general assembly. The president's vote, or that of his/her replacement, is deciding in case of a deadlock.

Article 30 changes to the constitution

Any decision on changing the constitution will only be valid if the proposed changes were included in detail on the agenda, and only if at least 2/3 of all effective members are present, or are represented, at the general assembly. If the total number present is less than this, a second general assembly may be called for, in accordance with this constitution, where a valid decision will be possible irrespective of the number of people present. This second assembly must take place no less than 15 days later than the first. Changes to the constitution require a 2/3 majority vote, of the total number of present and represented members. Changes to the goals of the association require a 4/5 majority.

In the event of any changes to the constitution, a full updated version of the constitution will be submitted to the Court of Commerce; they will be published within 30 days.

Article 31

In order to voluntarily disband the association, the same rules apply as for changing the goals of the association

Article 32

A 2/3 majority is required to terminate an individual's membership. In order for this vote to be valid, the vote needs to be included on the meeting's agenda, and the individual must have been invited to have the opportunity to defend his/her case.

Article 33

Records will be kept of all meetings, and will be signed by the president and the secretary. These records will be available at the association's seat, and can be viewed by members and/or interested third parties⁸; the records will also be available through the ECPA website.

V. BUDGET AND FINANCES

Article 34

The association's financial year is april 1st – march 31st.
The board is responsible for closing the previous financial year, and for preparing next year's budget. Both these are submitted to the general assembly, to be voted on for approval, no more than 6 months after the end of the financial year.

VI. DISSOLVING THE ASSOCIATION

Article 35

Excepting when the association is dissolved as required by court-order, or due to any other legal requirement, the decision to dissolve the association can only be made by the general assembly, when at least 2/3 of the members are present or represented, and then only with a 4/5 majority. The item to dissolve the association must be included on the agenda, in order for the vote to be valid.

If fewer than 2/3 of the members are present, a second general assembly can be called to meet, to decide on dissolving the association. For this meeting, a valid decision to dissolve can be made irrespective of the number of present or represented members; a 4/5 majority vote is still required at this second meeting.

When the association will dissolve voluntarily, a receiver will be appointed by the general assembly, or by the courts if the general assembly fails to do so. The general assembly will decide on their authority, and the procedures by which they will operate.

⁸ Interested as in whoever is legally entitled to do so, not just any random person who wants to

The remaining assets (after expenses) will be transferred to an organization with goals similar to the ECPA.

The decision to dissolve, and details as to the receiver, including the duration for which they have been appointed, will be submitted to the Court of Commerce, and will be published within 30 days.

Article 36

Any matter, which is not dealt with in this constitution, will be as per the law of 27/6/1921, as amended by the law of 2/5/2002. This document has been composed at the meeting where the association was founded, on 15/7/2005 in Brussels,

Francescato Donata
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Van den Broucke Stephan