

## EHPS conference 2012

# Delegate Feedback on the 2012 EHPS Conference, Prague, Czech Republic

The 2012 EHPS Conference took place in Prague (21-25 August 2012) and was attended by 814 delegates. An online conference evaluation survey was sent to all delegates, of whom 373 (46%) completed the survey. Of the delegates who completed the survey, the highest numbers were from the UK (n=74), The Netherlands (n=39) and Germany (n=29), which broadly reflects the profile of EHPS members and conference delegates. For 39% of respondents, this was their first conference, although a similar number of respondents had attended at least 3 EHPS conferences in the past 5 years (38%).

As shown in Table 1, respondents' overall ratings of the scientific programme were high, with the exception of the rating for the poster presentations which was lower, but still positive. These ratings were reflected in respondents' comments on the conference.

Table 1. *Scientific Programme: Overall Ratings (1=Poor to 5=Excellent)*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Overall quality	4.20	0.64
Keynotes	4.34	0.74
Symposia	4.26	0.65
Oral presentations	4.05	0.64
Roundtables/debates	4.11	0.79
Chairing	4.36	0.70
Pre-conference workshops	4.44	0.91
Poster presentations	3.82	0.91

*"The keynotes were really inspiring and the quality of the talks and posters was outstanding"*

*"Really good conference, but poster sessions not working"*



**Paul Norman**

Conference Officer,  
Past President

Table 2. *Balance of Sessions in the Scientific Programme*

	<i>Too Few</i>	<i>Fine</i>	<i>Too many</i>
Symposia	7.90%	88.00%	4.10%
Workshops	10.20%	88.40%	1.40%
Keynotes	11.10%	84.60%	4.30%

In terms of the balance of sessions in the scientific programme, the vast majority of respondents (>80%) were happy with the numbers of symposia, workshops, keynotes and oral presentations. However, 39.0% of respondents felt that there were too many poster presentations, which may reflect the experience of many delegates when trying to view the posters and/or listen to the short presentations. This was reflected in many delegates' comments on the poster sessions.

*"There were too many poster presentations at the same time—it is usually very difficult to hear what the presenter is saying"*

*"The poster area was too noisy and crowded for this to work properly"*

When asked whether they would prefer to have poster sessions with or without short presentations, just over half (50.5%) indicated that they would prefer poster sessions with short presentations, with 32.3% indicating that they would prefer poster sessions without short presentations and 17.3% undecided. Delegates' comments indicated that many like the interactive poster sessions, especially as it gives new researchers an opportunity to present their work, but also that the sessions are too crowded to work well.

*"The interactive format provides a chance for everyone, including early career researchers, to present their work"*

*"I like the format of the poster presentations but felt the venue was too small for it to be done properly"*

Table 3. *Specific Aspects of the Conference Programme (1=Poor to 5=Excellent)*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Good quality research	4.14	0.69
Range of theoretical approaches	4.08	0.80
Theory-based interventions	4.09	0.77
New/yet to be published research	4.04	0.81
Range of methods	3.84	0.87
Relevant to clinical practice	3.80	0.79
Relevant a health psychologist's work	3.91	0.80

Respondents' ratings of aspects of the conference were generally positive (Table 3), although respondents felt that the programme was less successful as regards to including papers that had a range of methods, were relevant to clinical practice and address issues relevant to all aspects of a health psychologist's work.

Respondents' ratings of other aspects of the

conference were generally positive (Table 4). Overall, respondents gave very high ratings for the overall time schedule of the conference as well opportunities to meet and talk with colleagues. Other aspects of the conference such as the social events received slightly lower, but still positive, ratings. These ratings were also reflected in delegates' comments.

Table 4. *Various Aspects of the Conference (1=Poor to 5=Excellent)*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Overall time schedule	4.26	0.71
Venue	3.95	1.00
Social programme	3.64	1.02
Opportunities to meet colleagues	4.25	0.78
Value for money	3.88	0.88

*"Good venue; good, interesting keynotes; good time management; easy to meet colleagues"*

*"Overall very good. Only regret is that because of too many people, the opening ceremony and the conference dinner were too crowded"*

The majority of respondents (69.8%) reported that they had accessed the online Abstract Book before the conference. Most of the comments on the abstract book were positive although a minority of delegates indicated that they would prefer to have a paper version at the conference.

*"Excellent that you have gone digital only. It is also much more useful because you can do searches"*

*"Whilst it would be nice to have a printed copy of the supplement booklet, it is fully understandable"*

*"The key thing is to have wireless access all over the conference site to facilitate access to the abstract book"*

Looking forward, there are a few issues that the EC will need to consider when planning future conferences. First, as with previous conferences, the poster sessions attracted the most negative comments. These centred around the physical space devoted to the posters which often made it difficult to hear presenters or to move around the poster space. Many respondents suggested that the sessions would be improved if there were fewer posters; future Scientific Committees may decide to look at ways to limit the number of posters. Second, the online Abstract Book attracted some negative comments with some respondents indicating that they would prefer a printed version. However, other respondents agreed with the EC's decision to have an online-only Abstract Book on environmental grounds.

In conclusion, respondents' ratings of, and comments on, the conference were very positive. It was clear that respondents enjoyed the

conference and thought that the scientific quality was high. We are indebted to the hard work of the Conference President, Vladimir Kezba, and the Chair of the Scientific Committee, Aleksandra Luszczynska, for ensuring the success of the conference.

*"Excellent conference—congratulations to the local organisers and scientific committee for their hard work"*

*"I enjoyed it very much and am looking forward to attending the one next year!"*

Thank you to all delegates who completed the conference evaluation survey—your comments and suggestions are very helpful and will help to shape the structure of future EHPS conferences. ■

*Paul Norman*  
EC Conference Officer