

University of Groningen

Editorial

Imhoff, Roland; Smith, Joanne; van Zomeren, Martijn

Published in:
European Journal of Social Psychology

DOI:
[10.1002/ejsp.2359](https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2359)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2018

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Imhoff, R., Smith, J., & van Zomeren, M. (2018). Editorial: Opening up to openness. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 48(1), 1-3. DOI: 10.1002/ejsp.2359

Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.

EDITORIAL

Editorial: Opening up to openness**Editors-in-Chief (in alphabetical order)**

Roland Imhoff (Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz)
 Joanne Smith (University of Exeter)
 Martijn van Zomeren (University of Groningen)

Associate Editors (in alphabetical order)

Catherine Amiot (Université du Québec à Montréal)
 Eleni Andreouli (Open University)
 Michał Bilewicz (University of Warsaw)
 Diana Boer (Universität Koblenz-Landau)
 Andrea Carnaghi (University of Trieste)
 Aleksandra Cichocka (University of Kent)
 Juliane Degner (Universität Hamburg)
 John Dixon (Open University)
 Matthew Easterbrook (University of Sussex).
 Katharine Greenaway (University of Melbourne).
 Nicole Harth (Ernst-Abbe-Hochschule Jena).
 PJ Henry (NYU Abu Dhabi).
 Tara Marshall (Brunel University).
 Esther Papies (University of Glasgow).
 Tobias Rothmund (Universität Koblenz-Landau)
 Shaul Shalvi (University of Amsterdam)
 Nurit Shnabel (Tel Aviv University)
 Jeroen Vaes (University of Trento)

As the new editors-in-chief of the *European Journal of Social Psychology* (EJSP), we are writing this editorial to outline our twin goals for the journal for the next three years, and to reach out to social psychologists both within and outside of Europe to help us realize that vision. We also want to thank the 13th EJSP team with Radmila Prislina and Vivian Vignoles at the helm, who carefully steered the journal through the past three years, and left it to us in an admirable state.

Our twin goals are to maintain EJSP's profile as the flagship journal for high-quality work in European social psychology, while promoting its reach and reputation through "opening up". This means, within the broad confines of our field, that we seek *more diverse contributions* (e.g., theoretical as well as empirical contributions, work on mainstream and non-mainstream topics in the field, quantitative as well as qualitative work), as well as a *more global and representative scholarship* (both in terms of authors and samples) in the pages of our journal. To this end, we have assembled a larger editorial team, which reflects the expertise, experience, and diversity – geographical, methodological, and theoretical – that is required for realizing our vision.

As a team, the guiding principle for our term is *openness*. This does not just mean appreciating diverse types of high-quality contributions to our journal, and different (meta)-theories, perspectives, approaches, methods, data, and statistics. Openness also does not just mean welcoming scholarly work from geographical areas and subfields that may traditionally not be represented well in EJSP, and seeking new perspectives on how

insights from such fields can be connected and integrated with more mainstream knowledge. Beyond all of this, we believe that openness pertains explicitly to clearer norms and expectations about how we, as social psychologists, make accurate claims based on our findings, and how we communicate and report these findings in a published article. We discuss each of these three themes below, as well as what these changes mean for authors submitting to EJSP.

Openness to Theoretical and Methodological Breadth

It goes without saying that EJSP should be the home of high-quality theory and research in social psychology. We build upon the previous team's vision that high-quality does not necessarily equate to "experimental research" – we are open to and will be actively seeking high-quality theoretical or empirical contributions, independent of whether these use mainstream or non-mainstream perspectives, whether these use quantitative and qualitative methods, whether comparisons are experimental, longitudinal, or cross-cultural, or whether the data approach is confirmatory or explorative.

We specifically emphasize our commitment to high-quality *theoretical* articles – we want EJSP to be an outlet for those contributions that seek to develop, move beyond, and/or integrate insights from different theories and models (for discussions on the importance of theory, see Ellemers, 2013; Kruglanski, 2001; Van Lange, 2013). We expect such a scholarly endeavor to have concrete outcomes, such as novel implications for guiding future research, or for addressing key insights to real-life issues and problems. To facilitate this process, we are inviting *3-page proposals for theoretical articles* while providing clear criteria for the type of high-quality theoretical contributions we would like to see published in EJSP (see the EJSP website for more procedural details). Those proposals that receive a green light to be submitted as a full paper will then go through the normal rigorous peer-review process.

We also extend an invitation to submit work to EJSP *from subfields in social psychology that may typically not be viewed as prototypical for EJSP*, such as theory and research on close relationships and interpersonal processes, on cultural and cross-cultural social psychology, and discursive psychology. Indeed, we want EJSP to gain from key insights in such domains in order to add to what may be traditionally considered more prototypical areas of research published in EJSP. Needless to say, we value and want to maintain and foster our base, but also see clear added value in opening up to include other subfields of social psychology as well. We want all of European social psychology to be reflected in the pages

of our journal, as long as contributions are of high quality.

Openness to Geographical Diversity

We further seek openness in terms of the *geographical breadth* of submissions to EJSP (including work from, for example, Asia, Africa, and the Americas), but also in the *samples* being studied in EJSP publications. This is important because one point of critique of the field of social psychology is its overreliance on Western (student) samples (see Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; Sears, 1986). We feel it is absolutely pivotal for social psychology to become more representative in this regard because a more diverse sampling strategy will provide a more accurate assessment of the claims made on the basis of social-psychological research. This is important because identifying boundaries to our findings, for instance through cross-cultural or sample-based comparisons, forces us to become more precise (and typically more modest) in our claims, and moreover invokes a need for stronger and more precise theories in our field, and for new theory-driven research to test or explore them.

We further hope that a broader and more representative social-psychological body of theory and research, as published in EJSP, will be more *consequential* in terms of impact and societal relevance. This is because our journal's readership is becoming more and more global, which means more potential interest and coverage of what is published in EJSP. In this sense, together with our publisher Wiley, we want to do more to alert both the EASP membership and our global readership to new EJSP articles. This requires, however, that the contents of EJSP should be relevant across a broad range of populations, groups, and social contexts, which fits with our aim to open up to a more global and representative scholarship. Indeed, social psychology does not get less interesting or impactful when we identify boundaries to our theories – in fact, our field gets more interesting, relevant, and consequential in the face of such challenges, and we want EJSP to be an outlet for showcasing such developments.

Openness about Research Transparency

Last, but certainly not least, we want the core principle of openness to be more explicitly reflected in the scholarly work we publish in the pages of our journal. This means we are explicitly asking authors to stick to the openness principle when submitting to EJSP, as the principle applies equally to all forms of research. Specifically, there are *three changes* that our editorial team will be implementing.

First, irrespective of whether the reported work is qualitative or quantitative in nature, we require authors of EJSP articles to be explicit about whether their studies provide *confirmatory* and/or *exploratory* evidence for their conclusions, and thus which ideas and predictions they had when they started the study and what insights they

derived from exploring the data in the process (see Nosek et al., 2015). From this it also follows that, where relevant, one reports how sample sizes were obtained (e.g., based on power analyses, practical considerations, or strategies to terminate data collection). Specific tools to facilitate such openness, such as a formal preregistration, are encouraged but not required – the key issue here is that claims need to be in line with what was actually done, rather than boosted to “sell” the research.

Second, upon acceptance of a paper to EJSP, authors will be required (see the EJSP website for more details) *to provide a working, publicly accessible, link to their research materials and/or data – or else explain why they are unwilling or unable to do so*. The latter option is explicitly non-judgmental, as there are good reasons imaginable for not providing such a link (e.g., institutional or national regulations or laws, the nature of the data gathered). Nevertheless, we believe that a shift to more openly accessible data will be beneficial to the field (e.g., in terms of re- and meta-analysis), and that changing the default to providing a link to materials and/or data upon acceptance will facilitate this process (Morey et al., 2016).

Third, opening up also implies being considerate of empirical imperfections that would otherwise remain hidden from view. This means that we require authors to provide a transparent description of the research process in their articles (e.g., report all measures, manipulations, and exclusions from samples, if any; e.g., Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2011). We thus encourage authors to accurately report about the inclusion of failed studies and imperfect patterns (e.g., p-values not meeting the .05 threshold), but this also has to mean that disclosing such imperfections, all else being equal, should not affect the likelihood of acceptance. We therefore want authors to evaluate the *overall evidence* available for a conceptual claim (rather than report only the studies that “worked”). As such, the conceptual claim needs to be in line with the weight of the empirical evidence, and we can only evaluate this if authors are open about this.

In this respect, some might wonder how to manage and achieve openness within the confines of EJSP's word limits (4000 for brief reports; 10 000 for research articles). It is true that, in the past, such word limits may have limited not just the number of words but also authors' attention to detail in their descriptions of the research process. Since the advent of online appendices, however, there is no longer any restriction on word limits while reporting your research in an open way. In fact, Wiley facilitates the publication of online appendices and thus provides a clear way to combine concision in writing research articles with openness in reporting.

Opening Up to Openness

The new EJSP editorial team is committed to foster the principle of openness in social-psychological scholarship. We are opening up in different ways and expect

contributors to open up to us as well. But to achieve this, we obviously need you – our authors, reviewers, consulting editors, and readership – to join us in this endeavor. First and foremost, we want you to send us your best theoretical and empirical work, while reporting and communicating openly about it. Second, we also want you to help us evaluate and select the finest work in the peer-review process by asking for your expertise. And finally, we want your research, once accepted, to be sent “out there”, as a way of showcasing our fascination with social psychology, in the broadest sense of the word, for all the world to see. We believe that by adopting openness as our guiding principle, we can achieve our twin goals: To maintain EJSP’s profile as the flagship journal for high-quality work in European social psychology, while promoting its reach and reputation through “opening up”. We see this editorial as a first active step to achieve these twin goals, and hope that you will join us in this important endeavour.

References

- Ellemers, N. (2013). Connecting the dots: Mobilizing theory to reveal the big picture in social psychology (and why we should do this). *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43(1), 1–8.
- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). Most people are not WEIRD. *Nature*, 466(7302), 29–29.
- Kruglanski, A. W. (2001). That “Vision Thing”: The state of theory in social and personality psychology at the edge of the new millennium. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80(6), 871–875.
- Morey, R. D., Chambers, C. D., Etchells, P. J., Harris, C. R., Hoekstra, R., Lakens, D., ... Vanpaemel, W. (2016). The peer reviewers’ openness initiative: Incentivizing open research practices through peer review. *Royal Society Open Science*, 3(1), 150547.
- Nosek, B. A., Alter, G., Banks, G. C., Borsboom, D., Bowman, S. D., Breckler, S. J., ... Contestabile, M. (2015). Promoting an open research culture. *Science*, 348(6242), 1422–1425.
- Sears, D. O. (1986). College sophomores in the laboratory: Influences of a narrow data base on social psychology’s view of human nature. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(3), 515.
- Simmons, J. P., Nelson, L. D., & Simonsohn, U. (2011). False-positive psychology: Undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant. *Psychological Science*, 22(11), 1359–1366.
- Van Lange, P. A. (2013). What we should expect from theories in social psychology: Truth, abstraction, progress, and applicability as standards (TAPAS). *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 17(1), 40–55.