

2020

# EFPTA Newsletter



## PSYCHOLOGY FOR EVERY DAY

Promoting life skills through  
the teaching of psychology

EFPTA biennial conference

15.-18.04.2021, Bratislava, Slovakia



# EFPTA Newsletter December 2020

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## From the Editor

It gives me great pleasure to present to you the latest edition of the EFPTA newsletter. This is my first as editor and I would like to pass on our thanks to my predecessor Jackie Moody - I just hope it lives up to her high standards.

Very often the main content of the newsletter reflects the wonderful EFPTA conference which was held the previous Easter. However, this year the world, and our EFPTA conference, has been turned upside down by the COVID-19 pandemic. The conference is always an ideal way to bring everyone together, to share ideas and good practice and most importantly make new friends and contacts. The previous conference in Reykjavik, Iceland brought together psychology teachers from 13 nations and I am sure the next conference in Bratislava, Slovakia 15-18

April 2021 with the theme Psychology for everyday: promoting life skills through the teaching of psychology, will be as equally international. We hope that our 2021 conference will take place as an in-person event as planned; depending on the pandemic circumstances, it may be hybrid or fully online.

However, throughout this year different countries have hosted conferences either in person or online. Summaries of some of the research that was presented are given.



**Jock McGinty England & Wales representative**

## From the President

It is my pleasure to welcome international readers of the 2020 EFPTA Newsletter. This edition is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, both from the point of view of the content and the context. My great thanks go to the Newsletter editor, Jock McGinty, and to all the contributors who made this special edition for you. I would also like to say thank you to all the EFPTA board members and national representatives who have worked so hard in 2020 to spread the ideas of EFPTA. Even though we did not have the opportunity to meet in person, we stayed close to each other across different regions and time zones via digital media.



Normally, the EFPTA Newsletter focuses on the biennial EFPTA conference. However, in 2020 the conference did not take place. It should have returned back to the 2010 venue – Bratislava, Slovakia. The 2010 conference was affected by the eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland and while some delegates were unable to reach Bratislava that year, others had difficulties returning home! It is almost unbelievable that a global catastrophe has influenced the EFPTA conference in Bratislava again. Approximately one month before the conference European countries started closures and lockdowns and the EFPTA board decided to postpone the conference to 2021. I hope to meet all the EFPTA supporters either face to face or online in April 2021 to share the best practices in the teaching of psychology and to support international networking of psychology teachers.

Until then, I am happy to introduce you the 2020 edition of EFPTA Newsletter. It contains reports from publications, conferences and continuing professional development events from different countries across Europe where pre-tertiary psychology education and EFPTA were presented. Most of these were organized during the COVID-19 pandemic to support psychology teachers. We also take the opportunity to present to international readers, the national reports from the EFPTA member countries.

I wish you interesting reading and I am looking forward to meeting you again soon at EFPTA events.

**Lenka Sokolová, EFPTA President**

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## Brain size in Romanian adoptees



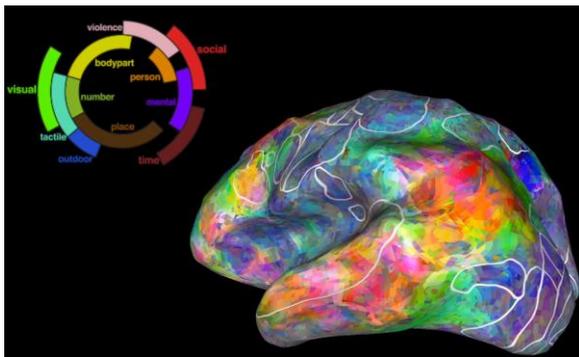
Mackes *et al.* (2020) set out to investigate the effects of institutional deprivation in early childhood on brain structure and volume in adults, more than two decades after deprivation cessation had been replaced by environmental enrichment. The ERA study followed 165 Romanian adoptees and a control group of 52 UK-born adoptees.

Mackes *et al.* recruited 67 Romanian adoptees (with between 3 and 41 months of deprivation)

and 21 non-deprived UK adoptees from the original ERA sample into the English and Romanian Adoptees Brain Imaging Study (ERABIS). Employing a MRI whole brain analysis strategy, Romanian adoptees were found to have total brain volume (TBV) on average 8.6% smaller than non-deprived adoptees. Each additional month of deprivation was linked to a  $3\text{cm}^3$  lower TBV. Reductions in TBV were found in the right inferior frontal cortex of Romanian adoptees, which in turn were associated with lower IQ and a greater number of ADHD symptoms. Counterintuitively, deprivation-related increased thickness, surface area and volume of the right inferior temporal cortex was associated with a lower number of ADHD symptoms. Might deprivation-related neuroplastic changes in brain structure sometimes be compensatory?

Mackes, N.K., Golm, D., Sarkar, S., Kumsta, R., Rutter, M., Fairchild, G., Mehta, M.A., Sonuga-Barke, E.J.S., ERA Young Adult Follow-up team (2020). Early childhood deprivation is associated with alterations in adult brain structure despite subsequent environmental enrichment *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences U.S.A.* 117(1):641-649. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1911264116

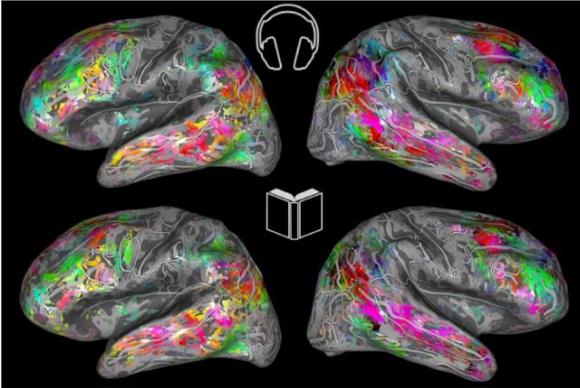
## Semantic maps across the cortex



Semantic representation of spoken words occurs across both hemispheres and not just within the left. Spoken words can activate multiple cortical regions depending on meaning. Each semantic concept is represented in multiple semantic areas, and each semantic area represents multiple semantic concepts. These maps are largely consistent across subjects.

Huth, A.G. et al (2016). Natural speech reveals the semantic maps that tile human cerebral cortex. *Nature*; 532, 453–458

## Listening and reading in the brain

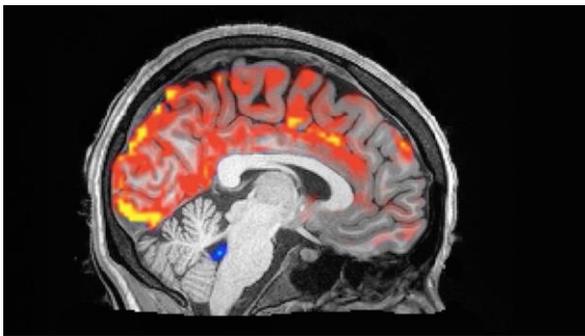


In this extension of Huth's study, Deniz et al showed that reading specific words is associated with activity in brain regions also activated when listening to the same words. This suggests that processing of meaning is independent of the sensory modality through which the information is received. fMRI was used to measure cerebral blood flow changes in six male and three female participants whilst listening to or reading the transcript of a podcast consisting of short stories. Researchers were able to map out which tiny area (or voxel) of the cerebral cortex was associated

with processing each word when read or heard. Results indicated that semantic voxels were distributed bilaterally (in each hemisphere) over the temporal, parietal and prefrontal cortices. For the vast majority of words, associated brain activity was consistent across both sensory modalities. Further, brain activity associated with reading a word could be predicted on the basis of brain activity associated with listening to a word, and vice versa.

Deniz, F et al (2019). Representation of semantic information during listening and reading. *Journal of Neuroscience*. 39 (39) 7722-7736; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1523/JNEUROSCI.0675-19.2019>

## Sleep cleans the brain



The restorative nature of sleep appears to result in part from the active clearance of the by-products of neural activity that accumulate during wakefulness. During sleep the brain's cells reduce in size, allowing waste to be removed more effectively. Hablitz *et al.* (2019) demonstrated that glymphatic influx correlates positively with cortical delta power in EEG recordings. Fultz *et al.* (2019) showed that neural activity and changes in blood

flow during slow wave sleep are together responsible for deep cleaning. EEG measures of electrical activity and fMRI measures of blood flow changes were taken in two men and eleven women whilst they slept in a scanner for up to two and a half hours. Results showed that an electrical slow wave pulse was followed seconds later by a drop in blood oxygen and a decrease in blood volume. These oscillations in neural activity and blood volume produce rhythmic, pulsing waves of CSF (approximately every twenty seconds) into the fourth ventricle and between the meninges to carry away waste products.

Fultz, N.E., Bonmassar, G., Setsompop, K., Stickgold, R.A., Rosen, B.R., Polimeni, J.R., Lewis, L.D. (2019). Coupled electrophysiological, hemodynamic, and cerebrospinal fluid oscillations in human sleep. *Science*, 366(6465):628-631. doi: 10.1126/science.aax5440.

## BPS Engagement with Pre University Teachers of Psychology



### Who are the BPS?

With over 70,000 members and subscribers, The British Psychological Society is the professional body for psychologists in the UK and the largest psychology community in Europe.

BPS supports and enhances the development and application of psychology for the greater public good. The

Society's broader mission as the representative body for psychology and psychologists in the UK, involves thinking about evidence based psychological interventions in a range of settings, including health and social care, schools, prisons and other areas of society.

### What do our members want?

New ways to connect across the discipline to support people in their careers and study (events, CPD, networks) including more resources for the broader profession Members also want an embedded philosophy of giving back to and promoting the discipline through shared experience, mentoring, education, advice and guidance and CPD

### What do we currently do?

The BPS provides careers Events for Undergraduate and A Level students and a Teachers Toolkit with resources for teaching psychology.

- Voluntary Multi Membership Scheme
- <https://careers.bps.org.uk/>
- <https://www.bps.org.uk/public/become-psychologist/career-options-psychology>
- [www.jobsinpsychology.com](http://www.jobsinpsychology.com)
- Member networks initiatives (such as mentoring for specific subjects i.e. Leadership)
- Careers booklet
- DART-P and SCoPTE

### What else could we do?

- Think outside the box – psychology in its broadest sense – not just about practitioner careers and mental health
- Promote careers support across the lifespan – including for non-members and students at pre university level

- Be proactive – build relationships with schools and colleges via University partnerships and student ambassadors
- Consider how we can support teachers, through resources and CPD and also advocacy (Regulators, exam bodies)
- Be aware of the broader environment, where are the opportunities? How do we work with teachers, schools, colleges and universities to bridge the transitions through psychology education?

### **Enhancing our Offer**

- We have a new VLE platform BPS Learn to offer CPD and other resources
- Free student membership and personalised resources
- Pre University resources and further education support - teachers toolkit
- Working with employers and universities to support more meaningful relationships with colleges and schools
- Provide more high-quality accessible careers guidance resources
- Create CPD and inter professional learning opportunities for teachers

### **What opportunities does this provide?**

- Provides new platforms from which to advocate and influence the profession
- Supports the transition through education, establishing psychology as a worthwhile career route for a diverse range of learners
- Gives the opportunity for the society to engage directly with learners at a much earlier point
- Provides a platform through which to promote the broadest range of careers, moving away from the traditional model of promoting routes to the protected titles and recognising the growth of the profession into new areas
- Support teachers in responding to policy decisions
- Provide a professional home to support teachers in their roles and career pathways

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### **ATP Nov CPD presentations**



What a fantastic CPD event that was! A proper pick me up at these difficult times. Proceedings began with a half hour “chat session” which was great. It was wonderful to see old friends and new faces, and to see teachers new to the profession using discussion to get advice from seasoned colleagues.



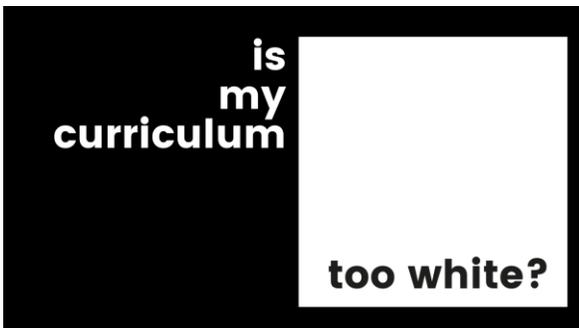
The event was launched by Matt Jarvis discussing, “The use of technology in the classroom”. This could not have been more timely, or a more useful session. Matt provided us with a raft of tools and ideas to enable us to make far better use of technology to support learning both virtually and within classroom lessons. He reminded us that we need to keep student learning at the heart of our on-line lessons, showcasing a range of interactive options that ensure it is the students that do

the work even during virtual lessons. Matt demonstrated a number of techniques where teachers can monitor progress in real time. Always the wordsmith, Matt introduced many of us, I’m sure, to two new words. Synchronous (real time) and asynchronous (non-real time). He discussed the relative merits of both types of technology and encouraged reflection on the fact that asynchronous lessons allow the students to work at their own pace and can be far less exhausting for teachers. The session was both inspiring and practical, despite Matt’s prediction that the accelerated use of technology by teachers has heralded the end of snow days!



Helen Kitching, gave a detailed presentation on evidenced based revision strategies, and in doing so, presented us with a truly comprehensive smorgasbord of the revision options available to teachers today. For example, Podcasts with a twist, interleaving, the Leitner box technique, mind maps, The Cornell method as well as old reliables such as use of examiners’ reports and spaced repetition. This was an invaluable session for anyone new to teaching, but even for an old hander such as myself, it

was a great opportunity to be reminded of all the tried and tested revision techniques at our disposal. The geeks amongst us, I’m sure, will enjoy having a look at the psychological evidence behind the different strategies that Helen offered up for our consideration.



“Decolonising the curriculum” was the topic chosen by Phil Banyard. Yet again a subject matter that has never seemed more pertinent to the moment, despite its fundamental and timeless importance. Typically, Phil prompted far more questions than answers. The session was basically a journey, through a quagmire of the issues and barriers surrounding the legacy of colonisation, for our nation, and for western dominated psychology. It seems we are so far away from answers, that Phil was

compelled to inform us that his own university feels that the point we are currently at is best described as “Pre decolonisation”. A key theme was the role of myth making in masking the truth of widespread institutional racism. Phil took his life in his hands by using the current stories of two national treasures; Captain Tom Moore and Marcus Rashford in order to examine their relationship with the mythmaking business. Bringing us back on point, Phil identified key areas of psychological research that are firmly rooted in issues related to British and western European, historical world dominance.

**Helen Gibb ATP committee member**

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## Getting off to a good start in psychology: benefits and limitations of pre-tertiary education in psychology

Report from the EFPTA round table at European Society for Psychology Learning and Teaching (ESPLAT) biennial conference, Utrecht, The Netherlands, September 2019



The European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations (EFPTA) was established to support pre-tertiary psychology education and psychology teachers' networking and professional development. The EFPTA board members invited colleagues interested in pre-tertiary teaching of psychology and cooperation between schools and universities to discuss their experiences and expectations about pre-tertiary psychology education. The round table started with a brief overview of EFPTA research and activities followed by a semi-structured discussion.

Psychology is taught as a secondary school subject in many European countries, in various types of schools and with diverse content. It is rarely a compulsory subject (e. g. in Finland one course in psychology is compulsory for all upper secondary school students). More usually psychology is taught either as a voluntary/optional subject in both general and vocational upper-secondary education (e. g. in England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Germany, Slovakia, Czechia, Slovenia or Croatia) or as a component included in other subject (e. g. philosophy, social studies or citizenship education). The numbers of psychology students in pre-tertiary education vary across different countries but in general psychology seems to be a popular subject among secondary school students.

Psychology teachers believe that studying psychology at pre-tertiary level contributes to students' preparation for studying psychology and other disciplines at university. Pre-tertiary psychology helps students develop critical thinking skills, understanding of self and others, life skills, mental health and overall psychological literacy. It also has a potential to bridge social studies, STEM and personal development subjects. On the other hand, the teaching of psychology faces many obstacles: the subject

often receives limited support with a shortage of qualified teachers. More details about pre-tertiary psychology in Europe can be found in the research reports in the reference section below (including the survey research with EFPA member associations in 2016 and 2017).

EFPTA was formed in 2004 as a federation of national and regional associations of psychology teachers in schools and colleges in European countries. Members are mainly involved in teaching psychology courses at lower and upper secondary levels at schools to students aged from 13 to 19. EFPTA's focus is on pre-university psychology education, and in the spirit of the Bologna Process it has established a network of pre-tertiary psychology educators across Europe. EFPTA is affiliated to the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA) and its representatives are members of the EFPA Board of Educational Affairs. EFPTA conducted several surveys focused on pre-tertiary psychology education (for more details see [www.efpta.org](http://www.efpta.org)) and based on the results five questions were set for the round table discussion.

### **1. Do you think it is useful/important to teach psychology at a pre-tertiary level of education?**

#### **What should its purpose be?**

The participants discussed two aspects of this question: the preparation for university studies of psychology and the wider benefits. For those students who plan to study psychology at university pre-tertiary psychology may help to reduce anxiety. On the other hand, it could be also counter-productive, because they might learn the same content again. That is why, for some discussants it is advisable to design the pre-tertiary curriculum in cooperation with universities.

The second purpose of pre-tertiary psychology is to help students to use psychological knowledge and skills in their everyday lives, to produce psychologically literate citizens who are able to apply psychological information in managing their relationships, studies, work and mental health. To fulfil this aim, pre-tertiary psychology courses should be focused just as much on such skills as on the content and to go more in depth depending on the age of students.

### **2. What age do you think it is appropriate to start teaching psychology to young people?**

School systems across Europe differ, some of them offer psychology courses only for students older than 16, in other countries pre-tertiary psychology is available sooner. The round table participants agreed that some psychology content (e.g. online safety, bullying, emotions etc.) should be taught really early (e. g. from the age of five). This specific content may help to develop early psychological literacy, ability to cope with stress and difficult situations, and maintain mental health. According to some round table participants, such courses or content is available in many schools around Europe but it is not always called "psychology". This situation brings the issue of teacher qualification. Those courses could be taught by teachers who have no qualification in psychology. It seems to be important to highlight the need of qualified teachers for delivering psychological content (even if the course is not always called "psychology"). Courses of psychology for young children should be designed in cooperation with school/educational psychologists and led by professionals otherwise they might not meet their objectives.

### 3. What pitfalls might pre-tertiary psychology education have?

The question of possible limitations of pre-tertiary psychology education is closely related to the previous one. The participants mentioned the shortage of qualified teachers as the main problem, which caused some other problematic issues. If the teacher is not qualified, the teaching may lead to misconceptions about the subject and the psychological professions, and replication of myths. The quality of teaching often depends on the teacher and his/her motivation. The teachers in pre-tertiary education feel that they have less freedom than universities. The content and assessment are pre-designed by national/regional awarding bodies. It sometimes happens that the content is not up-to-date or even correct. However, the teachers cannot update the content or they are not aware of the latest research. This conclusion again led to the next question.

### 4. Who are the stakeholders we should engage in developing pre-tertiary psychology education?

There are currently many different bodies involved in the development of psychology curriculum in European countries. Based on EFPTA's research, national psychology teachers' associations play an important role in supporting psychology teachers, networking and providing opportunities for continuing professional development. The role of national psychologists' associations is a bit different. In some countries they are very active and support pre-tertiary teaching of psychology, however, in others they are not even aware of whether or how psychology is taught in schools. The round table participants found it important to engage also universities and the wider public into the discussion about pre-tertiary psychology education. It seems to be relevant to assess people's expectations and images of psychology as a science and profession. These data could help to focus psychology courses on current issues.

### 5. How shall we promote qualified and effective pre-tertiary teaching of psychology at both national and European levels?

To sum it up, to have relevant and quality teaching of psychology at pre-tertiary level, we need to support and promote the examples of good practice. There are several tools how to do it: national and international

conferences and seminars (both live and online), publications (including website reports, newsletters and peer-reviewed articles), and sharing information with policy-makers. Those activities may help to raise standards of psychology teaching and also support the status of psychology as a school subject, because in some countries there is a risk of it being cut back due to financial and other reasons.

#### Conclusion

The participants of the ESPLAT conference round table called "Getting off to a good start in psychology: benefits and limitations of pre-tertiary education in



psychology” discussed several important issues related to the pre-tertiary teaching of psychology. EFPTA board members see this round table as an important step towards cooperation among schools, universities, professional associations and other stakeholders.

Sokolová, L., McGinty, A., & Williamson, M. (2019). Getting off to a good start in psychology: benefits and limitations of pre-tertiary education in psychology. Round table discussion at ESPLAT conference in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Abstract available online: <https://www.esplat2019.org/program>

## Psychology curricula for non-psychologists?



### Abstract

This paper argues that teaching psychology for non-psychologists influences psychology's public image and the basis of collaboration between psychologists and non-psychologists. Therefore, designing psychology curricula for non-psychology students and professionals is an important task of psychology departments that deserves attention.

For guiding the design process, we propose considering five criteria. Curricula for non-psychologists should be:

- (a) Specific to the profession of the target group,
  - (b) Specific to the needs and
  - (c) Work processes of the target group and
  - (d) Limited to the professional field of the target group. Although psychology curricula for non-psychology students need to be limited regarding its breadth, they should
  - (e) Maintain the depth and multi-perspectivity required for understanding psychological phenomena.
- Discussing these criteria should help raise awareness for the role of teaching psychology to students of academic disciplines and professions other than psychology.

Dutke, S., Bakker, H., Sokolová, L., Stuchlikova, I., Salvatore, S., & Papageorgi, I. (2019). Psychology curricula for non-psychologists? A framework recommended by the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations' Board of Educational Affairs. *Psychology Learning and Teaching*, 18(2), 111-120. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475725718810929>

## A survey on pre-university psychology education in EFPA member countries' schools

### Survey aims and method

The EFPA Board of Educational Affairs and the European Federation of Psychology Teachers' Associations jointly carried out an online survey of EFPA member associations (MAs) in early 2017. Findings were reported in a Symposium<sup>1</sup> at the Europlat 2017 conference in Salzburg in September 2017, and disseminated online and in print as a poster infographic<sup>2</sup>.

The aim of the survey was to discover the extent of pre-tertiary psychology education (PTPE) in European countries. EFPA invited its 36 member associations (MAs) to respond to a questionnaire. One response per MA was requested, and 28 responses were received from 20 EFPA member countries, a response rate of 56%. Participants were asked about various aspects of availability of psychology as a school subject in their country, and about the extent of the MAs' involvement in the provision of psychology as a school subject. Questionnaire responses were subjected to quantitative analysis in the form of descriptive statistics and some free text responses were also recorded.

### Findings

- Availability of psychology as a school subject

This is very variable: although psychology is taught in 18 of the 20 European countries which responded, it is compulsory in none.

- Examinations/qualifications at the level required for entry to university (Abitur, Matura, A-level etc.)

They are available for psychology in half of the responding countries where psychology is taught (n=9).

- Psychologists' associations' policies and involvement in PTPE

Three member associations (MA) report that they have a stated policy for pre-tertiary psychology, three are developing such policy, four MAs are involved in developing the school psychology curriculum, five MAs are involved in developing teacher training programmes and/or professional development for psychology teachers, two respondents are currently aiming to do so.

Published research on PTPE Research into PTPE has been published in eight countries. Psychology teachers' associations or committees MAs reported that these exist in only six countries. Some are standalone associations, others are sub-committees of psychologists' associations. In all the countries where an association does exist, MAs have formal or informal links with teachers' associations.

### Overall conclusions

Taken together, our findings show that in Europe, PTPE teachers and students make very diverse journeys into the discipline of psychology. However, qualitative responses suggest that there is substantial cross-border consensus amongst teachers about the value of the subject in the high school curriculum, and high

demand from students. However there is great variation in the psychology community, amongst psychologists, psychology academics and researchers, in their attitudes to, and level of involvement in PTPE, especially in relation to curriculum and teacher education. So it appears that pre-tertiary psychology teachers and students are not always well nurtured along their journey into the discipline.

### Recommendations

- encourage all members of psychology communities in Europe to recognise and celebrate the value of pre-tertiary psychology and its place in the overall range of psychology education
- encourage involvement of psychologists in developing high school curricula
- improve availability of teacher education and professional development for psychology teachers
- encourage communication and collaboration amongst schools, universities, teachers' associations, psychologists' associations - EFPTA and EFPA BEA can help to facilitate.

In sum, there is a need to provide support for PTPE and its teachers and students; those who have already made their successful journey into our discipline are ideally placed to offer such support.

<sup>1</sup> Sokolová, L., Williamson, M., & McGinty, A. (2017, September 28). Journeys to psychology: Different perspectives on pre tertiary teaching of psychology in Europe. Retrieved from <https://osf.io/4n3rh/>

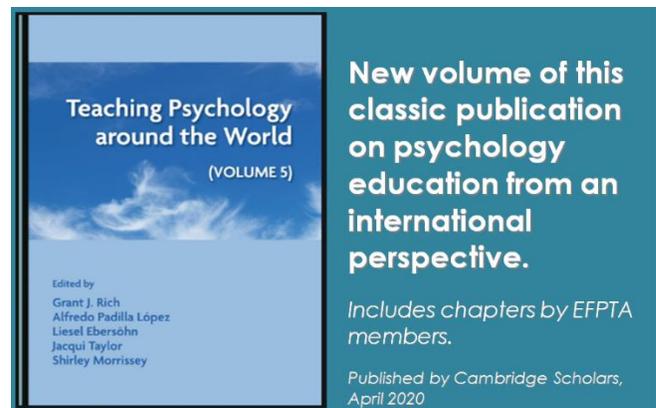
<sup>2</sup> [http://www.efpta.org/docs/efpa\\_efpta\\_survey-infographic-LS-M-561202-16-11-2018.pdf](http://www.efpta.org/docs/efpa_efpta_survey-infographic-LS-M-561202-16-11-2018.pdf)

Williamson, M., & Sokolová, L. (2019). A survey on pre-university psychology education in EFPA member countries' schools. EFPA News Magazine, February 2019. Available online: <http://educational-affairs.efpa.eu/resources-for-the-public/>

## The Journey into Psychology Starts at School: Pre-Tertiary Psychology Education in Europe

Here Lenka Sokolová, and Morag Williamson present the conclusions from their book chapter.

Psychology education at pre-tertiary level in Europe presents something of a conundrum. Since the late 20th century, its popularity has been widespread and enduring. The number of countries offering pre-tertiary psychology in their schools has increased, as has the number of courses within those countries, and this trend is likely to continue. National teachers' associations are flourishing along with their EFPTA, thus increasing opportunities for CPD, sharing of good practice, and networking amongst psychology teachers. There is growing awareness of PTPE in the wider community of professional practitioners in psychology, academics and psychologists'



associations; there is some recognition of the important role of PTPE in sowing the seeds of psychological literacy.

As well as bringing benefits for the individual, it is claimed that PTPE is beneficial for society: many of the thousands of young people who study psychology at school go on to study it at university, but many do not; this means that, over the years, and regardless of numbers of psychology graduates, the general population of many countries are building up a shared understanding of psychological concepts (Banyard, 2014). Such understanding may ultimately help in addressing, at community and societal levels, challenges of modern life such as prejudice and hate, social media abuses, environmental degradation etc., where changes in attitudes and behaviours are needed to improve general wellbeing (Hulme, 2014).

In this regard, might PTPE be an asset in the wider context of national policies for education? There is increased concern globally about mental health and wellbeing, particularly among children and young people, and governments often see schools and teachers as playing an important role in promoting health and wellbeing, with an emphasis on early intervention and prevention of problems (e.g., Scottish Government, 2017). There are examples of teachers and educational psychologists working in partnership to this end (e.g., in Finland). Psychology teachers generally possess specialist knowledge of developmental processes and the impact of adverse childhood experiences; to what extent might their expertise be of value in promoting wellbeing in their school and community? This question needs exploration.

Sokolová, L., & Williamson, M. (2020). The Journey into Psychology Starts at School: Pre-Tertiary Psychology Education in Europe. In: *Teaching psychology around the world. Vol. V*. Cambridge Scholars. (<https://www.cambridgescholars.com/>)

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## News from around Europe

### ❖ **Slovakia:** Slovak Association for the Teaching of Psychology (SAUP)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the autumn term has seen schools in Slovakia open only for pre-primary and primary levels. At the beginning of October secondary schools (15-19) and universities again moved to full-time distance teaching, which means that psychology is taught only online (including practical workshops, training etc.). Teachers have found this very difficult and are also worried about the impact of this way of teaching on students' competences.

The Slovak Association is trying to support teachers via the website and Facebook group. They have also planned online activities starting with a webinar in June.

As the teaching practice element of the training of future psychology teachers is online too, they have started cooperating with other EFPTA Board members to bring an international dimension to their training. Jock McGinty and Helena Haranen were invited to present the teaching of psychology in England and Finland respectively and in cooperation with Alena Nohavová we started a twinning class project with the Czech Republic and Scotland for psychology teacher trainees.

**Lenka Sokolová, EFPTA President and Slovakia Representative**

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**❖ Scotland:** Association for the Teaching of Psychology, Scotland (ATPS)

Almost all schools are open in Scotland, although lockdown restrictions have been made more severe again in the last two weeks. The Scottish Government is giving children's education top priority, saying schools must stay open. There are serious concerns about the mental health and wellbeing of many children and young people due to coronavirus.

Students' exam results for 2020 were originally calculated by an algorithm, but it transpired that this disadvantaged certain schools and young people, and after an enormous political row, the Scottish Government and the exam board (SQA) did a U-turn and recalculated grades using teachers' estimates. Most students / parents / teachers were satisfied, and virtually all subjects including Psychology benefitted from a higher pass rate than usual.

For 2021 exams, SQA put forward proposals, making no changes at all to Psychology course content or assessment – this was absurd (reduced content / shorter exams were proposed for most other subjects). Individual teachers responded and ATPS submitted a robust response including alternative proposals; there was another U-turn, in mid-October. Across all subjects SQA received c.23, 000 responses to the proposals (that's a lot, in a small country). Psychology teachers are fairly content with the outcome: reduced content, shorter exam, and some flexibility.

The ATPS Team continues to collaborate with BPS-S. Some previous planning has been disrupted by the pandemic but there are plans for a joint webinar event, possibly in January. BPS (UK) recently published a guidance document for universities and other providers of teacher education for psychology in the UK; ATPS members Jonathan Firth and Morag Williamson are two of the contributors along with ATP committee member Helen Kitching as co-editor. <https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Events%20-%20Files/REP136%20ITE%20psychology%20WEB.pdf>

**Morag Williamson, Scotland Representative**

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**❖ Czech Republic:** Teaching psychology in schools

Since 12 October, schools in the Czech Republic have been closed again. Teaching is conducted remotely. During the spring lockdown, teachers sent students a lot of worksheets and study materials. However the autumn lockdown has seen lessons move to a more online format with the advantage that the students are connected in online learning.

A collaborative project on 'Learning journey on stress, wellbeing, and psychological resilience' is planned between the Czech Republic, Scotland and Slovakia. We have prepared a basic concept and are now preparing teaching materials at a national level. We would also like to include work with mobile applications, for example a stress test, anti-stress applications, anti-stress games, stress control, etc.

**Alena Nohavová, Czech Republic Representative**

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## ❖ Russia

September 30 - October 3, 2020 at The International Forum "Mission of Teacher Education in the XXI century"



Here, the Rector of Southern Federal University Marina Borovskaya introduces the Forum at which EFPTA board members Professor Raisa Chumicheva and Professor Olga Zvereva presented a report on "EFPTA - Format of International Cooperation in European Psychological Education".

The forum discussed the most successful experiences of introducing new practices and modern technologies into the work and training of teachers. New interdisciplinary

areas in pedagogy, joint projects and international educational programs in the framework of pedagogical sciences were discussed. Raisa's and Olga's presentation focused on the content, main problems of cross-cultural research, and described various forms and methods of cooperation between psychology teachers in Europe.

In 2020, Professor Raisa Chumicheva also gave presentations on 'Digital Challenge for the Socialization of Preschool Children', 'Risky Activity of Students in Conditions of Digitalization' and 'Psychological and Pedagogical Conditions for Positive Socialization of Children in the Digital Environment'. Raisa has also cooperated with a graduate student from China ZHANG Chunxiang, in an article revealing the psychological characteristics of students in the on-line learning process 'On the Reform of Training Mode of Physical Education Teachers in China'.

Professor Olga Zvereva also researched the use of Information and Communication Technologies in teaching and published an article entitled "Information and Communication Technologies in education: advantages and disadvantages". The data obtained are similar to the results obtained by my European colleagues. The advantages of distance education include flexible schedule and time savings, the disadvantages include technical and communication difficulties, insufficient level of information and communication skills of teachers and students. Summarizing the obtained data, we offer the pedagogical conditions for the introduction of Information Technologies in the educational process at university level, while noting that it is necessary not to abandon traditional forms of teaching, to combine traditional and non-traditional forms, relying on the technology of cooperation.

**Raisa Chumicheva, Russia Representative**

❖ **Denmark** Danish Psychology Teachers Association (Psykologilærerforeningen)

The Psychology Teachers Association in Denmark held their conference between 5 – 6th November 2020 in Fredericia. The conference brought together teachers from all around Denmark and offered delegates three seminars.

Seminar 1: Climate psychology in your everyday life was presented by Simon Elsborg Nygaard, a Postdoc student from the Department of Psychology, Aarhus University.

Seminar 2: Political Psychology was delivered by Jonatan Kolding Karnøe, Associate Professor, Cand.Psych, from Absalon Professional College.

Seminar 3 was facilitated by the board of the Association and was entitled Knowledge Sharing in Psychology with a focus on writing in psychology where delegates were encouraged to bring and share examples from their own work.

The keynote speech was delivered by Professor Svend Brinkmann from the Department of Communication and Psychology, Aalborg University on the topic of diagnoses and grief and this was followed by news from the Ministry of Education with Mikkel Krag Brunvold, a specialist consultant in marketing, market communication, innovation and psychology.

**Mette Lohmann Eggertsen EFPTA Vice-President**

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