

## **ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF THE EUROPEAN PENITENTIARY TRAINING ACADEMIES NETWORK**

*(Replacing the 2010 'Protocol of Engagement')*

### **CHAPTER I - Mission**

EPTA is a public professional organization of European interest, with no legal personality that was established in 2010.

The mission of the network is to enable cooperation between the European penitentiary staff training institutions with the purpose of raising the quality of penitentiary staff training of the member countries to a level that provides for a high level of professionalism of penitentiary staff.

The EPTA network commits to, supports and promotes the Council of Europe guidelines regarding recruitment, selection, education, training and professional development of prison and probation staff, adopted on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2019, the European Prison Rules and its other Conventions and Recommendations related to prisons and community sanctions and measures.

The EPTA network's mission is 'Excellence by cooperation'.

### **CHAPTER II - Objectives**

- To promote exchanges of knowledge, training contents, programmes and good practices;
- To facilitate communication between members and among different network partners;
- To develop common strategies regarding penitentiary staff training curricula and methodologies;
- To issue recommendations for improving the quality of penitentiary staff training;
- To promote and improve the image of the penitentiary staff;
- To promote the principles governing the protection of human rights, focusing particularly on eliminating any kind of discrimination in penitentiaries;
- To promote cross-border mobilization of penitentiary staff;
- To encourage inter-disciplinary approaches and develop research cooperation.

### **CHAPTER III - Organization**

The EPTA network comprises of its members and is headed by an annually rotating presidency and a steering committee. EuroPris functions as the permanent secretariat.

The fields of cooperation within EPTA are:

- Ethics and rules of conduct;
- Training curricula development;
- Selection and training of trainers/trainers;
- Training assessment;
- Scientific models of reference.

In order to meet the objectives established in these Articles, the EPTA network will engage in the following:

- Hold an Annual conference of the network, organized by the President;

- Organize thematic seminars and workshops;
- Disseminate information and share knowledge of their practical experiences;
- Exchange of correctional staff, students and trainers, as well as job-shadowing activities;
- Set up special interest groups to work on specific topics;
- Set up effective digital communications tools, including a website;
- Cooperate with other relevant organisations.

## **CHAPTER IV – Presidency**

EPTA has an annually rotating Presidency. The EPTA President is elected annually from one of the member institutions. The election takes place at the Annual conference. Each EPTA member can apply for the Presidency. Before or during the conference members can express their interest to the sitting President. When several members apply for the Presidency, an open voting process is initiated, leading to the election of the member with a majority of votes.

If no candidate is available at the conference, the position will be awarded to the first candidate expressing interest after the conference. The Presidency term starts the month following the Annual conference or as soon as a new President has been appointed after the conference. The institution holding the presidency organizes the Annual EPTA Conference.

During the Presidency, the EPTA President has the following duties:

- Act in accordance with EPTA mission and objectives;
- Organize the Annual EPTA conference and draft Annual conference report;
- Cooperate with other relevant network organizations;
- Represent EPTA at related conferences and events;
- Participate in EPTA Steering Committee meetings;
- Coordinate with EuroPris Secretariat the dissemination and publication of information;
- Conclude cooperation agreements with other organizations on behalf of the network after consulting its members for validation;
- Validate membership application forms and sign EPTA membership certificates;

## **CHAPTER V – Secretariat**

EuroPris has been assigned as permanent EPTA Secretariat in order to provide for sustainability and consistency of the organisation, membership and work of EPTA.

If there is no external funding EuroPris delivers these services and involved staff costs free of charge. The Services are delivered to all EPTA members, not dependent on their membership of EuroPris.

EuroPris is a permanent member of the Steering Committee.

The responsibilities of the EPTA Secretariat are the following:

- Membership administration and communication;
- Maintaining EPTA archive of general and procedural documents;
- Central point of contact for (potential) EPTA members and external organisations;
- Communication and coordination of activities with EPTA President;
- Participation in EPTA Steering Committee meetings;
- Building and maintaining the EPTA website;
- Developing and maintaining the EPTA house style;

- Issuing bi-annual EPTA newflash;
- Linkage to the work and activities of EuroPris;
- Dissemination of EPTA information through various media (printed and digital).

## **CHAPTER VI – Steering Committee**

The general strategy for the development of the EPTA network is determined by the EPTA members during the Annual conference. The Steering Committee (SC) guides and supports EPTA in its strategic development.

The SC supports the President in the preparation of the Annual conference and other organisational issues.

The SC comprises of a minimum of five and maximum of seven members including the EPTA President and the EuroPris representative. The EPTA President is for the duration of the Presidency member of the Steering Committee. EuroPris is a permanent member. The other Steering Committee members are elected by the members for four years per term and a maximum of two terms.

EPTA members are informed one month before the Annual conference if elections for the SC will take place and are invited to submit nominations. The EPTA member institution nominates their candidate for the Steering Committee election. The candidates that receive the most votes from members at the Annual conference will be elected.

Each EPTA member is expected to be represented in the Steering Committee at some point. Each EPTA member can only be represented with one person in the Steering Committee. It is preferred that only the elected member attends the Steering Committee meetings on behalf of their institution.

Responsibilities of the Steering Committee are:

- Conducting SC meetings;
- Drafting EPTA procedural documents;
- Proposing to members organisational or procedural changes;
- Strategic advice on EPTA's functioning, activities and relations to external organisations;
- Advising on the contents of the Annual conference.

The work of the SC is carried out via exchanges by emails, video-conferences or occasional meetings.

If no funding is available, costs involved in the participation at the Steering Committee meetings are covered by the institution of SC member.

## **CHAPTER VII - Annual EPTA Conference**

The annual EPTA Conference represents the defining event of the EPTA network and is organized each year by the institution that holds the Presidency.

The President establishes the period, the agenda and the location, in collaboration with the Secretariat and the Steering Committee. The President sends an invitation to all EPTA member institutions, at least 90 days before the date of the Conference including the costs of registration fee if any.

In order to participate at the Annual conference, each EPTA member institution delegates a maximum of 2 representatives, one of them being authorized to vote.

Without external funding, the host institution may request a participation fee to be paid prior to the conference through a procedure defined by the host institution. The participants would need to cover their own expenses

for travel and overnight accommodation. The host country registration fee would be based on expenses for meeting rooms, catering and printing materials.

## **CHAPTER VIII – Becoming an EPTA member**

Penitentiary staff training academies of the Council of Europe Member States are eligible for EPTA membership. Such training academies should provide on behalf of the national administration initial and/or continuous training to staff working in the penitentiary service.

If a jurisdiction has more than one penitentiary staff training academy, each of them is eligible for membership. The decision if one or more staff training academies of one country become member of EPTA is up to the national administration.

The application form is filled in by the legal representative of the applicant institution, in accordance with the model set out in Annex 1 of the present Regulation, and subsequently sent to the EPTA Secretariat [secretariat@epta.info](mailto:secretariat@epta.info).

After the application form has been approved by the President the new member receives an EPTA membership Certificate, in accordance with the model in Annex 2, signed by the serving EPTA President.

Being an EPTA member requires an actual commitment to its activities, as well as the observance of the following general obligations:

- a) To abide by the present Statutes;
- b) To commit to the Council of Europe Recommendations and the European Prison Rules;
- c) To contribute to the EPTA network activities;
- d) To contribute, with its own means, to the achievement of EPTA mission and values;

An EPTA member can, at any time, request to withdraw from the network through a written notice to the EPTA Secretariat.

## **CHAPTER IX – Validation & entry into force**

The present Articles are adopted by a majority of votes of the EPTA members and put into force by each member institution in accordance with the national law and with its own procedures and practices.

Any change in the present Articles shall be made through an amendment to be adopted by the EPTA members.

Annex 1 – Application form

Annex 2 – Membership certificate