



EPA Council of National Psychiatric Associations (NPAs) - Minutes

Location: HUNGEXPO Budapest Congress and Exhibition Centre
H-1101 Budapest, Albertirsai út 10 (Entrance: Gate I. and III.)
Date: Saturday 6 April 2024, 14:00 – 17:00 (CEST)

Chair: Prof. Bernardo Carpiniello (Chair of the Steering Committee, Council of NPAs)
Co-chair: Prof. Geert Dom (EPA President)

PARTICIPANTS

EPA Leaders and Invitees

NAME	ROLE
Julian Beezhold (JB)	EPA Secretary General
Bernardo Carpiniello (BC)	EPA Council of NPAs Chair
Eka Chkonja (EC)	EPA Council of NPAs Vice-chair
Simone De Ioanna (SDI)	EPA Executive Director
André Decraene (AD)	EUFAMI Vice-President
Geert Dom (GD)	EPA President
Andrea Fiorillo (AF)	EPA President Elect
Cécile Hanon (CH)	EPA Secretary for Education
Péter Kéri (PK)	GAMIAN-Europe President
Tamas Kurimay (TK)	EPA Board Member
Martina Rojnic Kuzman (MRK)	EPA Treasurer
Simavi Vahip (SV)	InterACT Editor-in-Chief
Margaret Walker (MW)	EPA Consultant

NPA participants

COUNTRY	NPA	NPA REPRESENTATIVE
ARMENIA	Armenian Psychiatric Association	Armen Soghoyan (AS)
AUSTRIA	Austrian Society for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy	Eleonore Miller-Reiter (EM)
AZERBAIJAN	Azerbaijan Psychiatric Association	Fuad İsmayilov (FI)
BELARUS	Belarusian Psychiatric Association	Oleg Skugarevsky (OS)
BELGIUM	Belgian Professional Association of Medical Specialists in Psychiatry	Geert Dom (GD)
BELGIUM	Flemish Association of Psychiatry	Kirsten Catthoor (KC)
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	Psychiatric Association of Bosnia-Herzegovina	Goran Račetović (GR)
BULGARIA	College Private Psychiatry of Bulgaria	Ruslan Zhelev (RZ)
CROATIA	Croatian Psychiatric Association	Tihana Jendričko (TJ)
CZECH REPUBLIC	Czech Psychiatric Association	Pavel Mohr (PMO)
DENMARK	Danish Psychiatric Association	Merete Nordentoft (MN)
ESTONIA	Estonian Psychiatric Association	Anne Kleinberg (AK)
FINLAND	Finnish Psychiatric Association	Erika Jääskeläinen (EJ)
FRANCE	French Congress of Psychiatry	Philip Gorwood (PG)
FRANCE	French Federation of Psychiatry	Suzana Andrei (SA)



GEORGIA	Society of Georgian Psychiatrists	Tamar Aladashvili (TA)
GERMANY	German Association for Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics	Andreas Reif (AR)
GREECE	Hellenic Psychiatric Association	Lillian Markaki (LMI)
HUNGARY	Hungarian Psychiatric Association	Róbert Wernigg (RW)
ICELAND	Icelandic Psychiatric Association	Páll Matthíasson (PMA)
IRELAND	College of Psychiatrists of Ireland	Joanne Fegan (JF)
ISRAEL	Israel Psychiatric Association	Yuval Melamed (YM)
ITALY	Italian Psychiatric Association	Bernardo Carpiniello (BC)
LATVIA	Latvian Psychiatric Association	Māris Taube (MT)
LITHUANIA	Lithuanian Psychiatric Association	Ramunė Mazaliauskienė (RM)
MALTA	Maltese Association of Psychiatry	Giovanni Grech (GG)
MOLDOVA	Society of Psychiatrists, Narcologists, Psychotherapists and Clinical Psychologists from Republic of Moldova	Jana Chihai (JC)
NORWAY	Norwegian Psychiatric Association	Lars Lien (LL)
PORTUGAL	Portuguese Society of Psychiatry and Mental Health	Luís Madeira (LMA)
SERBIA	Serbian Psychiatric Association	Marta Gostiljac (MG)
SLOVAKIA	Slovak Psychiatric Association	Vanda Valkucakova (VV)
SPAIN	Association of Psychiatrists of Spanish Association of Neuropsychiatry	María Fe Bravo Ortiz (MB)
SPAIN	Spanish Society of Psychiatry and Mental Health	Manuel Martín Carrasco (MMC) Marina Diaz-Marsá (MDM)
SWEDEN	Swedish Psychiatric Association	Maria Larsson (ML)
SWITZERLAND	Swiss Society for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy	Rafael Traber (RT)
TÜRKIYE	Psychiatric Association of Türkiye	Koray Başar (KB)
UKRAINE	Association of Neurologists, Psychiatrists and Narcologists of Ukraine	Nataliya Maruta (NM)
UNITED KINGDOM	Royal College of Psychiatrists	Lade Smith CBE (LS) Mohammed Al-Uzri (MA)

EXCUSED

NPA's

COUNTRY	NPA	NPA REPRESENTATIVE
NETHERLANDS	Netherlands Psychiatric Association	Niel Mulder
POLAND	Polish Psychiatric Association	Jerzy Samochowiec
ROMANIA	Romanian Association of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy	Catalina Giurgi-Onacu
UKRAINE	Ukrainian Psychiatric Association	Olha Myshakivska

EPA Leaders

NAME	ROLE
Peter Falkai	EPA Past President
Jerzy Samochowiec	EPA Secretary for Sections

NOT PRESENT

COUNTRY	NPA
SLOVENIA	Slovenian Psychiatric Association
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Independent Psychiatric Association of Russia



PROPOSED AGENDA

- 1. (14:00 – 14:12) Welcome Words & Introduction to the Meeting** (*B. Carpiello & G. Dom*)
 - a. (14:00) Introduction of the Participants
 - b. (14:10) Apologies for Absence
 - c. (14:11) Declaration of Interests
- 2. (14:12 – 14:15) Approval of the Agenda & Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*B. Carpiello*)
Appendix 1: Council of NPAs Meeting Minutes - 25 March 2023
- 3. (14:15 – 15:20) Steering Committee Activities 2023** (*K. Başar; B. Carpiello; E. Chkonia; G. Dom; S. Vahip*)
 - a. (14:15) Anti-Stigma Survey: Preliminary Findings (*K. Başar*)
 - b. (14:25) EPA-NPA Joint Symposia: Experiences and Report from Bulgaria, Lithuania and Moldova (*E. Chkonia; R. Zhelev; R. Mazaliauskiene; J. Chihai*)
 - c. (14:40) Update on Webinars (*E. Chkonia*)
 - d. (14:45) Update on InterACT (*S. Vahip*)
 - e. (14:50) Update on the Reorganisation of the NPAs Steering Committee and Expanded Collaboration with the EPA (*G. Dom*)
 - f. (15:00) Open Round Discussion (*All Participants*)
- 4. (15:20 – 15:35) Proposals to Promote EPA & NPAs Collaboration** (*G. Dom & M. Rojnic Kuzman*)
 - a. (15:20) Update on the Ambassador Project (*M. Rojnic Kuzman*)
 - b. (15:25) Update on the European Board Exam in Psychiatry (*G. Dom*)

(15:35 – 15:50) Coffee Break
- 5. (15:50 – 16:25) Presentations from NPAs** (*J. Chihai; L. Markaki; L. Smith CBE; A. Soghoyan*)
 - a. (15:50) Armenia (*A. Soghoyan*)
 - b. (15:58) Greece (*L. Markaki*)
 - c. (16:07) Moldova (*J. Chihai*)
 - e. (16:16) UK (*L. Smith CBE*)
- 6. (16:25 – 16:45) EUFAMI and GAMIAN-Europe: Key Update** (*A. Decraene & P. Kéry*)
 - a. (16:25) EUFAMI (*A. Decraene*)
 - b. (16:35) GAMIAN-Europe (*P. Kéry*)
- 7. (16:45 – 16:55) Final Comments** (*All*)
 - a. (16:45) Increase of Membership Fees for NPAs (*M. Rojnic Kuzman*)
- 8. (16:55 – 17:00) Closing Remarks and Group Photo** (*B. Carpiello & G. Dom*)



MINUTES

The meeting started at 14:00

1. Welcome Words & Introduction to the Meeting

- GD opened the meeting by welcoming the EPA Executive Committee, the representatives of GAMIAN-Europe and EUFAMI and the high number of NPA participants.
- BC noted the apologies received from EPA Leaders and NPA Presidents who could not attend the meeting.
- Each participant briefly introduced themselves.
- There were no declarations of interest.

2. Approval of the Agenda & Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- The proposed agenda was adopted and the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2023 were approved without further comments.

3. Steering Committee Activities 2023

a. Anti-Stigma Survey: Preliminary Findings

- KB presented the importance of the issue, the context of the survey as well as the preliminary findings.
- KB thanked all those who have already participated in the survey and invited others to fill out the online questionnaire by the extended deadline of 10 May 2024 (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/anti-stigma1>).

b. EPA-NPA Joint Symposia: Experiences and Report from Bulgaria, Lithuania and Moldova

- EC provided an overview of the Joint Symposia selection process and the upcoming events in 2024. EC also mentioned the upcoming EPA Symposia to disseminate the Code of Ethics during several NPA national events. EC invited participants to submit their applications for a Joint Symposium during the next call for proposals.
- RS, RM and JC each gave a presentation on their experience of hosting a Joint Symposium in their respective countries. Information provided related to the application process, the organisation and logistics as well as key highlights of the events.

c. Update on Webinars

- EC presented an update on the two webinars organised by the Steering Committee in 2023. EC noted the rationale for the selected topics and gave key information on the format, content and attendance statistics.
- EC informed participants that, following an increasing number of requests from EPA Committees to hold webinars, a working group was formed to formulate a plan on the coordination and financial matters of webinars at EPA level.



- EC provided key information on the upcoming webinar to be held on 5 June 2024 and invited participants to be pro-active in disseminating the information to their association members.

d. Update on InterACT

- SV gave a presentation on InterACT, mentioning the historical setup of the quarterly newsletter, where to find previous issues and the topic of the 'Special File' for the upcoming publication.
- SV noted his ambition to improve and enrich the functionality and impact of InterACT and invited participants:
 - Ψ to provide one name from their association to join the InterACT Editorial Board,
 - Ψ to provide their opinion on the 2024 Congress, and
 - Ψ to send their questions and suggestions related to InterACT to simavi.vahip@gmail.com

e. Update on the Reorganisation of the NPAs Steering Committee and Expanded Collaboration with the EPA

- GD presented an update on the reorganisation of the NPAs Steering Committee, highlighting that much work has been done by the Steering Committee and the EPA Executive Committee on this project.
- GD indicated that in the initial timeline of the NPAs Restructuring project, procedures and changes were to be implemented in spring 2024, for the new structure to be ready to start after the 2025 elections.
- GD noted that more time is needed to refine the model due to difficulties in translating proposed changes into EPA Statute changes. The Task Force will continue to work to fine-tune the organisational models that have been presented with the hope to submit the final proposal at the General Assembly in Madrid in 2025.

f. Open Round Discussion

- Several participants shared insights and concerns regarding the perception of psychiatry and the issue of stigma. Key comments included:
 - Ψ Issue with the field of psychiatry not being as trusted as other branches of medicine.
 - Ψ Problem of stigma against psychiatrists. Lack of knowledge on what psychiatrists do, even amongst medical colleagues. Need to think more about the perceived role of psychiatrists in society. Essential to educate about the profession.
 - Ψ Importance of collaboration to tackle anti-psychiatry movements, to raise the profile of the profession and increase trust.
 - Ψ Collaboration with carer and patient organisations seen as essential to reduce stigma.
 - Ψ Importance to counter misinformation with evidence-based positive information.
 - Ψ Example of German NPA who is developing a campaign in collaboration with an advertising company on the topic of mental health.
 - Ψ Debate as to whether NPAs should react and or engage directly with protesters and anti-psychiatry activists. On one hand, promoting excellence and evidence-based science may be more efficient



than engaging, but on the other hand, NPAs cannot be seen as doing nothing and may want to use a mixed approach. MMC noted that a common policy from the EPA may be helpful.

- Ψ Example of Swedish NPA and their strong collaboration with patient organisations to create a dialogue with protesters. Importance of listening to criticisms against psychiatry in order to understand the reasons.
- Ψ AD agreed about the need to understand the roots of anti-psychiatry movements and suggested that a working group on this subject would be an interesting initiative.
- Ψ LL gave the example of pill shaming' which is threatening the treatment of patients and noted that the EPA should address this important topic and consider setting up a Task Force.
- Ψ LS and LL indicated their interest to take an active role in supporting the work of a Task Force on the subject of anti-psychiatry.
- Ψ GD noted the enthusiasm of participants to collaborate on this serious and complex topic. GD invited the Steering Committee to discuss the idea of setting up a working group. GD mentioned the scarcity of positive articles and publications on medication and also highlighted the lack of dialogue with a large number of patient organisations in Europe. GD noted his support to increase the number of patient associations that the EPA is working with to improve the level of engagement and dialogue. GD invited EUFAMI and GAMIAN-Europe to think about how to engage with larger groups of associations representing patients.

4. Proposals to Promote EPA & NPAs Collaboration

a. Update on the Ambassador Project

- MRK provided an overview of the Ambassador project and the results of the first four surveys. MRK mentioned that NPAs are usually contacted after each Congress to become national coordinator with the aim of distributing the survey to their members and of finding 20 participating members in their country.
- MRK thanked participants for their contributions to past surveys and invited them to fill out the 2024 survey on bipolar disorders.

b. Update on the European Board Exam in Psychiatry

- GD presented an update on the process of setting up a European Board Exam in Psychiatry. GD recapped the project timeline and acknowledged EPA Sections that contributed to the list of topics to be included in the Exam.
- GD also mentioned the training workshop on question writing taking place at the end of June. GD indicated that support from NPAs would be required and invited any motivated and experienced people willing to contribute to come forward.
- An article on the European Board Exam of Psychiatry will be shortly published in *European Psychiatry*. GD invited attendees to read this editorial and spread information about this project.
- GD noted that the first exam will take place early 2025 and that feedback would be shared at the next Congress.



5. Presentations from NPAs

a. Armenia

- AS gave a presentation on the field of psychiatry in Armenia. The talk focussed on the war situation and its consequences on the mental health of Armenians. AS mentioned the issue of refugees who are registered as psychiatric patients but who have no medical documentation.
- AS highlighted numerous partnerships for mental health in Armenia as well as the Mental Health Coalition under the leadership of the Ministry of Health. AS also noted new initiatives taking place to improve the situation in Armenia, such as the programme of trained peer-consultants.

b. Greece

- LMI presented the National Mental Health Action Plan (NMHAP), which is a project that demonstrates the partnership between the State, the mental health professionals and the scientific community of Greece towards the completion of the psychiatric reform and the restructuring of the mental health services system.
- LMI provided more details on the methodology, timeline, sources of funding, the 10 axes of interventions and the next steps of the NMHAP.

c. Moldova

- JC gave a presentation on the mental health reform in the Republic of Moldova.
- JC highlighted the development of a country-wide network of community-based mental health care providers.
- JC mentioned the importance of mental health in the context of integration in the European Union.
- JC noted that challenges remain in relation to integration with existing systems, financial and human resources, resistance to change, stigma, and sustainability.

d. UK

- LS presented the context of mental health in the UK. LS highlighted the issue of chronic deficit in the mental health workforce with significant staff shortages in the UK. LS also noted the consequence of the mental health crisis on the long waiting list for referrals.
- LS provided information on the three key priorities of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, including Presidential Priorities and Manifesto, Equity and Equality, International Strategy and Diploma.
- LS emphasised the importance of research and the need for investment to counteract the reduction of academics in psychiatry and of funding in psychiatric research.



- On behalf of the Hungarian Psychiatric Association, TK thanked all attendees for their support. TK noted his gratitude to have the EPA Congress organised in Hungary. TK also shared his hope to use this opportunity for further development of Hungarian psychiatry and to shape a model that works for young colleagues but also for patient and carer organisations.
- RW welcomed all participants to Budapest and conveyed his aspirations for the Congress to be useful and to help create new collaboration.
- BC thanked TK for his work for the Council of NPAs and welcomed RW to the Council.

6. EPA/NPA Task Forces an EUFAMI and GAMIAN-Europe: Key Update

a. EUFAMI

- AD presented the work of EUFAMI and indicated that the organisation is working on a new vision and strategic plan. AD provided more information on the three strategic pillars of EUFAMI: advocacy, membership and research. AD also mentioned the PROSPECT training programmes.
- AD mentioned the importance of participation and inclusion at every stage of the therapy process and also highlighted the significance of providing information to help combat stigma.

b. GAMIAN-Europe

- PK introduced himself and GAMIAN-Europe and thanked the EPA for enabling a patient organisation to be represented at the Council of NPAs meeting.
- PK brought about the topic of stigma coming from the mental health care system itself and his vision to help close the bridge between different mental health professions to provide better care for patients.
- PK highlighted the importance of cooperation between patient organisations to identify differences between countries from the perspective of patients.
- PK mentioned that patients have a place in all organisations dealing with mental health.
- PK invited participants who know a national organisation interested to cooperate to contact GAMIAN-Europe.

7. Final Comments

a. Increase of Membership Fees for NPAs

- MRK presented the proposal to increase membership fees for EPA individual members as well as for NPAs.
- MRK noted that NPA fees had not increased since the start of the Council of NPAs and that the Board had examined the level of fees in other similar associations in order to define the proposed increase.
- MRK explained that the increase of NPA fees will vary from 20 to 40% depending on the country category.
- MRK indicated that the proposal will be presented for approval at the General Assembly.



8. Closing Remarks and Group Photo

- GD thanked all participants for their rich and inspiring ideas, including the potential creation of a new Task Force. GD noted that the growth of the Council of NPAs is reinforcing the need to reform the Steering Committee to increase collaboration and the sharing of ideas.
- BC also thanked participants as well as the Steering Committee and the EPA administrative staff for their work.
- GD closed the meeting by inviting participants to the official Congress opening ceremony.

The meeting ended at 17:30.

EPA contact for follow up:

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