

**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
WORLD FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES OF  
BIOLOGICAL PSYCHIATRY**

**Association domiciled in Zurich, Switzerland**

**1 Name, Domicile and Purpose**

- 1.1 Under the name World Federation of Societies of Biological Psychiatry (hereafter called the "Federation") there exists an Association pursuant to Art. 60 et seq. of the Swiss Civil Code with domicile in Zurich.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Federation is to promote, in all countries, education and the attainment of the highest level of knowledge and understanding in the field of Biological Psychiatry in so far as such activities shall be wholly non-profit making in nature. Biological Psychiatry is defined as being all forms of study of the biological basis of mental disorders and related manifestations. Such studies may be pursued in animals or human being and be of experimental clinical or applied nature.
- 1.3 To that end, but without restricting the foregoing main object of the Federation and in so far as the same shall be wholly charitable, the Federation intends:
  - 1.3.1 To foster and encourage scientific research, investigation and demonstration in the field of Biological Psychiatry.
  - 1.3.2 To improve the quality of instruction in the professions dealing with these sciences.

- 1.3.3 To supply information to, to operate with and to advise, through its committees, any society institution or individual interested in these problems.
- 1.3.4 To establish and maintain an efficient collaboration with international and national learned societies, governmental organisations, professional associations and other groups, societies, institutions and individuals who contribute to progress in the field of Biological Psychiatry.

## **2 Means**

The means of attaining these ends shall consist more particularly of:

- 2.1 Organising World Congresses of Biological Psychiatry to be held in one of the countries represented in membership of the Federation.
- 2.2 Appointing special Committees, Commissions, groups or individuals for the purpose of studying all problems related to the aims of the Federation.
- 2.3 Fostering and facilitating in all countries the proper methods of study and means for action, of meeting and of exchange of ideas, concerning progress attained in Biological Psychiatry.
- 2.4 Disseminating information through the journal and books published under the control of Member National Societies of Biological Psychiatry.
- 2.5 Making known its activities as well as those of Congresses and national or regional meetings and those of its Committees by all appropriate means and, in particular, through the medium its official publications, the bulletin *WorldBiolPsychNews* and *The World Journal of Biological Psychiatry*.
- 2.6 Collaborating with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and with other institutions in so far as they endeavour to improve human health in the field of Biological Psychiatry.

### **3 Membership**

- 3.1 The Federation is an association composed of National Societies, or groups of Societies of Biological Psychiatry. Member Societies other than charter members shall be those Societies whose applications for membership have been accepted by majority vote of the Council.
- 3.2 To permit participation in the Federation by qualified individuals residing in a country without a National Society of Biological Psychiatry registered in the Federation, an Individual Membership Section is established. The Individual Membership Section shall have the status of a single member society with respect to privileges of voting and representation on Committees or Commissions.
- 3.3 Application for Society membership must be made in writing to the President and be accompanied by a list of the current officers and members of the Society and by a copy of its Constitution.
- 3.4 Application for membership in the Individual Membership Section must be made in writing to the Secretary-Treasurer, accompanied by an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae. Such applications shall be reviewed by an Individual Membership Credentials Committee appointed by the President.
- 3.5 Maintenance of the privileges of membership, including voting rights, requires regular payment of dues, as described under Article 12.
- 3.6 Any person who has rendered important service to the Federation may be appointed Honorary Fellow by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly.

### **4 Organisation**

- 4.1 The Federation has the following executive bodies
  - The General Assembly
  - The Council, consisting of
    - the Executive Committee and
    - one Delegate from each of the Member Societies and the Individual Membership Section
  - The Auditors

## 4.2. **The General Assembly**

- 4.2.1 The General Assembly is composed of the Honorary Presidents, the Council, the members of Special Committees and of the current Executive Committee and two officers or their specified alternates of each Member Society and of the Individual Membership Section. The Secretary of each Society must submit a written list of these Officers and alternates in advance to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Federation. The President of the Federation is the Chairman of the General Assembly.
- 4.2.2 When a Member Society cannot be represented in the Assembly by its full quota of delegates, the Delegate (s) present may cast more than one vote, providing permission has been requested in writing to the Secretary-Treasurer and approval granted by the Council. Similarly, if circumstances prevent of any Delegate from a Member Society, a Delegate from another Society upon prior written request to the Secretary-Treasurer and approval by Council may cast their votes.
- 4.2.3 The ordinary General Assembly is held at the place and date fixed for the session of the World Congress.
- 4.2.4 The General Assembly shall be convened by the Executive Committee. Notice shall be given at least 20 days prior to the meeting in writing stating the agenda.
- 4.2.5 Extraordinary meetings shall be called according to necessity or if so requested in writing by at least 20 % of the members stating the purpose of such meeting.
- 4.2.6 All those registered at the World Congress may attend the General Assembly, but only the official members of the Assembly may speak and vote. Exceptionally, the Chairman of the General Assembly may invite a non-member of the Assembly to speak.
- 4.2.7 There is a quorum of the General Assembly if 30 % of the total of the Member Societies is present.
- 4.2.8 The voting power of the Member Societies is as follows:
- |                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| 10 - 20 members:           | 1 vote  |
| 21 - 40 members:           | 2 votes |
| 41 - 80 members:           | 3 votes |
| 81 - 200 members:          | 4 votes |
| 201 - 400 members:         | 5 votes |
| 401 - 600 members or more: | 6 votes |

4.2.9 The General Assembly elects the President, the first Vice-President, the second Vice-President, the Secretary-Treasurer, the first associate Secretary-Treasurer and the second associate Secretary Treasurer. The candidates are initially nominated by the Nomination Committee and approved by the Council. The Chairman of the General Assembly may ask the Assembly for nominations of additional candidates before nominations are closed and voting takes place.

4.2.10 The General Assembly approves the accounts and decides on the use of the financial result.

4.2.11 The General Assembly determines the membership dues pursuant to Article 12.

4.2.12 The General Assembly passes resolutions and carries out elections, to the extent this Constitution or the law do not provide otherwise with the absolute majority of the votes cast. A two-thirds majority of the votes represented is required for the election of a Honorary Fellow, for the amendment of the Constitution, for amalgamation or dissolution of the Federation. If the votes are equal, the Chairman shall have the deciding vote.

#### 4.3 **The Council**

4.3.1 The Council is composed of the Executive Committee, together with one Delegate from each of the Member Societies and the Individual Membership Section.

4.3.2 The Council meets at the same place and immediately before the General Assembly. It may also conduct its business by postal ballot or e-mail if a member of the Council raises no objection.

4.3.3 For the Council meeting before the General Assembly or such other meetings of Council called officially, the name of the Delegate or an alternate for his absence shall be submitted in advance to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Federation.

4.3.4 There is a quorum of the Council if one member of each of one third of the Member Societies together with the President and the Secretary-Treasurer or their specified deputies and one other Executive Officer are present.

4.3.5 Each member (including the Chairman) of the Council has one vote. The Council passes resolutions, to the extent the law or the Constitution do not provide otherwise with the absolute majority of the members present.

4.3.6 A three quarters majority of the member of the Council present is required for the exclusion of a Member Society from the Federation.

#### **4.4 The Executive Committee**

- 4.4.1 The Executive Committee is composed of the President, immediate Past-President, the first Vice-President, the second Vice-President, the Secretary-Treasurer, the first associate Secretary-Treasurer and the second associate Secretary-Treasurer.
- 4.4.2 The Executive Committee may hold meetings at any time and in any place, which may be convenient to its members; it may conduct its business by postal ballot or e-mail if no objection is raised by a member. It shall have full power to formulate by-laws not in conflict with the Constitution subject to ratification by the Council.
- 4.4.3 There is a quorum of the Executive Committee if the President and the Secretary-Treasurer or their deputies, and two other members, totalling at least 4 members, are present.
- 4.4.4 Each member (including the President) of the Executive Committee has one vote. The Executive Committee passes resolutions, to the extent the law or the Constitution do not provide otherwise with the absolute majority of the members present.

#### **4.5 The Auditors**

The Auditors shall audit the books and records. The Auditors shall prepare a report in writing addressed to the Council, which in turn presents such report to the General Assembly. Only Certified Public Accountants can be appointed as Auditors.

### **5 Terms of Office**

- 5.1 Honorary Fellows are elected without term by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly. They have no voting powers.
- 5.2 Past Presidents are entitled Honorary Presidents without term. Only the immediate Past President is an Executive Officer of the Federation. In the event of the prolonged incapacity or death of the President, the First Vice-President assumes his office and duties for the remainder of the fiscal period.
- 5.3 The term of office of the President, the first Vice-President, the second Vice-President, the Secretary-Treasurer, the first associate Secretary-Treasurer and second associate Secretary-Treasurer is the fiscal period. They are not eligible for re-election in the same office.

- 5.4 Each delegate is appointed by his Member Society to represent his group in the affairs of the Council. In the absence of a Delegate from the meeting of Council, an alternate shall be appointed by the Member Society or by the Individual Membership Section for the duration of the meeting. The name of the Delegate shall be forwarded on his appointment and annually thereafter to Secretary-Treasurer of the Federation.

## **6 Fiscal Period**

- 6.1 The fiscal period is a four year's period, and its beginning and end shall coincide with the World Congress General Assembly. It defines the term of the Executive Committee and of its members, the term of the Council and all Special Commissions and Committees.
- 6.2 If, for any reason, a World Congress is held two years or less after the preceding Congress, all the above mentioned shall remain in office until the next following Congress. Any period from one Congress to the next or more than four years constitutes the fiscal period. In no case shall the fiscal period exceed five years.

## **7 Special Commissions**

The Executive Committee, or the Council or the General Assembly may set up Special Commissions, each to develop a special task for a specific period of time. As many members as required to complete the task will be appointed to each Special Commission and one member will be designated as Chairman.

## **8 Nomination Committee**

- 8.1 Not less than one year before the end of the fiscal period, the Executive Committee shall elect three delegates to serve as a Nomination Committee under the chairmanship of the immediate Past President.
- 8.2 This Nomination Committee shall invite nominations from the members of the Council who may each consult with his parent Society or the Individual Membership Section for the offices of President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary-Treasurer and Associate Secretary-Treasurers of the Federation. The Executive Committee may decide the number of candidates to be nominated for each of the six Officer posts but there should never

be less than two for each position. Having ascertained the willingness of the candidates to serve and following approval of the nominations by Council, the Chairman of the Nomination Committee shall submit their names to the vote of the General Assembly. The Secretary-Treasurer shall supervise the ballot in the Assembly and record the results.

## **9 Congresses**

- 9.1 Not less than three years before the end of the fiscal period an Organisation Committee of the World Congress shall be set up for the purpose of organising all aspects of the next World Congress.
- 9.2 This Committee shall be formed initially from four appointees by the National Society in charge of the Congress who shall act as Convenor, Secretary, Associate Secretary, and Treasurer of the Congress. The President of the Federation has the option of being Chairman of the Organisation Committee.
- 9.3 After preliminary discussion, sub-committees to conduct the different affairs of the Congress shall be set up and the Chairman of each sub-committee shall ex-officio become a member of the Organisation Committee. Other persons may be co-opted as members at the discretion of the Committee.
- 9.4 Not less than two years before the end of the fiscal period, the national society in charge of the Congress shall be asked to recommend for appointment of one or more Honorary Presidents of World Congress, one may be the Convenor.
- 9.5 Not less than two years before the date of the Congress, the general plan of the Congress, including a proposed budget shall be submitted by the Organisation Committee to the Executive Committee of the Federation for ratification in principle. This plan shall include a budget and an indication of the support and assistance required from the Secretariat of the Federation. It is to be understood that the host national Society assumes the basic responsibility for funding the Congress.

## **10 Constitution and Special Committees**

- 10.1 At the beginning of the fiscal period, a Constitution Committee of five members shall be set up by the Executive Committee. The Constitution Committee shall constantly review the Statutes and by-laws and make recommendations if necessary for their

amendment to the Executive Committee. The President may refer questions regarding the interpretation of the existing Constitution and by-laws to the Constitution Committee and request a recommendation to the Executive Committee. The final decision rests with the Executive Committee.

- 10.2 Special Committees may be appointed by the President of the Federation and ratified by the Executive Committee. A Special Committee may act through representatives duly appointed. The Chairmen of the Special Committees are directly linked to the Executive Committee. The Chairman will be a member of the Council and will advise it of interests of this specialty; the other members of the Special Committees, as well the Chairmen, are members of the General Assembly.

## **11 Languages**

The official languages of the Federation shall be English, French, German and Spanish and the translation from one language to the other shall be organised as much as possible to give, if not the whole text, at least a summary. Speakers, however, shall have the right to use the language of their choice, providing they supply a translation in one of the official languages.

## **12 Finances**

- 12.1 For the accomplishment of its purpose the Federation disposes of the membership dues and other contribution of third parties.
- 12.2 For all obligations of the Federation only the Federations property is liable. Any personal liability of the members is excluded.
- 12.3 Each Member Society shall pay to the Federation an annual subscription, the amount of which shall be determined by the General Assembly. The amount of such subscription shall be proportionate to the number of members of each Society and shall be payable in advance to the Secretary-Treasurer until the last day of March. A Society may, having regard to the variable structure of Societies from one country to another, contest the number of its members ranking for assessment.
- 12.4 Members of the Individual Membership Section will pay annual dues at a level determined by the General Assembly. They will be billed individually by the Secretary-Treasurer.

- 12.5 The Executive Committee shall determine all matters of finance, such as the site of the Treasury and the making of grants and loans.
- 12.6 The Federation shall have the right to accept and administer gifts, legacies, movable or immovable properties, donations and assets of any kind without any restrictions as to amount or value.
- 12.7 The assets of the Federation shall be used for its own operation, for payment of its assessments to any international body with which it may be affiliated and in a general way to provide for the attainment of its purposes. Any excess shall be deposited in the Treasury of the Federation.
- 12.8 No portion of the assets of the Federation shall be paid, directly or indirectly, to any Member Society or Officer of the Federation, except for reasonable payment for services actually rendered or repayment of expenses incurred in the interests of the Federation.
- 12.9 The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep proper books and records of account.

### **13 Dissolution of Federation**

- 13.1 The Federation may be dissolved or may be amalgamated with another body having similar objects on the proposal of the Executive Committee ratified by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly.
- 13.2 In the event of its dissolution the assets of the Federation may not be divided among its members and shall be transferred to another international body or bodies of like interests.
- 13.3 In the event of annulment or cessation of its present purpose, the assets of the Federation may not be distributed among its members but shall be assigned to another international body or bodies or like interests, which must use the assets exceptionally and directly for welfare purposes.
- 13.4 In the event of dissolution of the Federation the member are not entitled to the Federation's assets.

## **14 Final Provisions**

- 14.1 The present Constitution was approved by the Incorporation Meeting of the Federation in Zurich on March 6, 2001.

In the name and with proxy  
of the Founders:

Dr. Thomas Wartmann

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