



Participants of the NEAT meeting 2018 in Brussels

From NEAT to EFAT

In May 2018 in Brussels, Belgium 51 participants from 27 European countries¹ met to celebrate NEAT's transition to the European Federation of Art Therapy (EFAT). Up until then, the Network of European Art Therapists (NEAT) was an informal network consisting of members from more than 30 European countries with an aim to create EFAT and share their knowledge in the field of art therapy. Altogether the meeting ran for three days.

¹ Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, UK.

On the first day, a creative exercise organized by the Lithuanian participants was followed by reports on the state of art therapy in countries which previously had not been represented at NEAT. The coordinator Maria d'Elia also presented an update on EFAT's main stepping stones since NEAT's last meeting - two of the most important being **the signing of the notarial founding act**, which was signed on 12th April 2018 in Brussels and at the time of the meeting was still awaiting confirmation by the Belgian king, and **the creation of temporary Board** - Maria d'Elia (LU) as president, Dominik Havsteen-Franklin (GB) as vice president, Natacha Piroette (BE) as secretary-general, Tanaïs Verbist (BE) as treasurer, Irina Katz-Mazilu (FR) and Nada Ivanovic (HR) as members. Maria d'Elia also brought attention to the necessity of developing effective means of communication (e.g., registration of EFAT's website: www.arttherapyfederation.eu) to grow EFAT's visibility and presented the proposals for the definition of EFAT's membership criteria and fees.

The second day started with reports from several NEAT Work groups who shared the results of their projects. The presentations were followed by discussion led by Dominik Havsteen-Franklin on EFAT's financial and funding resources and status. To light a creative spark, Paola Luzzatto, the initiator and coordinator of NEAT, guided everybody through her "The Hidden Seed" workshop. After this inspirational experience, the participants split up into several groups to work on EFAT's future committees: Research Committee, Ethics Committee, Application Review Committee (ARC), Professional Exchange Committee, Conference Committee (ConfCom), Communication Committee (ComCom) and Finance Committee. The rest of the evening was dedicated to the celebration of EFAT's birth and to honour Paola's outstanding contribution to NEAT. For this, Judy Rubin from the US joined in via Skype.

On the last day, the meeting participants debated on the design of EFAT's Bylaws, predominantly the topic of voting modalities. This was followed by Alkistis Boura's (EL) film about her AT work in prison. At the end of the day, the last NEAT's business meeting took place where it was decided to hold the very first EFAT's meeting in **Vienna, Austria in 2019**, open to NEAT and EFAT members and interested public. The meeting will include EFAT's Constitutive General Assembly, time for the various Committees to meet and work, as well as a clinical exchange part in the tradition of NEAT's meetings 2014-2017. It was also agreed that the representatives of EFAT's Research Committee will attend the AATA/BAAT's "International Art Therapy Practice and Research Conference" in July 2019 as official ambassadors of EFAT.