

**IMAGINE**  
A WORLD  
**FREE OF**  
EMOTIONAL  
**DISTRESS**



**EAP**  
European Association  
for Psychotherapy

Member of the World Council for Psychotherapy (WCP)  
NGO with consultative status to the Council of Europe



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY (EAP) IS THE FLAGSHIP OF THE PROFESSION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY IN EUROPE

- Overview / Facts ..... 4/5
- Who we are / About EAP ..... 7
- Our vision ..... 8
- European Psychotherapy Act .....9
- What we do is of importance to the EU .....10/11
- Our goals / Adoption of the Psychotherapy Act ..... 12
- European Certificate of Psychotherapy (ECP) ..... 13
- What is Psychotherapy? .....14/15
- Psychotherapy & Research ..... 16
- Strasbourg Declaration on Psychotherapy of 1990 ..... 17
- Statement of Ethical Principles of the EAP..... 18

### EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY (EAP)

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# EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING IS A HUMAN RIGHT

Psychotherapy is an effective intervention for a wide range of mental health problems in people of all ages.



**38.2%**

**OF THE CITIZENS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION SUFFER FROM EMOTIONAL DISTRESS OR MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS**

Their ability to live their lives to the full in their personal, family and working life is reduced.

[More information on page 10.](#)



**200 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE EU SUFFER FROM EMOTIONAL DISTRESS<sup>(1)</sup>**

(1) The size and burden of mental disorders and other disorders of the brain in Europe 2010. European Neuropsychopharmacology, Volume 21, Issue 9, September 2011, Pages 655-679

**EUROPE'S CITIZENS DESERVE ACCESSIBILITY TO QUALITY ASSURED PSYCHOTHERAPY**

EAP aims to ensure that high-quality psychotherapy in both private and public sectors is available to everyone.



**SUCCESS RATE**

The average success rate for treated cases range from 65 to 72%<sup>(3)</sup>

(3) The Effectiveness of Psychotherapy, Carr (2012)

**IN EUROPE, ONLY 26% OF PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO A MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST**



**GRANT PSYCHOTHERAPY A PROFESSIONAL STANDING**

We look forward to the adoption of the **PSYCHOTHERAPY ACT** by the European Union, thus granting the same professional standing as has been given to other professions in recent years.

[More information on page 12.](#)

**DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR REQUIRE FURTHER INFORMATION? CONTACT US!**

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# EUROPE'S CITIZENS DESERVE ACCESSIBILITY TO QUALITY ASSURED PSYCHOTHERAPY

## WHO WE ARE

### THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY (EAP) IS THE FLAGSHIP OF THE PROFESSION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY IN EUROPE

EAP unites **120,000 PSYCHOTHERAPISTS** and **128 PSYCHOTHERAPY ORGANISATIONS** from **41 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES** into a common organisation. Based on the "Strasbourg Declaration on Psychotherapy of 1990"<sup>(2)</sup> the EAP represents and **SUSTAINS THE HIGHEST PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS** for the free and independent practice of psychotherapy, and upholds rigorous standards of competence and professionalism.

(2) Strasbourg Declaration on Psychotherapy of 1990

### THE AUTHORS OF THIS LEAFLET

Patricia Hunt, President of the European Association for Psychotherapy  
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**120.000**  
PSYCHOTHERAPISTS



**128**  
ORGANISATIONS



**FROM 41**  
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

## OUR VISION

IS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION BEING A PLACE IN WHICH  
EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING IS A HUMAN RIGHT.

We aim to transform lives by unlocking individual's potential. When someone's potential is unlocked in this way they are **ABLE TO WORK EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY**, and contribute to the social and economic good of society. They are also able to enjoy their personal and family relationships to the full.

EAP aims to **ENSURE THAT HIGH-QUALITY PSYCHOTHERAPY** in both private and public sectors is **AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE**, no matter who they are. We aim to protect the public by making sure all Psychotherapists on our register meet our training, professional and ethical standards. We aim to continue setting high standards in the way we govern and organise ourselves as an organisation.

We support the conduct of appropriate research, and use research findings to promote psychotherapy and to inform training and the development of psychotherapists for the benefit of all.

EAP aims to **ELEVATE AND PROMOTE THE PROFESSION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY**.

In 2018 the European Association for Psychotherapy submitted the **PSYCHOTHERAPY ACT** to the **EUROPEAN COMMISSION** to gain recognition of the professional status of Psychotherapist. The Psychotherapy Act approved by the EAP in April 2018 is as follows:



## EUROPEAN PSYCHOTHERAPY ACT

DATE OF FORMAL ADOPTION FROM  
EAP GOVERNING BOARD: 30TH APRIL 2018

The Psychotherapy Act encompasses all the professional actions, i.e. the autonomous, interdisciplinary, relationship-based and evidence-informed psychotherapeutic methods, for the treatment of psychological, psycho-social and psycho-somatic disorders and difficulties. A relationship of trust, empathy and confidentiality between the Psychotherapist and the client is essential for effective clinical practice.

The Psychotherapy Act is underpinned by national and international ethical codes which respect the dignity, autonomy and uniqueness of all human beings.

**PSYCHOTHERAPY IS AN INDEPENDENT PROFESSION** from psychology, psychiatry and counselling. Psychotherapists usually have a first degree followed by a professional, highly specialized, theoretical and clinical training which includes research methodology and continuous professional development. The range of psychotherapeutic modalities is broad, and the profession is constantly evolving new developments in theory and clinical practice.

**Charles Cassar**  
EAP President

**EUROPE'S CITIZENS DESERVE  
ACCESSIBILITY TO QUALITY  
ASSURED PSYCHOTHERAPY**

EAP aims to ensure that high-quality psychotherapy in both private and public sectors is available to everyone.

# WHAT WE DO IS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE EU

When someone is experiencing emotional or mental health problems their capacity to live life to the full is usually reduced. This means that in their working life they are unlikely to be able to perform their work to the highest level of which they are capable, and tasks they could normally fulfil effectively cause them stress and anxiety. Their efficiency is reduced, their ability to relate well to colleagues may be affected and their employers will notice differences in their productivity. There may be days of work lost to their ill health and sometimes extended periods of sick leave due to emotional and mental health problems.

## THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF AN ESTIMATED 38.3% OF THE POPULATION BEING AFFECTED BY EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

**PSYCHOTHERAPY IS AN EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION** for a wide range of mental health problems in people of all ages; the **AVERAGE SUCCESS RATE** for treated cases range from **65 to 72%**.<sup>(3)</sup> There is a benefit for clients who receive effective treatment, and also crucially for the EU there is a **COST BENEFIT** to the state and the taxpayer due to the relatively **LOW COST / HIGH VALUE STRUCTURE**.

## IN EUROPE, ONLY 26% OF PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO A MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST.

People who experience personality disorders, chronic conditions and severe anxiety or depression disorders are a group that needs psychotherapy, including long-term psychotherapy. It is extremely important that such people receive adequate support. If this does not happen then the costs associated with, for example, sick leave, reduced productivity, frequent outpatient appointments and visits to hospital emergency departments and acquired disability, significantly increase.

There is ample evidence from studies going back 40 years that **individuals, couples and families who participate in psychotherapy fare better in terms of managing their lives** in the short to long term **than approximately 75% of people who do not participate in psychotherapy**.<sup>(3)</sup>

(3) The Effectiveness of Psychotherapy, Carr (2012)

(4) Caldwell, Woolley & Caldwell (2007)



**200 MILLION PEOPLE**  
IN THE EU SUFFER FROM EMOTIONAL DISTRESS<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) The size and burden of mental disorders and other disorders of the brain in Europe 2010. European Neuropsychopharmacology, Volume 21, Issue 9, September 2011, Pages 655-679

There is also evidence that **PEOPLE WHO USE PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC SERVICES USE FEWER MEDICAL SERVICES, INCLUDING HOSPITAL SERVICES**. In research over a 30 year period it was demonstrated that in 90% of cases surveyed the cost offset was actually greater than the cost of the psychotherapy provided.<sup>(4)</sup>

Research shows that the **COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE OVERALL HEALTH CARE** of a person who benefited from psychotherapy **WERE REDUCED BY 17%** compared to those who did not use psychotherapy. In the case of people not using psychotherapy, the necessary expenditure on health services increased by 12.3%.<sup>(5)</sup>

Comparing data from the period before the beginning of psychotherapy and after its completion, Golden<sup>(6)</sup> noted a **reduction in the frequency of visits to the primary care physicians or family doctors by 49%**. These results also show that the inclusion of psychotherapy in the treatment process of people who very often use medical care reduces hospitalization rate by an average 2.52 days per person.

To give **FINANCIAL EXAMPLES OF THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS** of psychotherapy from one country, Poland, a report prepared by the Institute of Healthcare Management in Warsaw demonstrates that in Poland the costs of the treatment of depression amount to 40 million Euros annually, and the costs incurred by the Polish Social Insurance Institution related to this depression amount to 176 million Euros annually. It is important to point out that about 80% of all patients with depression are people at the age of highest economic activity (30-59 years). The financial costs reported in Poland are mirrored in every country of the EU.

In conclusion, it is clear that there are **BENEFITS AND SAVINGS FROM THE USE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY** in the health care system, social welfare and other sectors or areas. Effective intervention in the area of mental health problems should include help and action at the earliest possible stage, including psychotherapy. Additionally, the objectives of psychotherapy are more than the alleviation of troublesome symptoms. Within the psychotherapeutic relationship the **client has an opportunity to experience more of who they are, increased self-awareness, a greater capacity for self regulation and a more satisfying life**.

(5) Chiles, Lambert and Hatch (1999, 2002)

(6) Golden (1997)

## OUR GOALS

### WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE ADOPTION OF THE PSYCHOTHERAPY ACT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

We understand that the European Union places great emphasis and funding on health, as healthy people are happy citizens and an effective work force.

Psychotherapists are an important part of the group of health professionals needed by the EU as psychotherapy is effective in helping people overcome emotional and mental health problems and becoming happier and more fulfilled citizens.<sup>(4)</sup>

Since 1990 EAP has accumulated a vast amount of experience and expertise in dealing with the regulation of the profession of psychotherapy, including training standards and accreditation, ethics, CPD and maintaining a register, and has links with the relevant international psychotherapy bodies.

2018 is a new era in which we look forward to the **ADOPTION OF THE PSYCHOTHERAPY ACT** by the European Union, thus granting the **SAME PROFESSIONAL STANDING as has been given to other professions in recent years**, for example the Medical Act and the Nursing Act. We look forward to being part of future consultations with European Commissioners.

(4) Caldwell, Woolley & Caldwell (2007)



# EUROPEAN CERTIFICATE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

## TO ENSURE THE STANDARDISATION OF THE PROFESSION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY THROUGHOUT EUROPE

The European Association for Psychotherapy has established the European Certificate of Psychotherapy to ensure the **STANDARDISATION OF THE PROFESSION OF PSYCHOTHERAPY** throughout Europe.

The **EUROPEAN CERTIFICATE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY (ECP)** was established to create a comprehensive Europe wide standard for the profession of psychotherapy. It ensures equal standards of education, training and clinical practice across Europe. The ECP establishes and defines the core professional competencies of a European Psychotherapist.

For further information on the European Certificate of Psychotherapy please see <https://www.europsyche.org/ecp/about-ecp>



# WHAT IS PSYCHOTHERAPY?

**AN INDEPENDENT SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE,  
PRACTICED AT AN ADVANCED, QUALIFIED AND SCIENTIFIC LEVEL**

Psychotherapy is an independent scientific discipline, practiced at an advanced, qualified and scientific level. It covers a **RANGE OF APPROACHES AND METHODS** based on a well-established body of **THEORY, METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH**.<sup>(8)</sup>

The term Psychotherapy covers a range of approaches and methods. They all involve a psychological (as distinct from medical or pharmacological) treatment for a range of psychological, emotional and relationship difficulties and disorders. Each approach is based on a well-established body of theory, methodology and research, and is grounded in a philosophy of person and the human condition.

Psychotherapy may be **SHORT-TERM** or **LONG-TERM**. Some approaches focus on treating and resolving symptoms and addressing overt behaviour and cognition. Other approaches aim for change in personality and emotional development by taking into consideration aspects of the inner world of which the person may be unaware and helping them understand and change deep and often unconscious emotional and relationship problems. Different approaches may be indicated or appropriate according to the presenting problem or client preference.

Psychotherapy provides an **EFFECTIVE TREATMENT** for people with serious **PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS**. People may seek help for specific reasons such as early childhood trauma, eating disorders, psychosomatic conditions, suicidal ideation, post-traumatic stress disorder, obsessional behaviour, or phobic anxieties. At other times help is sought because of more general underlying feelings of depression or anxiety, difficulties in concentrating, dissatisfaction in work or inability to form satisfactory relationships. However, the value of psychotherapy is not limited to those with mental health problems. Many people who experience feelings of emptiness or meaninglessness in their lives or who are seeking a greater sense of fulfilment may be helped by psychotherapy. Psychotherapy can benefit adults, adolescents, children and families.



The **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PSYCHOTHERAPIST** is a crucial element in the therapy. The psychotherapist offers a confidential and private setting in which difficult experiences may be explored and worked through. Current theoretical and empirical research confirms the importance of the therapeutic relationship as a critical factor influencing successful psychotherapy outcome.

Psychotherapy has also benefited from newer developments in **ATTACHMENT THEORY** and the findings from both **AFFECTIVE AND COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE**. Psychotherapists have been actively engaged with colleagues from neuroscience in these new emerging fields. Psychotherapy is essentially a talking therapy, however psychotherapists may use a range of methods including art, music, drama and movement.

## **PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSIONS CAN BE**

- one-to-one
- include a partner of family members
- in a group
- some therapists specialise in providing psychotherapy for adolescents and children.

EAP Psychotherapists conduct **PROFESSIONAL WORK IN A VARIETY OF SETTINGS** including the National Health Services, Psychiatric and General Hospitals, Child and Adolescent centres, Private Practice and voluntary groups.

(8) Irish Council for Psychotherapy's Submission Paper to the Department of Health on the proposed Statutory Regulation of Psychotherapy and Counselling under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005

## PSYCHOTHERAPY & RESEARCH

Psychotherapy is a scientific profession. **RESEARCH IN THE DOMAIN OF PSYCHOTHERAPY** can be understood as an ongoing **STRUCTURED, METHODOLOGICAL PROCESS OF REFLECTING ON CLINICAL PRACTICE**, connected with knowledge from research on the functioning of human beings.

**SCIENTIFIC VALIDATION** means, that the theory has a scientific base, that there are case descriptions, qualitative research, empiric process and outcome research and combinations of qualitative with empiric deigns.

The concept of Evidence based Medicine (EbM), that first was developed for testing pharmacies, describes and contains originally all these kinds of researches. If the concept contains all categories of research designs, it is a useful concept. But unfortunately some research experts in some countries tend to count only so called randomized controlled trials (RCT) as a the “gold standard” in EbM. This is highly controversial when discussed in the scientific community. Some researchers say that this is an abuse of the concept of EbM<sup>(9)</sup> and absolutely not suitable for psychotherapy research.

There has been a wide spectrum of research done in the last few decades that has generated **EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PSYCHOTHERAPY** in general.<sup>(10)</sup> However, there are a lot of questions not yet answered, such as “**HOW DOES PSYCHOTHERAPY WORK?**”, “What are the change mechanisms?”, “What are the core and specific competencies of therapists that lead to successful therapies?” which oblige all psychotherapy modalities to engage in further research.

Such questions can only be answered if qualitative methods and quantitative methods are getting mixed in a research design and if the dynamic and process of the relation between therapist and client are properly observed. This cannot be done with simple RCT designs.

For **PUBLIC HEALTH** it is necessary to have research with a high external validity, which means results that are gained in everyday practice (this is called a naturalistic design) and not in laboratories with well sorted out patient groups.

**EUROPEAN LAWS ON PSYCHOTHERAPY** should insist in **ACCEPTING A WIDE RANGE OF RESEARCH DESIGNS FOR SCIENTIFIC VALIDATION**, that are appropriate to the specific process of psychotherapy in interaction between therapist and client as a co-creation of a healing process.

(9) Kriz, J. (2014). Wie evident ist Evidenzbasierung?

Über ein gutes Konzept – und seine missbräuchliche Verwendung. In S. Sulz (Hrsg.), Psychotherapie ist mehr als eine Wissenschaft. Ist hervorragendes Expertentum durch die Reform gefährdet? (S. 154–185). München: CIP.

(10) Wampold B, Imel. Z.E. (2015): The Great Psychotherapy Debate. 2nd edition. London, Routledge

## STRASBOURG DECLARATION ON PSYCHOTHERAPY OF 1990

In accordance with the aims of the **WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO)**, the non-discrimination accord valid within the framework of the European Union (EU) and intended for the European Economic Area (EEA), and the principle of freedom of movement of persons and services, the undersigned agree on the following points:

- 1** Psychotherapy is an **INDEPENDENT SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE**, the practice of which represents an independent and free profession.
- 2** Training in psychotherapy takes place at an **ADVANCED, QUALIFIED AND SCIENTIFIC LEVEL**.
- 3** The **MULTIPLICITY OF PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC METHODS** is assured and guaranteed.
- 4** A **FULL PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC TRAINING** covers theory, self-experience, and practice under supervision. Adequate knowledge of various psychotherapeutic processes is acquired.
- 5** Access to training is through various preliminary qualifications, in particular human and social sciences.



## STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE EAP

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Psychotherapists **RESPECT THE DIGNITY AND WORTH** of the individual and strive for the preservation and protection of fundamental human rights. They are **COMMITTED TO INCREASING KNOWLEDGE** of human behaviour and of people's understanding of themselves and others and the utilisation of such knowledge for the promotion of human welfare.

While pursuing these objectives they **MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PROTECT THE WELFARE** of those who seek their services, of people related to those using their services (where that does not conflict with the needs of their clients) and of any research participants that may be the object of study.

Psychotherapists respect other members of their profession and of related professions and make every effort, in so far as they are able and where that does not conflict with the interests of their clients, to provide full information and give mutual respect. They use their skills only for purposes consistent with these values and do not knowingly permit their misuse by others.

While demanding for themselves freedom of inquiry and communication, psychotherapists accept the responsibility this freedom requires: competence, objectivity in the application of skills, and concern for the best interests of clients, colleagues, students, research participants, & society members.

In the pursuit of these ideals psychotherapists subscribe to detailed **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES** in the following areas:

**RESPONSIBILITY • COMPETENCE • MORAL & LEGAL STANDARDS**  
**CONFIDENTIALITY • WELFARE OF THE CONSUMER**  
**PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS • PUBLIC STATEMENTS**  
**ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES • RESEARCH**

Psychotherapists cooperate fully with their own professional, national, and European organisations & associations and with the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP) by responding promptly and completely to inquiries from and requirements of any duly constituted ethics or professional committees of such associations or organisations of which they are a member or to which they belong.

The full statement can be found at  
<https://www.europsyche.org/quality-standards/eap-guidelines/statement-of-ethical-principles>



[europsyche.org](http://europsyche.org)



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