



EHPS president's message

Dear EHPS Members, colleagues and friends,

We are now approaching the 24th EHPS Conference to be held in Cluj, Romania, September 2010. I am happy to have this opportunity to welcome everyone to the conference and share with you the beautiful printed issue of the European Health Psychologist, always anticipated with interest by its readers.

As the term of the current Executive Committee is wrapping up, I would like to share with you a brief overview of the past two years. I will summarize some of the main principles that have shaped our work during the past two years, specifically developing new initiatives, international collaborations, and diversity.

Interesting ideas and suggestions for *new initiatives* have come from EHPS members, from the Executive Committee, and the Subdivisions, and I am happy to say that we have been able to implement many of them. For example, CREATE, represented by Jana Richert, proposed several new initiatives, including the establishment of two tandem grants, and two visiting scholar grants. The EC supported these ideas for annual awards and the first recipients of the grants were named last year. It has been a joy to work with the enthusiastic teams of CREATE, they have solidified and enriched the mission and vibrancy of this subdivision.

Members inquired about potential EHPS support for collaborative research activities, and after some time to consider how to structure this support, we developed the procedure and announced a call for Research Networking Grants. The deadline for the first application for such a grant is October 30th 2010, and we hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to develop research networks and partnerships and start-up collaborative research initiatives.

The Fellowship Committee was elected several years ago, and last year they launched the first cycle of nominations and selection of new EHPS fellows. At the 2009 Members' Meeting in Pisa the first elected fellow was announced; we look forward to new fellows being introduced at this year's 2010 Members' Meeting in Cluj. A new call will be issued in the fall of 2010 and I encourage you to nominate and self-nominate new fellows and thus honour members' contributions to health psychology.

The rising complexity of decisions regarding venues and organization of conferences, led us to create a new position of Conference Officer within the EC. This position will help streamline the tasks surrounding conference organization and additionally ensure continuity of information and procedures. The expanding



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contacts with members and colleagues motivated the EC to establish the position of Communications Officer in the EC. The communications area includes multiple activities, including corresponding with EHPS members, sustaining contact with the European Health Psychologist, maintaining the website and new Facebook page, offering useful resources to members—you will be seeing more of these in the next few months.

During these two years, the EHPS has expanded its *international collaborations and representation*. One example of this is the planned affiliation of EHPS with the United Nations, through which members will be able to contribute to improving health, reducing health disparities and affecting policy on a global level. It took all of the past two years for us to prepare our application materials, as this required collecting letters of recommendation, financial audit, documentation proving EHPS status, and illustrations of current EHPS collaborations with United Nations organizations. Thank you to members who sent us examples of their UN related work and helped with preparing documents; and in particular to Susan Michie, who as Past-President initiated the idea, Suzanne Skevington, Margreet Scharloo, Ad Kaptein and the entire EC! We have submitted the application and hope to have positive news to share with you soon and to ask you to nominate EHPS representatives to the UN.

We have sustained and expanded our connections with collegial professional organizations. For example, for the UN application we received support and recommendations from IAAP, APA, ISTSS and the Romanian Association of Health Psychology. EHPS supported the Southeastern European Regional Conference of Psychology (SEERCP) in Sofia, Bulgaria 2009, organized by the Bulgarian Psychological Society under the auspices of IAAP, IUPsyS, IACCP, EFPA and EHPS. We have renewed contacts with APA Division 38 and with their president-elect and are planning more





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invited symposia at each other's conferences in 2011, and inviting publications in each other's newsletters. Britta Renner and I were invited to publish a paper about EHPS in *Psicologia Della Salute*, and I have prepared a piece about the EHPS for the APA publication Psychology International.

Another principle that has organized our work has been one of *diversity of representation* in EHPS committees, subdivisions, conference venues and publications. Ensuring diversity of international representation, whenever possible, has always been an important principle in the EHPS and has been an aim during these two years, though there is much more that can be done in this direction. For example, the network of EHPS member countries has expanded to 32 countries. The EHPS website is now re-designed and includes a webpage for each member country. CREATE has been mindful of this principle and has aimed to have international diversity in the Board, as well as in the workshops. Their activity in approaching many countries and using a variety of communication channels resulted in workshop applications from 23 different countries this year. Synergy has also used this principle in ensuring international diversity in the Synergy Board, as well as content diversity in the Synergy workshops for advanced researchers. It has been very gratifying to witness the development of Synergy during the years since its establishment, and to welcome the new Synergy Board with convenor Karen Morgan.

I am very happy that the EHPS has broadened its presence in Central and Eastern Europe and the awareness of the role of health psychology in these regions of Europe; now we are here in Cluj, Romania, we will be in Crete, Greece in 2011 for the 25th anniversary conference and in Prague, Czech Republic in 2012! The EHPS support of the SEERCP in Sofia, Bulgaria in 2009 also significantly contributed to this goal.

The EHPS publications also offer a forum for diverse topics and opinions. *The European Health Psychologist*, with Editors Gerard Molloy and Emely de Vet, has an explicit policy of printing unique pieces, new ideas and debates. The two EHPS journals also ensure academic excellence and scholarly diversity. During the term of Lucy Yardley and Rona Moss-Morris, *Psychology and Health* published on diverse health psychology topics, increased its impact factor during 2008, was indexed by Medline, increased to 10 issues per year, and recently Taylor & Francis proposed to start publishing monthly issues in 2011. The first Editorial board, including Joop van der Plicht as Editor and Denise de Ridder, Alexander Rothman and Brian Oldenburg as Associate Editors, successfully established

the new EHPS journal *Health Psychology Review*. The new Editor Martin Hagger and the Associate Editors Noel Brewer, Linda Cameron, Denise de Ridder, Antonia Lyons, and Falko Sniehotta, whom we welcomed in 2009, also represent diverse areas of health psychology and are continuing to build the journal's strengths.

We trust that we have also been able to represent diversity of members' opinions and have aimed to expand ways in which we can hear them – through different forms of member consultations, new technologies such as on-line surveys and voting and social networks, as well as through asking for your feedback through regular channels. We are always open to further suggestions on how to ensure this representation.

As the two-year term of this Executive Committee, as well as my term as President is coming to a close, I look back with much gratitude for the constructive and warm relationships within the EC. I express my sincere thanks to Vera Araujo-Soares, Yael Benyamini, Elvira Cicognani, Paul Norman, Britta Renner, Holger Schmid, and Manja Vollmann, who have worked actively in their specific areas, but have also been there to offer invaluable feedback and suggestions at every step. Thank you to the past presidents, who have also offered support and ideas. Congratulations to the newly elected Executive Committee and I wish you a constructive and exciting term!

The hosts of the 24th EHPS Conference have worked hard over the past two years to create a wonderful meeting place - we greatly appreciate your hospitality and are impatient to start the conference! We are grateful to Taylor & Francis for sponsoring this issue of the *European Health Psychologist* and their support of this EHPS publication during the past years. Thank you to all EHPS members for your involvement in EHPS initiatives, consultations, sub-divisions and committees - your contributions have been invaluable for the growth of the Society.

It has been a stimulating and fruitful time for me and I am content that many of the goals I had envisioned at the start of this term have been realized or propelled into soon becoming a reality. I am honoured to have been entrusted with the Presidency by the EHPS members for the past two years. I look forward to continuing to work with the new Executive Committee in a different role. I will always remember and treasure the friendships fostered during these years. ■

Irina Todorova
EHPS President
July 2010, Sofia