

**"EUROPEAN FAMILY THERAPY ASSOCIATION"**  
"E.F.T.A", International Association

## **I. Name, Location, and Purpose**

### Article 1. Definition

The EUROPEAN FAMILY THERAPY ASSOCIATION (EFTA) is an international association dedicated to scientific purposes.

This association will be subject to the requirements of Titre III of the Belgium act of parliament of 27th June 1921 governing not for profit associations, foundations and not for profit international associations, and by international law.

There must be at least three members.

### Article 2. Location

The registered office of this association will be located at 9 rue du Bailli, 1000 Brussels, Belgium, in the administrative district of the capital city of Brussels. The office can be transferred to any other location by a decision of the General Board of the EFTA. However, the different <boards> of EFTA may transfer their offices to other European countries depending on their composition.

### Article 3. Aims

The association is strictly non-profit making; it has the following aims:

1. To link and co-ordinate European national associations, institutes and individuals in the field of family therapy and systemic practice.
2. To promote the highest level of competence and quality in practice, research, supervision and teaching in family therapy and allied fields.
3. To facilitate European co-operation and the exchange of ideas and

experience among associations, institutions and individuals concerning medical, legal, social, psychological, gender, cultural, economic, spiritual and other aspects of human experiences in relation to systemic thinking and practice.

4. To spread information about family therapy and the systemic approaches throughout Europe to individuals, institutions and organisations concerned with the health and development of families and human systems.
5. To promote research, conferences, publications, audio-visual tools and other scientific material in this field through meetings and all other appropriate communicational methods.
6. To enhance the training of systemic professionals and family therapists at regional, national and European levels by organising and facilitating exchanges between individuals, and professional centres.
7. To create links with other organisations having common or compatible aims in and outside of Europe.

The activities for achieving the aims of the association are :

- Regular international meetings
- Conferences and seminars
- International congresses
- The annual publication of a membership list
- The spreading of information by all appropriate means
- Professional exchanges between family therapy centres and therapists in training and trainers from different European countries
- The establishment of appropriate different committees (such as ethics, training criteria,...)
- And all such other activities as will advance the aims of the association.

## **II. Membership**

### Article 4. Membership

The Association is composed of three chambers each one made up of members :

- The Chamber of Individual Members (CIM)

- The Chamber of National Family Therapy Organisations (NFTO)
- The Training Institutes' Chamber (TIC)

In order to be accepted, the member must meet the criteria and formalities required by the appropriate chamber and be accepted by the « board » of the chamber in question. Removal of members is made by resignation or by suspension for a reason agreed by the chamber(s) in question. A member who has not paid his or her annual membership fee will be deemed to have resigned. In the event of exclusion, the member concerned has the right to present his / her defence before a meeting of the general assembly.

Each Chamber has its autonomous policy, its own elected Board and its own budget. These are decided by the members of each respective Chamber.

#### 4.1. The Chamber of Individual Members (CIM)

- Ordinary members are individual professional members having a continuous practice in the field of human systems and/or family therapy in European countries and Israel.
- Candidate members are individuals who are in training and/ or persons lacking the requisite training and/or experience to become ordinary members.
- Foreign members are ordinary members connected with the systemic field and/or family therapy residing in countries outside Europe and Israel, and other nearby countries.
- Honorary members are members invited by the association on account of their specific contribution to the field of family therapy.

All individual members must pay an annual fee, except for Honorary Members, and any exceptions as decided by the Board of the Chamber of Individual Members.

All members, except the candidate members, who have fully paid their annual fees up to the year in which the General Assembly takes place have the right to vote.

#### 4. 2. The Chamber of National Family Therapy Organisations (NFTO)

Associations representing family therapists and/or national associations promoting systemic approaches and family therapy in any country in Europe and Israel may become a member of the Chamber of National Family Therapy Organisations.

In order to become an ordinary member of the NFTO-Chamber the applying National Association must:

1. Show a clear organisational structure with a Board with elected members, records of membership, regular General Assemblies and Board meetings.
2. Use clear and public criteria of admission.
3. Serve as a formal representative for the professionals represented.
4. Provide an opportunity for its members to discuss and vote about European policies.
5. Implement in an effective manner a national organisation that covers at least the majority of the national territory declared and referred to in its statutes.

Each country should be represented by one National Association or Federation. Each country has three votes. During a transitional period until the end of 2005 each country that is represented at the Chamber of NFTOs may propose to the Board of this Chamber a maximum of three persons who will represent this country as designated delegate members with the right to vote in the General Assembly of the Chamber of NFTOs. A delegate member may be the holder of proxy votes for the other delegate members of his/her country.

By the end of the transitional period the regional associations must have organised themselves into one National Association or Federation. Until then the Regional Associations of a same country are responsible for organising themselves in order to pay the annual fee and to have a transparent and fair representation in their voting procedures.

NFTO Chamber elects its board from among the representatives of national associations or federations.

#### 4.3. The Training Institutes' Chamber (TIC)

Institutions that carry out training and research in the systemic domain and/or Family Therapy may be members of the Chamber of Training and Research Institutes of EFTA.

For full (ordinary) membership members must :

1. Provide in-depth training.
2. Provide a clinical training program which has a duration of at least three years.
3. Have already completed one three-year training cycle.
4. Meet the criteria as currently specified by the Chamber.

For associate membership institutes will:

1. Have a training program with a duration of less than three years and/or have not yet completed at least one three-year training cycle.
2. At the present time choose not to apply for Full (ordinary) Membership although they fulfil the relevant criteria.

Each member of EFTA-TIC that has fully paid the fees will designate a representative to exercise its right to vote at General Assembly of the EFTA-TIC.

Associate members may participate and contribute to the EFTA-TIC process, but are not eligible to vote or be elected to Board positions.

#### Article 5. Elections to the Board

The council of management is made up of three boards.

- I. The members of the Board of a Chamber are elected or revoked by the members of the Chamber in question.
- II. Candidatures for a position in the Boards must be submitted in writing to the secretariat of the pertaining Board.
- III. Each Board will notify all of its members of the call for nominations, in writing at least 28 days prior to the closing date for nominations.
- IV. Each of the three Chamber Boards shall normally have no more than two representative by country. It is possible to co-opt no more than two persons to serve each Board. Co-opted members do not have voting rights.

V. Each of the three Chamber Boards elects from among its members a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer by secret ballot and may also elect a vice chair.

#### Article 6. Membership fees

- I. In order to exercise the right to vote at the any of the Assemblies, members must have fully paid the corresponding fees to the Chamber to which it belongs.
- II. The annual fees are determined and collected by the pertaining Chamber.
- III. The exclusive purpose of the fee is to implement the aims of the Association.
- IV. The General Assembly of each Chamber will vote to approve the accounts and budget of its respective Chamber annually.

### **III. The General Assembly of the EFTA**

#### Article 7. Composition and functions

- I. The General Assembly of EFTA is composed of all members of the European Family Therapy Association, that is, of the members of all three Chambers.
- II. Only those ordinary members of the Chambers have the right to vote.
- III. Decisions of the General Assembly of EFTA require a simple majority of votes in each of the three Chambers.
- IV. In order to come to a decision affecting the whole of EFTA each Chamber votes first on its own. The results within each Chamber are then listed as three distinct votes and considered together as the composite vote of the General Assembly. The voting and counting procedure may take place within the same location.

The functions of the general assembly are to:

1. modify by-laws;
2. annually approve the budget and accounts of EFTA;
3. discuss and develop the future policies of the Association as a whole;
4. consider, discuss and vote on such proposals as are laid before the General Assembly;

5. mandate the General Board to appoint working parties and committees to undertake specific tasks on behalf of the Association and report back to a future General Assembly;
6. dissolve the Association.

#### Article 8. Meetings

- I. The General Assembly of EFTA will meet at least once a year under the chairing of the President of EFTA at a location that has been indicated in a written notice convening the meeting. This notice is issued by the Board of EFTA.
- II. The written notice convening the meeting will be sent by ordinary post or electronic mail at least **28 days** prior to the meeting.
- III. The notice must contain the date, time and place, and the agenda for the meeting.
- IV. The General Assembly of EFTA must also be convened if so requested by at least 25% of the members of at least two Chambers.
- V. The decisions and resolutions of the assembly will be notified to the members by regular reports and sent to the members. The reports are available on the internet site and with the secretariats of the three chambers.

#### Article 9. Quorum

- I. The General Assembly of EFTA may only proceed with its business if representatives of all three Chambers are present.
- II. Decisions require a simple majority of votes of the members present or represented of all three Chambers. If agreement is not reached, new discussion and voting are required.
- III. A member can be represented at the General Assembly by another member holding a proxy vote. A voting member cannot hold more than three proxy votes.

### **IV. General Board of EFTA**

#### Article 10. Composition

The General Board of EFTA is composed of at least 18 and no more than 24 members who are members of the Boards of the three Chambers in addition to the President.

The General Secretary and the General Treasurer of EFTA will be nominated and voted upon by the General Board from among its elected membership.

Notice in writing to attend by the General Board of EFTA shall be sent by ordinary post or electronic mail by the General Secretary of EFTA at least 28 days before the meeting.

#### Article 11. Election of the President

- I. The president of EFTA is elected or revoked by the General Board of EFTA from among its members.
- II. Each Chamber Board votes first on its own by secret ballot. A candidate for the presidency is elected if he or she attains 2/3 of the votes of each Chamber Board.
- III. The President of EFTA is then no longer a member of one of the three Boards. Thus the Chamber from which the President was elected, will replace their missing member with the person who received the next highest number of votes at their own Board election.

#### Article 12. Rights and Obligations

- I. The General Board of EFTA is empowered to transact all business and make all decisions concerning the management and administration of the Association as a whole.
- II. The General Board of EFTA may delegate the daily management to its President, one of its members, or a person specially appointed thereto.
- III. The General Board of EFTA has ultimate decision making power on matters submitted for discussion by the separate Chambers as long as the pertaining Chamber agrees to this procedure and to these decisions.

### Article 13. Decision-making

All decisions of the General Board of EFTA require a simple majority among the members of each of the three Chamber Boards. In order for valid decisions to be taken, a quorum of 4/7 of the members are necessary in each <board>.

### Article 14. Entitlement

All acts and decisions binding the Association with the exception of special powers of attorney require the signature of the President and the Chairs of the three Chambers or their nominated delegates. The president or his / her designated delegate is competent to follow the actions at law, whether in application or defence.

### Article 15. Co-ordinating Body

- I. The Co-ordinating Body serves the whole of the Association and prepares proposals to be discussed and voted by the General Board of EFTA.
- II. Each of the three Chamber Boards designates two of its members as members of the Co-ordinating Body.
- III. The Chair of the Co-ordinating Body is the President of EFTA.

The Co-ordinating Body has three tasks:

1. the co-ordination of the functioning of the three Chambers, whilst respecting the autonomy of each Chamber;
2. the organisation of conjoint meetings of the three Boards at least once a year, in particular to determine the general policy of the Association;
3. the co ordination of the administrative tasks of the Association according to the mandates originated by the General Board of EFTA.

### Article 16. Duration

The President and the members of the Board are elected for a period of three years. The board remains elected until the first General Assembly following this period.

The President can only be re-elected as such for one more term of three years consecutively but may stand for the re-election after at least one year of no longer serving on the Board .

Each chamber Board is responsible to create by-laws that will ensure appropriate continuity and renewal of its board members.

## **V. Budget and Expenses**

### Article 17. Period

The accounting year begins on the 1st January and ends on the 31st December.

Each Board is duty bound to submit to the approval of its own Chamber Assembly all accounts concerning the expired accounting year as well as the budget for the next accounting year. These will then be submitted for the approval of the next General Assembly of EFTA.

In the event of the dissolution of the association, the funds shall be given to another international association having similar aims and objectives.

## **VI. General Provisions**

### Article 18. Amendments

The Statutes may only be modified by the General Assembly of EFTA. The proposed amendment (s) must be agreed by the relevant Chamber(s) of those making the proposed amendment(s), and be notified to all members at least 28 days prior to the meeting of the General Assembly of EFTA.

The decision to modify the statutes or to dissolve the Association requires a majority of votes of at least two thirds of the members of each Chamber. Where this is not possible, a second General Assembly of EFTA may be convened *in not less than 28 days* where a decision can be made by a simple majority of those present or represented.

Modifications to the Statutes must be submitted to the Minister of Justice and be published in the annexes of the Moniteur Belge.

The eventual net assets, after liquidation, must be disposed of without personal gain.

All that is not included in the current statutes will be governed by the provisions of Title III of the Belgian law of 27th June 1921 in respect of not for profit associations, foundations, and not for profit international associations.