



Welcome Speech by

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5th EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF PSYCHOMOTRICITY

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Distinguished Speakers, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good afternoon to everyone, and thank you, for joining us, at the 5th EFP European Congress of Psychomotricity.

I would like to present my compliments to all academic colleagues and administrative authorities participating in this opening ceremony and express to you my deep satisfaction for sharing this important moment for the development of Psychomotricity.

To our eminent speakers, the EFP delegates and all participants who have come from all over Europe, I am greatly honored and pleased to welcome you to Barcelona, on behalf of the European Forum of Psychomotricity. We are indeed honoured to have you here with us.

We have about 300 participants from 15 countries gathered here today, making our congress a truly European initiative. I welcome also the colleagues from South American countries that have also honoured us with their presence. Their presence is also an opportunity to establish new scientific and professional bridges with other geographical realities.

The 5th European Congress of Psychomotricity is organised by the European Forum of Psychomotricity in collaboration with the *Federación de Asociaciones de Psicomotricistas del Estado Español* (FAPEE) and the Spanish Universities that have developed courses in the scientific and professional field of Psychomotricity.



European Forum of Psychomotricity

The Spanish organisation committee and also the scientific committee have done a fantastic work preparing our congress and I would like to thank them for their energy, competence and professionalism during the organization process. For sure, the success I anticipate to this congress will certainly be the result of the effective collaboration between the FAPee and the Spanish Universities, in coordination with EFP delegates and EFP Board.

I would like to present a special thanks to our colleague Estrella Masabeu, the Spanish delegate at EFP, not only for her fundamental work in motivating Spanish colleagues to propose the organization of this congress, but also by her leadership during the organization and also the continuous communication and coordination with the EFP Board and the General Assembly.

This Congress is certainly a special occasion for those who work for the development of Psychomotricity, in education, research and professional development. It will be an occasion to meet, to listen, to discuss, to share information and to plan for the future. Indeed, a congress is an opportunity to discuss key points of scientific and professional policies and strategies, helping us to define how we should encourage responsible conduct in our political decisions, to promote Psychomotricity at the European level and also to establish personal contacts with colleagues from other parts of the world.

Previous EFP congresses have been developed under this principle. The first congress took place in Marburg - Germany, in 1996 with the theme: *Psychomotor Activity and Human Development*.

The second congress took place in Strasbourg - France, in the year 2000 with the theme: *“Psychomotor Education and Therapy in a Society of Change on the Threshold of the Third Millennium”*.

The third congress was organised in Lisbon - Portugal, in 2004, with the theme: *“Psychomotor Identity: Similarity and Diversity”*.

Finally, in this historical sequence of EFP congresses initiatives, the fourth and previous Congress was organised in Amsterdam in the Netherlands, in 2008, with the theme *“Crossing Borders”*.

These made it possible to present perspectives about psychomotor concepts and methodologies and consequently have contributed to clarify the fundamentals of a common profession based on a common identity, respecting possible diversities.



European Forum of Psychomotricity

And here we are again, now in Spain, in Catalonia, in Barcelona, to continue this exceptional course that began in 1996. The EFP is proud to host this event again, bringing together renowned experts in our field, to address the vital issue of research excellence and professional development.

In my opinion, now is the right time to reflect on some questions. Today, Europe is at the crossroads of its future, in a difficult situation of crisis.

Are we choosing the right path in the crisis? Do our intervention programmes achieve the intended effects? Which innovative sectors or methodologies can we search for to work on? How can we secure a sustainable growth of Psychomotricity and produce long-term value development for our scientific and professional field?

In an increasingly globalised world, there is a critical need to develop guidelines and recommendations for promoting Psychomotricity at a European level. Given today's exigencies created by the political and economical demands and pressures upon professions, it is intended to improve and consolidate the professional, educational and research efforts to provide the European community with exceptional value for Psychomotricity. We cannot make this journey alone!

The theme of this congress is “*Different faces of Psychomotricity*”, and will certainly help us to think about some of these subjects. Research activities are now taking place at a higher level and so it is imperative to discuss positive approaches to encourage best research practices, including examining the role of academic publications in setting the standards for psychomotricity and also to present professional experiences.

We have with us today representatives from universities and research organisations. I hope that these three days of congress, allows academics, researchers and professionals to share their ideas and views on common psychomotor issues, discussing about the leadership challenges and responses in research which may in turn inspire new or validated standards of practices in the professional field.

By the end of the Congress, as usual, we intend to formulate the final conclusions and eventually make some recommendations, which will be a benchmark for the future and will certainly contribute to promote excellent research and appoint principles and strategies for training students, allowing them to acquire the adequate skills to answer the current challenges of society.

The “European Forum of Psychomotricity” was founded in 1996 and seeks to sustain and increase its excellence as an institution that supports Psychomotricity in Europe,



European Forum of Psychomotricity

through producing creative and innovative activities for education, professional development, research and political initiatives.

Having in consideration the international recognition of its standards, the European Forum of Psychomotricity has identified some strategic areas of development:

- a) Contribute to the creation of a basic national education in Psychomotricity, at the bachelor level in European countries, respecting the minimal requirements already approved by the EFP and influencing academic structures to use European benchmarks and homogeneous references for initial or post-graduated education courses;
- b) Contribute to the development of a specific profession recognised in the different European countries and also by the European Commission;
- c) Promote high quality research in cooperation with institutions of higher education, to strength the validity of psychomotor practices in the different contexts of intervention and at the political level;
- d) Sustain communication between national members and their political authorities and also promoting opportunities in continuing professional education and lifelong learning through courses and professional mobility programmes;
- e) Enhance students experience, cooperation and partnership between different European countries;

These goals are pursued throughout the different activities of the EFP organs, namely the General Assembly and the Board, which have the responsibility to lead the EFP dynamic.

The EFP has also three commissions working for psychomotor education, for science and research and for the profession, which have produced some basic documents, such as, for example, the Minimum Curriculum for Initial Education in Psychomotricity and also the Psychomotrician Professional Competences In Europe. The EFP also organises Students' Academies every year and the European Congress every 4 years.

There are different levels of psychomotor development in European countries and diverse integration in systems of political organization, mainly in Health, and Education. More developed countries should establish bilateral protocols based in homogeneous training with the same criteria for recognition of professional practice in other countries, and should support countries less developed in their path.

Also, all common initiatives (intensive students programmes, European Post-graduations, conferences, etc.) are also positive steps in this development direction.



European Forum of Psychomotricity

The EFF organizes its activity to provide European countries with the conditions to develop in the most appropriate direction for our professional security in the future. To accomplish this goal, we must think European and as always, that means to respect differences to progressively achieve common identity. For that, we should always understand and respect all specific situations at the professional and political level and get inspiration from models of development, which are already confirmed.

Since the creation of the European Forum of Psychomotricity, countries have increased knowledge of each other and have awakened the interest to learn from each other. It is always in communication and dialogue we can advance.

Having this idea in mind, I would like to remind you of a Roman philosopher and statesman, named Lucius Seneca, who was a contemporary of Jesus Christ and said *“If one does not know to which port is sailing, no wind can be favorable”*. This congress is also an opportunity to discuss and define the best routes to our port and to blow scientifically and professionally our Psychomotricity ship's sails.

With these words, I hope this Congress provides you with a forum to exchange scientific ideas, inspire new research, and new contacts for closer co-operation, so that we can, together, envisage the future of a promising development of Psychomotricity in Europe.

I also wish you a pleasant and interesting stay in Barcelona.

Finally, on behalf of the Board of the European Forum of Psychomotricity, I'm very proud to declare officially opened the 2013 European Congress of Psychomotricity, here in Barcelona.

Thank you very much

Barcelona, 9 of May 2013