

History of the Competency Movement in Europe

Dr. Rosaleen McElvaney



History of the Competency Movement in Europe

- **Aim:** To establish a universal set of qualifications which allows for professionals to practice freely throughout Europe.
- **Movement influenced somewhat from 1957 Treaty of Rome:**
‘freedom to work anywhere in the European Community is a basic right’, Treaty of Rome’; Article 48



- **Article 57:** allowed for mutual recognition and co-ordination of professional qualifications.

- Despite a consensus throughout Europe that such a movement was beneficial, implementation was slow and difficult.



EFPPA & EFPA

- 1981: The European Federation of Psychologists Associations (EFPA), formerly known as European Federation of Professional Psychologists Associations (EFPPA)
- This federation of national psychology associations promoted the current development of a European Qualification, along with the help of two major initiatives:
 - 1st: The EU Directive on professional qualifications
 - 2nd: The Bologna Process

The General Directive 89/48/EC & 92/51/EEC

- 1985: The European Commission proposed a new approach to cover professions which access was in some way restricted (or regulated)



Directive 89/48/EEC:

covers the mutual recognition of qualifications in recognised professions that require a University degree or equivalent



Directive 92/51/EEC:

covers the mutual recognition of qualifications in professions regulated below degree level

- Psychologists were covered by both directives

Third Directive

- Due to the limited success of General Directives in promoting mobility, a revised directive was developed.
- 1996: Consultations began for what would be the Third Directive which aimed to further facilitate free movement throughout the European Economic Area
- 2005: The Third Directive was finally accepted by both the Council of the EU and the European Parliament.
- This reviewed directive was proposed to replace 15 separate directives already in place and to 'clarify and simplify the rules in order to facilitate free movement of qualified people'.

These Directives cover all twenty-eight member states of the European Union plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.



However....

- There was little progress in using them to encourage the mobility of psychologists in Europe, partly due to each country's ability to impose its own requirements on psychologists attempting to enter the country with qualifications obtained in another country.
- Each country still had a national template from which individual cases would be compared and evaluated against.

Bologna Declaration

- **1999**: The Bologna Declaration; an inter-governmental commitment by 29 ministers to reform the structures of their higher education system in a convergent way and to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA).
- **2010**: The Bologna Process was officially launched, and now consists of 48 countries which implement an education area on common values and using common tools. Thus, ensuring quality and mobility.

The Bologna Process:

- The Bologna Declaration aimed to create an effective EHEA through three major strands;

- 1: **Creating a Common Degree Structure (based on three consecutive cycles: the undergraduate cycle lasting 3 years, followed by a graduate cycle of a 2-year Master's degree followed by doctorate degrees)**
- 2: **Supporting Mobility through the Use of the European Credit System (ECTS)**
- 3: **Enhancing the European Dimension in Higher Education by placing an emphasis on European Quality Assurance**

Benefits of the Bologna Process:

- **Almost all countries have now adapted their degree structures to the Bachelor/Masters structure pushed by Bologna**
- **Universities in European countries are increasingly collaborating to offer joint degrees, which are increasingly taught in the English language.**
- **More and more students are taking degrees that involve a period spent in another European country**
- **The ECTS, which enables students to gain credits from different universities in Europe, has had a major impact on the structure of degrees and on the growing use of learning outcomes to establish credit**

EFPA: European Federation of Psychologists Association

- EFPPA originated during a time when the issue of mutual recognition of qualifications was very much on the European agenda. Its name was changed to EFPA (the European Federation of Psychologists Associations) in 2001 after much debate to reflect a broader remit which also included psychologist researchers and the science of psychology.



ASPPB
Association of State and
Provincial Psychology Boards

'Optimum standards for the professional training in psychology (EFPPA 1990)

- 1990: The European Federation of Professional Psychologists Association (EFPPA) agreed on the above statement, which provided a very general framework for the level of qualifications for psychologists;



the requirement of six years of education and training for professional psychologists

EFPA & The Development of the EuroPsy

- 1998: a project to develop a European Framework for Psychologists Training was accepted for funding by the EU under what was known as the Leonardo da Vinci program.
- Over two years partners from 12 European countries began to map out the various professional psychology qualifications
- 2001: The project concluded by setting out a European Framework for Psychologists Training, a common framework for professional training of psychologists known as the EuroPsyT

EFPA & The Development of the EuroPsy

- EuroPsyT: The Framework involved a 6-year model of training, in three phases (3+2+1; i.e., 3 years academic foundation, 2 years advanced education/ training, 1 year supervised practice)

Most countries found little difficulty in agreeing on the basic, scientific or academic foundation

However...

There was considerable disagreement over the later more professional aspects of psychologists' training and over the requirements of a period of supervised practice

EuroPsy: A European Diploma in Psychology

- **2001**: Building upon the EuroPsyT, a second EU funded project began to, which aimed to maximise both quality and mobility.
- **2005**: Acceptance of the EuroPsy: an optimal standard which requires a five year university education in psychology with a recognised curriculum, plus one year of supervised practice.
 - It also implies a commitment to abide by the Code of Ethics, and to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
 - The EuroPsy Certificate is valid for seven years, after which the holder undertakes revalidation to ensure current competence and up-to-date knowledge.

EuroPsy Field Training

- Despite the acceptance of the EuroPsy, field testing was necessary to understand whether this standard could work.
- 2006: The “Experimental Garden”: pilot project which involved six countries (Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, and the UK) aimed to field-test the EuroPsy
- 2008: It was established that the EuroPsy framework has the flexibility for implementation in different ways to reflect the different traditions in the six countries

As early as during the pilot period, EuroPsy began to have an influence on education and training systems, through its requirement for supervised practice and the use of competences to define a fundamental element of professional practice.

EuroPsy Implementation

- 2009: The development of the EAC (European Awarding Committee)
- 2010: The launch of the EuroPsy!
- 2011: Launch of EuroPsy Website and Register



What Exactly is the EuroPsy?

- EuroPsy is *not a license to practice*. EuroPsy respects licensing regulations made by national governments (e.g. for health professions).
- EuroPsy is compatible with European Directives and the Bologna Process, and is meant to *facilitate the evaluation* of migrant psychologists' applications by Competent Authorities.
- EFPA promotes that EuroPsy be the basis for the (new) *“Professional Cards”* that the EU is currently developing.

EuroPsy

- Current Countries participating in the EuroPsy (24): Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom.



*Participating countries in blue



ASPPB

Association of State and
Provincial Psychology Boards

Current EFPA & EuroPsy

- EFPA is the leading Federation of National Psychologists Associations in Europe.
- It provides a forum for European co-operation in a wide range of fields of academic training, psychology practice and research.
- There are 37 member associations of EFPA representing about 300,000 psychologists.



Mission of EFPA

“The mission of EFPA is to promote the development, dissemination and application of psychology in all its forms in Europe and beyond, and to contribute to shaping a humane society, in Europe and beyond, on the basis of psychology’s expertise.”

Principle: “responsible expertise”.



Specialist Certificates

- Psychotherapy

- S-EAC for psychotherapy has been installed in Nov 2010; S-NACs will issue the Specialist Certificates.

- W&O Psychology

- EAWOP is preparing a field test to start in 2012

- Assessment

- A Specialist Certificate in Psychological Assessment is under development.

- Interest in Specialist Certificates have been expressed for:

- Aviation Psychologists
- School psychologists
- Sport psychologists

Current Legal Regulations:

- Recent years have seen a growth in the number of countries in Europe which have legal regulation or laws determining the requirements for the title of 'Psychologist'
- Of the 24 countries offering the EuroPsy, 16 have legal recognition over the title 'Psychologist';
 - Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey , & United Kingdom.

References & Useful Links

- Bartram, D. (1998). The need for international guidelines on standards for test use: A review of European and International initiatives. *European Psychologist*, 3, 155–163.
- Lunt, I. (2005). The impact of the “Bologna Process” on the development of a European qualification in psychology. *European Psychologist*, 10, 2, 86–92
- Lunt, I. (2008). Psychologist qualifications in Europe: Common standard for quality and mobility. *Australian Psychologist*, 43(4), 222-230
- Lunt, I. (2011). EuroPsy: The development of standards for high-quality professional education in psychology. *European Psychologist*.
- Rubin, N. J., Bebeau, M., Leigh, I. W., Lichtenberg, J. W., Nelson, P. D., Portnoy, S., ... & Kaslow, N. J. (2007). The competency movement within psychology: An historical perspective. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 38(5), 452

www.europsy.eu

www.efpa.eu

