

2010 conference evaluation

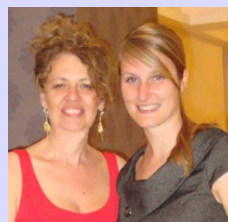
Delegate Feedback about the 2010 Conference of the EHPS, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

The 2010 Conference of EHPS took place in early September, in the city of Cluj-Napoca in Romania. It was hosted by the Babeş-Bolyai University, the oldest University in Romania, and by the Romanian Association of Health Psychology. The overarching theme of the Conference was *Health in Context*, underscoring the importance of community, social, cultural, economic and historical contexts for health. This was our most eastern location yet, and the EHPS expresses our gratitude to the local organizers for their hospitality and a very successful conference.

After the conclusion of the conference, the EHPS Executive Committee asked delegates to evaluate different aspects of their visit and participation in the 2010 EHPS annual event. We developed an evaluation survey, and are very grateful to Natalie Schüz for setting up the online technology and processing the data. We now have a section on the EHPS website, which can also be used in the future for online surveys. Here are some of the results of this evaluation:

The survey was filled out by 288 delegates of the conference, of which 43.4% were EHPS members and 54.9% from a total of 640 delegates were not members. The overall quality of the conference was well evaluated, with 23.6% of the delegates stating it was good, 51.4% stating it was very good, 17.7% that it was excellent. On a 5-point scale, the quality of the symposia was rated as 4.0, of the keynote lectures as 4.02, and the quality of chairing as 4.13. The overall quality of the workshops was rated highly at 4.14, and in the open-ended question people commented on the excellence of the workshops. The quality of the poster sessions was rated a little lower at 3.69. For the 2010 conference the Scientific Committee had decided to have poster sessions without poster presentations. Half of the delegates stated that they prefer to have poster presentations (50%), while 29.9% stated that they prefer without presentations, and the rest had no preference. Many delegates (35.8%) felt that this year there were too many posters for the room. While 57.6% felt they were the right number. This is compared to, for example 2.8% who felt the symposia were too many, while 86.5% felt that they were the right number.

For the 2010 conference the EHPS Executive Committee introduced an online only abstract book, in order to save funds and paper. While 55.5% of the delegates had accessed it before the conference, a full 40% had not, for different reasons. Ultimately 55% support the idea of an online only abstract book, while 28% do not, and others would like to see both an online and a printed abstract book. We will be using an online only abstract book again in Crete 2011 and we will take into



Irina Todorova & Natalie Schüz

account what we have learned from the 2010 experience and make sure information and access is clearly and easily available in advance and during the conference at computers.

In response to the open ended question regarding what aspects of the conference would delegates change for the future, the common answers were related to limiting the number of posters at each session, more information about the online abstract book, and reducing the number of absent presenters. Some people felt that the dinner had a slow start or that preferred food choices were not available, but many commented that after that the celebration was very enjoyable. These are issues which the EC is considering in detail in preparation of the 2011 Conference in Crete. In response to which aspects of the conference worked well, the responses were very positive, stating that it offered a high quality of presentations, representing a diversity of themes, methodological approaches and international representation. "The keynote topics were very well chosen"; "I would like to commend the organizers for including a wide range of approaches, including critical and qualitative." Delegates felt that the conference offered a unique opportunity and settings to meet colleagues and other PhD students. Delegates were very impressed by the hosts and local organizers, stating that they were always available, proactive, dedicated and extremely helpful.

"The hosting of the local organizing committee was excellent. The conference was very well organized and the atmosphere was welcoming."

"I would like to congratulate the organization for choosing this city for a conference called Health in Context. It was really interesting to get to know Cluj and some of its particularities and grow with them. Also I would like to thank the local team."

"The attention before, during and after the conference was impressive. They were very helpful, answering all your questions, making changes and everything I needed. Congratulations to the organization team!" ■

Irina Todorova
EHPS Past President and Conference Officer