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## 15<sup>th</sup> General Meeting of the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology

Opatija, June 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008

The 15th General Meeting of the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology was held in Opatija, Croatia, from 10th to 14th June 2008. This conference takes place every three years and besides being a central gathering of the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology) is also the central gathering of all European social psychologists and their guests from all over the world.

This year there were 955 participants from 34 countries, mostly from Europe, but also from overseas: Afghanistan, Australia, Chile, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore and the United States of America. The majority of participants were EAESP members – 544 of them; however this conference has always been attractive to all European social psychologists and other researchers who passionately work in the fascinating field of social psychology.

Judging by the number of submitted papers this was the biggest EAESP Conference so far, with over 1000 papers submitted. Unfortunately, the number of Croatian participants and those from other countries in our region was not very high. Nevertheless it should be said that Croatian social psychologists participated in several symposia, thematic sessions and posters. One of my recommendations for the next social psychology general meeting is to attract more people from the region; in this area social psychology has been flourishing over the past twenty years, and this happened particularly during the recent war. We had a living laboratory in real settings, where a number of valuable socio-psychological research was performed. It is important to present the results to the professional audience and make them a part of a general socio-psychological knowledge, particularly in the field of group and group processes, psychology of war and peace, psychology of prejudice and other intergroup attitudes, etc.

The Conference Program was divided in five thematic areas: social cognition, interpersonal processes, group and intergroup processes and attitudes, emotions and motivation. There were 66 symposia, 66 thematic sessions, and two poster sessions with about 400 presentations. The Program Committee was led by Professor Jens Foerster from the University of Amsterdam and the rest of the team members were Fabrizio Butera (Switzerland), Nira Liberman (Israel), Sabine Otten (The Netherlands), Alexander Haslam (Great Britain) and Pablo Brinol (Spain).

Local organizers were the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb and Society for Psychological Assistance from Zagreb. The organizing team was: Dinka Čorkalo Biruški (chair) Dean Ajduković (co-chair), Dea Ajduković, Petra Dražić, Jana Dusper, Dubravka Horvatiček, Aleksandra Huić, Margareta Jelić, Dragan Jusupović, Željka Kamenov, Kristijan Relković and Lidija Zajc.

The 2008 Conference is also to be remembered because the name of the Association has been changed into European Association of Social Psychology (EASP). By this change I believe the Association opens up its doors to all social psychologists and not exclusively to those who use experimental method. However for the sake of accuracy it should be said that EASP has always been an inclusive organization that appreciated diversity of the European socio-psychological thought.

During the Conference traditional Association's awards were given to several distinguished colleagues who have contributed greatly to the field of social psychology in the past period.

The winners were:

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**Jean-Paul Codol Award for significantly advancing the cause of social psychology in Europe**

Luciano Arcuri, Università Degli Studi Di Padova  
Dave Hamilton, University of California, Santa Barbara  
Maria Lewicka, Uniwersytet Warszawski

**Jos Jaspars Award for recognizing junior excellence**

Aarti Iyer, University of Queensland  
Jeroen Vaes, Università Degli Studi Di Padova  
Gerben van Kleef, Universiteit van Amsterdam

**Kurt Lewin Award for outstanding scientific contributions to social psychology**

Naomi Ellemers, Universiteit Leiden  
Neil Macrae, University of Aberdeen  
Vincent Yzerbyt, Université catholique de Louvain

**Henry Tajfel Award for a distinguished lifetime achievement in social psychology**

Tony Manstead, Cardiff University

At the end I want to emphasize that this jubilee conference was held in Croatia for the first time, and it was also the first time after the 1990 that the conference was held in a non-EU member country. This certainly serves as a great recognition to the Croatian (social) psychology. This success was acknowledged by our sponsors: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport of the Republic of Croatia, European Association for Social Psychology, Croatia Airlines, Potomac d. o. o. Zagreb, HT-Croatian Telecommunications, T-Mobile Croatia, and Coca-Cola Beverages Croatia d.d. I thank them again for their support.

Last but not least, as a chair of the Organizing Committee I can say that we are glad and proud to have had a chance to organize 15th general meeting of the European social psychologists. I think it was an important opportunity for Croatian social psychology and an important step for the Association to get closer and make a bridge to the professional audience in this part of Europe.

*Dinka Čorkalo Biruški*