

EUROPEAN FAMILY THERAPY ASSOCIATION (EFTA)

International non profit association

New statutes approved by the General Assembly of 28 May 2022

The general assembly of May 28, 2022 declares and decides that the text of the new statutes is as follows:

I. NAME, LOCATION AND PURPOSE

Article 1. Definition

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

This association will be subject to the requirements of the Belgium act of parliament of 23rd March 2019 governing companies, 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 in the region of Brussels, Belgium. The office can be transferred to any other location by a decision of the General Board of EFTA. However, the three different boards of EFTA may decide to transfer their offices to other European countries depending on their composition.

Article 3. Aims

3.1 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, training, and practice.
4. To spread information about family therapy and the systemic approaches throughout and outside Europe to individuals, institutions and organizations 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 facilitate exchanges between individuals, professionals, students, and institutions in the field of systemic practice and family therapy.

7. To enhance the training of systemic professionals and family therapy practitioners at regional, national, and European levels
8. To create links with other organizations having common or compatible aims in and outside of Europe.

3.2 The activities for achieving the aims of the association are:

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

II. MEMBERSHIP

Article 4. Membership Composition

4.1 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)

4.2 In order to be accepted, the member(s) 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 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 their defence before a meeting of the General Assembly.

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

4.4 The annual fees for membership in a Chamber are determined and collected by the pertaining Chamber. The exclusive purpose of the fee is to implement the aims of the Chamber and the Association.

4.5 Each Chamber CIM, TIC & NFTO contributes a proportion of its income to EFTA General Budget. The percentage is decided by the GB based on the income of the chamber of the previous year.

4.6 The General Assembly of each Chamber will vote to approve the accounts and budget of its respective Chamber annually.

Each of the three Chambers' Boards elects from its members a Chair, a secretary, and a Treasurer by secret ballot. It may also elect a Vice-Chair, Honorary Chair and/or Honorary members. Honorary Chair and Honorary members do not have voting rights.

I. The Chamber of Individual Members (CIM)

- Ordinary members are individual professional members who are practitioners 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.
- Senior Members are ordinary members who are non-active who will pay a nominal fee.
- 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.

II. 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. Demonstrate they have a clear organisational structure with a Board of 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.

If the annual fee is not paid, the member has one more year to pay the fee after which their membership will cease.

Each country should be represented by one National Association or Federation. Each country has three votes and is represented at the Chamber of NTFOs. Each country 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.

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

III. 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.

Full (ordinary) Members are Institutes that:

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

Associate Members are Institutes that:

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

Non-European affiliate Members are Institutes that meet the criteria and will be entitled to participate in all EFTA-TIC meetings and discussions but not to vote.

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

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

III. ELECTIONS OF THE THREE CHAMBER'S BOARDS

I. The members of each Chamber's Board are elected or revoked by the members of the Chamber in question. Electronic voting is possible.

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's Boards shall normally have no more than two representatives by country. It is possible to co-opt no more than two persons to serve on each Board. Co-opted members do not have voting rights.

V. Removal of members is made by resignation of the members or by suspension for a reason agreed by the General Board. A letter from the president informing the member of

their suspension and the reasons for this will be sent by post or electronically. In the event of suspension and possible exclusion, the member concerned has the right to present their defence before a meeting of the General Assembly. The GA has the final decision on the suspension or exclusion of the member.

IV. GENERAL BOARD OF EFTA

Article 5. Composition

5.1 The General Board of EFTA is composed of at least 18 and no more than 23 members who are members of the Boards of the three Chambers in addition to the President and President Elect.

5.2 In the event that a Chamber has elected an Honorary Board member or Honorary Chairperson, they can participate at GB meetings without voting rights.

Article 6. Meetings

6.1. The General Board meets at least two (2) times per year, virtually and/or face-to-face, in different European countries.

6.2. Proposals for the agenda of the General Board meeting must be sent to the President and EFTA General Secretary no less than four weeks in advance.

6.3. The invitation and the agenda, together with other required documents, must be sent out under the responsibility of the EFTA General Secretary, by ordinary post or electronic mail, and no later than 15 days prior to the meeting.

Article 7. Elections of Officers

7.1 All EFTA Officers – President, Vice President, General Secretary, and General Treasurer – are elected by the General Board from among its members.

7.2 The election of officers takes place by secret ballot during the first GB meeting after the general elections.

Article 8. Election of the President and the Vice-President

8.1 The President of EFTA is elected or revoked by the General Board of EFTA from among its members.

8.2 Each Chamber may nominate from its elected board candidates for the position of President & Vice President.

8.3 The President of EFTA is then no longer a member of one of the three Chamber's Boards. 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.

8.4 The Vice president election will take place following the election of the president.

Article 9. Duration

9.1 The President, Vice president, General secretary and General Treasurer 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.

9.2 The President can be re-elected as such for one more term of three years consecutively only in special or crisis situations as decided by the newly elected General Board but may stand for the re-election after at least one three-year term of not serving on the Board.

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

Article 10. Rights and Obligations

10.1 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.

10.2 The General Board of EFTA may delegate the daily management to its President, one of its members, or a person specially appointed thereto.

10.3 The General Board of EFTA has ultimate decision-making power on matters submitted for discussion by the separate Chambers' Boards.

Article 11. Decision making

11.1 All decisions of the General Board of EFTA require a simple majority of all the members present at the meeting. Chamber boards retain decision making control over internal budgetary decisions of their Board and internal matters of their Board.

11.2 In the event of a tied vote, the President has a casting vote as well as their own vote.

11.3 In order for valid decisions to be taken, a quorum of 4/7 of the members from each Chambers' Board need to be present at the GB meeting. Virtual attendance at GB meetings is possible with prior notification and the approval of the President.

Article 12. Executive Committee

12.1 The Executive Committee has the function to co-ordinate the business of EFTA and prepare strategic and operational plans to propose to the General Board.

12.2 The Executive Committee is comprised of the President, the Vice President, the EFTA Treasurer, the EFTA Secretary, the Chairs and Vice Chairs of each Board Chamber. The Vice President, the Treasurer and the Secretary have a consulting role without voting rights.

12.3 The Chair of the Executive Body is the President of EFTA.

12.4 The role of the Executive Body is to facilitate, mediate, drive and expedite processes and actions on behalf of the association. It is not authorized to make or change policies of the association.

Policy decisions can only be made by the General Board as mandated by the General Assembly.

Article 13. Administration

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 designate delegates. The President or their designated delegate is responsible to follow

the actions at law, whether in application or defence. In case of unavailability of the President, the President Elect, or the Presidents Delegated designate.

V. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF EFTA

Article 14. Composition et functions

14.1 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

14.2 The functions of the General Assembly are to:

- a. modify statutes and by-laws
- b. annually approve the budget and accounts of EFTA.
- c. discuss and develop the future policies of the Association as a whole.
- d. Consider, discuss, and vote on such proposals as are laid before the General Assembly.
- e. 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.
- f. Dissolve the Association.

Article 15. Meetings

15.1 The ordinary General Assembly of EFTA will meet at least once a year within the first six months at a location that will have been indicated in a written notice convening the meeting. The General Assembly is chaired by the President or by the Vice President in case of unavailability of the President.

15.2 The written notice convening the meeting is issued by the General Board and must be sent by ordinary post or electronic mail at least 28 days prior to the meeting. The notice must contain the date, time and place, and the draft agenda for the meeting. The link for electronic vote will be sent to fully paid-up members of the association. Proxy voting will be permitted at the GA, one proxy per person only to those attending the meeting in person.

15.3 The General Assembly of EFTA must also be convened if so, requested by at least 25% of the members of at least two Chambers.

15.4 The decisions and resolutions of the Assembly will be notified to the members by regular reports sent to the members. The reports will also be available with the secretariats of the three chambers.

15.5 In extraordinary circumstances the General board of EFTA can decide to conduct a virtual General Assembly.

Article 16. Quorum, Voting and Decision-making

16.1 The General Assembly of EFTA may only proceed with its business if representatives of all three Chambers are present.

16.2 Decisions of the General Assembly require a simple majority of votes of those EFTA members present or represented and with prior agreement virtually present at the General Assembly. If agreement is not reached, new discussion and voting are required.

16.3 Only Ordinary Members of the Chambers have the right to vote.

CIM members have 1 vote each member in the GA.

TIC members have 2 votes for each member training institute in the GA.

NFTO members have 3 votes for each national organisation in the GA.

In order to exercise the right to vote at the General Assembly, members must have fully paid the corresponding fees to the Chamber to which they belong.

16.4 Voting in the GA is by a simple majority of those members present or virtually voting at the GA. Voting by chamber may be used to facilitate the counting of the overall vote.

VI. BUDGET AND EXPENSES

Article 17. Period

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

17.2 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.

17.3 In the event of the dissolution of the association, the funds shall be given to another international association having similar aims and objectives. The eventual net assets, after liquidation, must be disposed of without personal gain.

VII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 18. Amendments

18.1 Modifications/ amendments to the Statutes can only be confirmed by the General Assembly of EFTA. Proposed modifications/amendments must be presented to the GB by a chamber board and must be submitted for discussion. The GB must inform all members of EFTA of the proposal(s) at least 28 days prior to the meeting of the General Assembly.

18.2 The decision to modify the statutes or to dissolve the Association requires a majority of votes of at least two thirds (2/3) 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.

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

18.4 All that is not included in the current statutes will be governed by the provisions of Title III of the Belgian law of 23rd of March 2019 in respect of non- profit associations, foundations, and non-profit international associations.