



GENERAL RULES OF PROCEDURES OF THE EUROPEAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION (EPA)

Approved by the EPA Board on 03/07/2020

(Extract for Sections)

VIII. Sections

Role and activities of Sections within EPA

- (81) The role of Sections is as defined in the EPA Statutes and this purpose is carried out through the organisation of the activities described below.
- (82) The Section activities shall consist of, but not be limited to:
- Organisation of international scientific meetings and sessions at congresses, including at EPA (seminars, workshops and symposia)
 - Enhance visibility of the EPA Sections and their activities through the collection and dissemination of information
 - Contribution to the European Psychiatry Journal, EPA Website & European Psychiatric Network, Newsletters
 - Presentation of information and activities pertinent to its mission within the EPA's organisational bodies and meetings
 - Networking and collaboration
 - Collaboration with other EPA Sections and EPA Committees
 - Collaboration with NPAs, particularly their Sections
 - Developing links across Europe and participating in international, national and local meetings on the specific psychiatric field
 - Cooperate with other organisations with similar concerns such as WPA and UEMS
 - Expert opinion / statements
 - Provide an official Section reply to any requests that are addressed to EPA within 2 months
 - Prepare guidance papers / position statements with NPAs and other bodies, under the coordination of the EPA Coordinator
 - Recruitment of new members
 - Actively work on the membership of the Sections to recruit well-known experts representing all population of Europe (WHO area) in terms of gender, ethnicity and geographical areas
 - Convert non-EPA Section members to paid-up EPA individual members
 - Annual Section business meeting
 - At least one meeting should be held per year.
 - The meetings should be announced in advance and are open to paid-up Section members and to other persons interested in the Section (as observers).
 - Other activities
 - Support of young clinicians and researchers (e.g. promote careers of young psychiatrists and use experience of senior experts)
 - EPA CME courses



- Collaborative research
- Improve the organisational system of mental health services
- Help the national organisations to be present in all activities in the field for better mental health
- Contribute to the preparation of a training curriculum consisting of different modules

Organisation of Section symposia, workshops and CME Courses at the EPA Congress

- (83) The Sections are required to submit one official symposium, workshop or CME Course proposal to the EPA Congress. The SPC may reject it if it is not of a good quality. If there is more than one proposal, the Section Chair has to highlight the one that is the main one and rank the others.

Criteria and procedures for establishment of new Sections

- (84) Any paid-up EPA Member may propose creation of a new Section. Proposals must be sent to the EPA President 2 months in advance of the EPA Board meeting. Each proposal must include the Section title, its objectives, a list of the activities to be conducted in the two years following establishment, the list of members and the composition of the Section's Committee.
- (85) The proposal must be pre-approved by the EPA Board upon the following criteria:
- Section has at least 10 paid-up EPA Individual Members, Fellows, Associate, Student or Honorary Members
 - Majority of Section's members are eligible to become EPA Members
 - The proposed Section Committee includes experts in the field
 - Proposed field is relevant to the EPA and is not already covered by an existing Section and could not be covered by an extension
- (86) After pre-approval by the EPA Board, the Section may start to function on an ad-hoc basis. The establishment of the Section has then to be approved by the General Assembly.

Section Committee & Elections

- (87) Each Section shall elect a Section Committee. Mandatory positions are: chairperson, co-chairperson and a secretary. The Section may elect up to 3 additional Section Committee members as Councillors.
- (88) Any paid-up EPA Individual, Fellow or Honorary member who is a member of the Section is eligible to be elected to the Section Committee. Section Committee members are required to be experts in the field and be working in Europe. The mandates of the Section Committee members start immediately after the election. The Section Committee members shall be paid-up EPA members during their terms of office.
- (89) The Section Chairs shall be elected for no more than 3 mandates of 2 years each (total of 6 years). Section committee members shall be elected for no more than 3 consecutive mandates in the same position (total of 6 years). Section Committee members can change positions.



- (90) In the case of a Section chair's resignation, the outgoing chair should assure the administration of the Section's activities until the election of a new chair. During this time, the outgoing chair should either remain the 'acting' chair of the Section until the next elections, or designate the co-chair as temporary chair for the Section. Upon resignation of the chair, the Section Committee members should assure the organisation of elections in the near future according to the established rules.
- (91) Elections for all positions take place every two years by a secret ballot. Any member can ask for an open election. Elections must be announced by the Section 2 months in advance of the election date. This can be done with the EPA Administrative Office's support. Names of candidates for the Section Committee should be put forth one month before the election.
- (92) Elections should take place during a physical meeting. Paid-up EPA Members who are members of the Section shall have voting rights. The quorum shall be 10% of Section members with a minimum of at least five paid-up EPA Members. When the quorum is not met at a physical meeting, an electronic vote can be organised and should be coordinated entirely by the Section. The candidates who received the highest percentage of votes are elected. No proxy nor remote voting by letter, telephone etc. is allowed.
- (93) If the election procedure is not respected, any member of the section can inform the Secretary for Sections. The Secretary for Sections and the EPA Administrative Office must be kept informed about the composition of the Section Committee within 1 month after the elections.

Membership

- (94) The Section members shall be paid-up EPA members. Sections can recruit new members who are not members of the EPA, but those eligible to become EPA Members, must apply for EPA membership within one year after recruitment. Those not eligible to become EPA Members may become Section Associate Members.
- (95) The Committee of each Section must keep a complete list of the Section members, which must be placed at the disposal of the Sections Secretary and the EPA Administrative Office.

Finances

- (96) Each Section is self-administrating. The EPA will not be responsible for any expenses the Sections may issue.
- (97) Sections act under the name of the EPA and thus shall maintain and provide, in their annual reports, accounts of their annual income and expenditure, as well as their sources of funding.

Quality control

- (98) Every year the Section chairperson should provide the Secretary for Sections with a detailed report in the prescribed format required by the EPA including: the composition of the Section Committee, the list of members, the activities of the Section for the past year, the work programme of activities



for future years and a brief statement about the Section and its activities to be placed on the EPA website.

- (99) The annual reports should be submitted two months in advance of the annual EPA Congress. These reports will be submitted by the Secretary for Sections with his/her comments to the Board.

Renewal & termination

- (100) Sections are renewed based upon satisfactory evidence that the Section is active including the following criteria:

- At least one Section business meeting per year
- At least one Session (symposium, workshop, CME) proposal to EPA's Annual Congress
- Board approval of a satisfactory annual report of activities (submitted by deadline)
- Elections carried out as required

- (101) The Board will consider recommending the termination of a Section to the Ordinary General Assembly:

- if a Section does not comply with the above rules in any given year
- or where serious concerns regarding the Section are reported to the Board

- (102) A Section may close itself following the procedure as described below:

- The voluntary discontinuation of the Section shall be decided if voted by at least 10 paid-up Section members, which shall also comprise a simple majority of the Section Committee members.
- The voting by the Section members can be organised at a physical meeting or electronically.
- The Chairperson of the Section shall inform the EPA Secretary for Sections and the EPA President of such decision and shall provide a report on how the voting was organised.
- The EPA Board will evaluate whether all necessary conditions for a lawful decision were respected, and if deemed so, will propose discontinuation of the Section to the Ordinary General Assembly.
- In case the Board is not satisfied with the decision-making process in the Section, it may request the Section Committee to organise a second vote.

Name change

- (103) If a Section wishes to change its name/title then it should follow the below procedure. A Sections' name change request should include an official letter signed by the chair of the Section including the following:

- Explaining the reasons for the name change
- Indicating that there is no intention of changing the aim nor the objectives of the Section
- Confirming that the approval of the majority of Section members was obtained

The request will be submitted to the Secretary for Sections, who will then present the request to the EC and Board for approval.