



**Report 2015-2017**  
**of the**  
**“Standing Committee Geropsychology”**  
**to the EFPA General Assembly in Amsterdam on**  
**July 15-16, 2017**

**Contents**

Executive summary .....	1
Introduction .....	2
Activities .....	2
1. Communication and exchange within the group.....	2
2. Symposium for the 15 <sup>th</sup> European Congress of Psychology .....	3
3. Special Issue for the European Psychologist.....	5
Meetings (also videoconferences, or skype meetings) during term 2015-2017	6
Important: Information & recommendations for GA & Member Associations ...	6
Proposals for decisions by GA.....	6
Members of the group .....	7

**Executive summary**

The report gives an overview of the various activities of the SC Geropsychology during 2015-2017. It elaborates ongoing and recurrent activities of the group with a somewhat larger time frame as well as activities planned for 2017 such as a symposium on “Facing the challenges of ageing populations” at the 15<sup>th</sup> ECP as well as a planned special issue on “Geropsychology in Europe: Perspectives on Health and Intervention Research” in the European Psychologist.

---

On behalf of the SC Geropsychology:  
Prof Dr Dieter Ferring (convenor)  
University of Luxembourg (L)

## Introduction

This report covers the activities of the Standing Committee on Geropsychology performed during the period January 2015 – June 2017 and it will focus on three domains of activities during these two years. A first part gives an overview of the communication and exchange between the group members. A second part focuses on a symposium that the group prepared for the 15<sup>th</sup> ECP in Amsterdam 2017. This symposium titled “Facing the challenges of ageing populations – Contributions from Geropsychology” includes two parts addressing “. Cognitive decline, aging, and mental health” with four contributions as well as “Quality of life, aging, and health behaviour”. A third part describes ongoing activities about a special issue in preparation for the European Psychologist addressing selected Geropsychological topics.

## Activities

### 1. Communication and exchange within the SC

The SC shows a stable number of members who cooperate now for at least six years. The SC was also happy to welcome Santo di Nuovo (Italy), Constanca Paul (Portugal) and Aycan Kapucu (Turkey) as further and/or new members. There have been two meetings at the Brussels EFPA Office during the last two years but the group has also been very busy in exchanging about upcoming activities – two of these described below in more detail. In addition to these, there are some ongoing topics described in this section.

At a more general level, there is always an exchange – bilateral and multilateral - about recent developments in Geropsychology across the countries. Moreover, the SC represents a European pool of expertise that can be used within the context of applying for research funding and joined efforts in education. Five more specific activities may be mentioned here as well. Firstly, the SC was honoured by an invitation of the Croatian Psychological Association to have a meeting on “psychological assessment in geropsychology” in Zagreb (March 2017). Unfortunately, most of the members could not achieve an additional financing for this meeting, and it had to be postponed. A second initiative concerns reflections and discussions within the group to come up with a recommendation for neuropsychological testing of older people. This represents a mid-term goal to tackle within the next three years. Thirdly, the SC is interested in reviewing the webpage which represents a recurrent topic still waiting for a solution including EFPA support. A fourth point concerns the exchange about the situation of geropsychology in the membership countries. On this behalf, an online survey was developed and programmed by May 2016. Contributions to this survey are still incomplete yet and have to be discussed in the SC summer meeting. A last activity to be listed here concerns the participation of SC member Rocio Fernández-Ballesteros at the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing

and the option of developing “Guidelines for Psychological Practice for Active and Healthy” within this activity.

## 2. Symposium for the 15<sup>th</sup> European Congress of Psychology

**Introduction.** The symposium starts with the notion that human ageing represents one of the major challenges of Europe in the upcoming decades given that nine of the 10 oldest world populations are from Europe. This has and will have evident consequences at all levels of the socio-ecological context. It is thus a challenge for Psychology and especially Geropsychology to provide sound research-based knowledge about processes of human ageing as well as expertise about training, education and interventions that will help to promote quality of living and subjective well-being both at the individual and the social level. The symposium follows this notion and scholars from eight European countries will report on new developments in theory and research across the various geropsychology domains that will help to tackle the challenge of ageing.

In a first part on “*Cognitive decline, aging, and mental health*”, the symposium will address clinical aspects of ageing. Di Nuovo (Italy) presents findings on interventions enhancing quality of life of elderly persons with mental deterioration or Mild Cognitive Impairment. R. Drăghici will report on the diagnostic use of drawings by elderly persons with neurocognitive disorders. Stepankova, Kopecek, and Schmand (Czech Republic, The Netherlands) focus on positive aspects of ageing presenting findings on cognitive superageing. Gatterer, and Blokesch, (Austria) present the theoretical rationale underlying schematherapy use in older adults. The second part of this symposium is dedicated to “Quality of life, aging, and health behaviour”.

The second part of the symposium addresses “*Quality of life, aging, and health behaviour*” and presents findings on personal and contextual factors that have an impact on these criteria. Fernández-Ballesteros, Angeles Molina and Sánchez Izquierdo (Spain) report findings on contextual influences in social images about ageing, testing predictions of the Stereotype Content Model. Lang and Damm (Germany) present theory and research findings on perceiving future time and its impact on preparing for old age. Despot Lucanin, Lucanin, Bjelajac and Delale (Croatia) present findings on the predictive contributions of psychosocial factors to life satisfaction in old adults. Finally, Ferring and Boll (Luxembourg) give insights into perceived gains and losses when caring for an older relative and their implications for psychosocial intervention.

Table 1: Speakers, affiliations and title of contributions.

Speakers	Title
<i>Part 1: Cognitive decline, aging, and mental health</i>	
Santo di Nuovo, University of Catania ITALY	Interventions on quality of life of elderly persons with mental deterioration or Mild Cognitive Impairment
Rozeta Drăghici National Institute for Gerontology and Geriatrics Bucharest, ROMANIA	Distortion in drawings of elderly persons – A discriminant neurocognitive index
Hana Stepankova, Miloslav Kopecek, Ben Schmand National Institute of Mental Health, CZECH REPUBLIC	Cognitive SuperAging
Gerald Gatterer; Richard Blokesch Sigmund Freud Private University-Vienna AUSTRIA	Need oriented schemata and schema-therapy in old aged people
<i>Part 2: Quality of life, aging, and health behaviour</i>	
Rocio Fernández-Ballesteros, María Angeles Molina, Macarena Sánchez Izquierdo Autonomous University of Madrid SPAIN	Contextual influences in social images about ageing
Frieder R. Lang & Franziska Damm Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuremberg GERMANY	Perceived future time and late-life preparation across adulthood
Jasminka Despot Lucanin, Damir Lucanin*, Adrijana Bjelajac, Eva Andjela Delale University of Applied Health Sciences and University of Zagreb, Croatian Studies CROATIA	Life satisfaction and psychosocial factors in old persons
Dieter Ferring and Thomas Boll University of Luxembourg LUXEMBOURG	Gains and losses of caring for an older relative and the indication for geropsychological intervention

**Achievements.** It is considered a big achievement that the group comes up with the proposal of a symposium addressing several aspects of human ageing both with respect to applied geropsychology as well as with respect to specific research. Domains cover diagnostics as well as therapy and the presentations will give a perfect overview about ongoing research across Europe.

### 3. Special Issue for the European Psychologist

The editor of the European Psychologist (EP) contacted the SC in fall 2015 inquiring for a possible special issue on human ageing including contributions of the group. The SC exchanged about this option and planned to submit a special issue on “Geropsychology in Europe: Perspectives on Health and Intervention Research” for the EP to be submitted in 2017 with a proposed publication date in the EP Volume 4 of 2017.

The special issue will cover prominent aspects of geropsychological research and application and thus reflect findings as well as practises in the field of geropsychology across Europe. The link between research and its application in geropsychological intervention therefore is a decisive aspect of the planned special issue. Moreover, giving an insight into research and practises in Europe will not exclude any other international findings. The presentations should present a review of the theory and research on the given topic and then come up at least two studies (and linked practises) from different European countries.

In November 2016 the following contributions were discussed:

- Memory performance and early detection of dementia;
- Functional health, frailty and quality of life;
- Geropsychological aspects of assistive technologies;
- Views and stereotypes on age and ageing;
- Resilience, adaptation and coping old age.
- Transitions into care;
- Cognitive Superageing
- Planning and Preparation of End of Life Across Adulthood

At the current state of planning four of these possible contributions are elaborated, namely, “Memory performance and early detection of dementia”; “Geropsychological aspects of assistive technologies”; “Cognitive Superageing”, and “Planning and Preparation of End of Life across Adulthood”. It will be a challenge for the upcoming months to coordinate these efforts between the SC members.

## **Meetings (also videoconferences, or Skype meetings) during term 2015-2017**

1. February 20th, 2015, Brussels, EFPA Office, 10 am - 3.00 pm
2. March 11th, 2016, Brussels, EFPA Office, 10 am - 3.00 pm
3. June 2017, Amsterdam
4. In general, the group has a vivid e-mail exchange throughout the years.

In average how many participants were attending the meetings?

50%

## **Important: Information & recommendations for GA & Member Associations**

The General Assembly is asked to take notice of the following:

- a. State of the EFPA webpage and the SC Geropsychology website in particular.

What is the current state of planning?

Is there an option of receiving an EFPA support structure to help and assist with the website?

- b. The SC members want to establish an “Expert’s data pool” that includes different domains of expertise (e.g., Quality of Life & Well-Being; Healthy and Active Ageing; Memory and Cognition; Dementia & Neurodegenerative Disease; Affective Disorders and Anxiety; Death & Dying). This pool should be open to all colleagues across Europe.

Are there any options to achieve this?

- c. Will there be an option to co-finance meetings by the EFPA?

## **Proposals for decisions by GA**

The General Assembly is advised to accept the following proposals:

1. Lowering of the European Psychologist fee for Open Choice or Open Mind to promote knowledge sharing.
2. Provide technical (IT) support to improve/develop EFPA web pages and thus enable dissemination of information;
3. Facilitate meetings and collaboration of the SCs (regular meetings are functioning, but at least half of the SC members have difficulties with getting funding and do not join in/occasional meetings in smaller work-teams?)

## Members of the group

Country	Name
EC LIAISON	Bruna zani
Austria	Gerald Gatterer
Croatia	Jasminka Despot Lucanin
Czech Republic	Hana Štěpánková
<i>Denmark</i>	<i>Iben Estrup Andersen</i>
<i>Finland</i>	<i>Hannu Pajunen</i>
Germany	Frieder Lang
<i>Iceland</i>	<i>Asa Gudmundsdottir</i>
<i>Italy</i>	<i>Santo Di Nuovo</i>
Luxembourg	<b>Dieter Ferring ©</b>
Norway	Elisabeth Holck Steen
Norway	Siv Tove Engebraten
Portugal	Constança Paúl
Romania	Rozeta Draghici
Russia	Elena L. Soldatova
Spain	Rocio Fernández Ballesteros
Turkey	<i>Aycan Kapucu</i>
© = convenor	
<i>Italic = Corresponding member</i>	
TOTAL	16
TOTAL Active	10
Total Corresponding	6