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Official Open Access Empirical Journal

of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA)

**Abstract book of the 19th**

**European Congress of Psychology**

Transforming Psychological Science:  
the 2030 agenda

1-4 July 2025, Paphos, Cyprus

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<b>Publisher</b>	Hogrefe AG, Länggass-Str. 76, CH-3012 Bern, Switzerland, Tel. +41 31 300 45 00, Fax +41 31 300 45 90, zeitschriften@hogrefe.ch, www.hogrefe.com	
<b>Production</b>	Karoline Wüthrich, Hogrefe AG, Länggass-Str. 76, CH-3012 Bern, Switzerland, Tel. +41 31 300 45 56, karoline.wuethrich@hogrefe.ch	
<b>ISSN</b>	ISSN-L 2673-8627, ISSN-Online 2673-8627	
<b>Frequency</b>	Published quarterly	
<b>Indexing</b>	Social Sciences Citation Index (SCIE), Social Scisearch, Current Contents/Social and Behavioral Sciences, Journal Citation Reports/Social Sciences Edition, PSYCLIT (Psychological Abstracts), PSYINDEX, PsycINFO, Europ. Reference List for the Humanities (ERIH), IBZ, IBR, and Scopus	
<b>Impact Factor</b>	1.7 (2023 <i>Journal Citation Reports</i> <sup>TM</sup> /Social Science Edition; Clarivate Analytics, 2024)	
<b>Electronic Full Text</b>	Full text available on Hogrefe eContent at <a href="https://econtent.hogrefe.com/toc/epo/current">https://econtent.hogrefe.com/toc/epo/current</a>	
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# **19th European Congress of Psychology**

***July 01–04, 2025***  
***Paphos, Cyprus***

***“Transforming Psychological Science: the 2030 agenda”***

## **Abstracts**

J u l y   1 - 4   •   2 0 2 5  
19th European Congress of Psychology



## Paper number 132 | Oral

### Randomized clinical trial of a prevention program for the enhancement of emotion regulation in adolescents

Christiana Theodorou<sup>1</sup>, Georgia Panayiotou<sup>2</sup>

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Emotional dysregulation can involve reduced awareness, understanding and acceptance of emotions. This prevention program had as a main purpose to enhance young people's personal skills, focusing especially on those who were more vulnerable in developing addictions and/or psychopathology due to their family history. In this randomized clinical trial (RCT), the intervention was improved based on the pilot study's findings. Before and after the application of the RCT, all participants (N=215) completed the same questionnaires. The findings of this RCT study support that participants developed ER skills after the program, such as acceptance, clarity of emotions, positive refocusing and reappraisal and confidence in finding multiple ways to manage emotions and reduced self-blame, impulsivity and catastrophizing thoughts. This RCT study found that affective problems, anxiety problems, ADHD, conduct disorder and oppositional defiant problems and substance use (such as consuming alcohol or nicotine dependence) were decreased significantly. Across the sessions, acceptance skill, behavioral activation and DBT skills were improved across all of the sessions. The main limitation of the RCT study was that a follow-up was not performed in order to evaluate the long-term effects of intervention. The increase of ER skills and decreased of mental health problems, as assessed by this RCT study should be re-evaluated via follow-ups to assess whether the significant findings continue or other important results are noted. To conclude, the prevention program contributed in the enhancement of using functional ways for managing negative and difficult emotions.

## Papers session 85

### Paper number 822 | Oral

#### The role of psychological distance in belief in conspiracy theories

Vytautas Jurkuvenas<sup>1</sup>, Antanas Kairys<sup>1</sup>, Vita Mikuličiūtė<sup>1</sup>, Aldona Radzevičienė<sup>1</sup>

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Belief in conspiracy theories can erode trust in institutions and spread misinformation. Research indicates these beliefs emerge across cultures and eras whenever uncertainty or mistrust surrounds significant events. They stem from fundamental cognitive biases that, though adaptive in some contexts, leave individuals susceptible to conspiratorial thinking. One of these factors might be psychological distance, the perceived cognitive separation between oneself and external objects. In this study, we examined whether psychological distance influences belief in conspiracy theories. In total 162 young adults participated in the research (76.5% were females). A between-subjects design was used. Belief in conspiracy theories was measured using a five-point Likert scale across twelve items. Exploratory factor analysis showed that a two-factor structure might better fit the data. Consequently, a general measure of belief in conspiracy theories was calculated, along with separate submeasures for COVID-19/post-COVID-19 conspiracies and pre-COVID-19/unrelated conspiracies. ANOVA and ANCOVA were conducted to examine differences in belief in conspiracy theories among groups with varying levels of psychological distance. Psychological distance was manipulated by varying the country where the conspiracy was described as occurring. The results indicated no differences between groups with varying psychological distances on the general

measure of belief in conspiracy theories or the measure of pre-COVID-19/unrelated conspiracies. However, a significant difference was observed between these groups on the measure of belief in COVID-19/post-COVID-19 conspiracies. This finding remained significant even after controlling for gender, age, ethnicity, and place of residence. Participants were most likely to believe in COVID-19/post-COVID-19 conspiracy theories in the group with the greatest psychological distance, where the conspiracies were described as taking place in New Zealand. In contrast, they were least likely to believe in conspiracies described as occurring locally. While further research is needed, these preliminary findings suggest that psychological distance may influence belief in specific types of conspiracies.

## Paper number 1115 | Oral

### **That's all I need to know: exploring the relationship between conspiracy beliefs and information sampling in an expanded foraging task**

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Previous studies have demonstrated that conspiracy beliefs are robustly associated with reduced information sampling during foraging tasks, such as the classic Jumping-to-Conclusions Task (JTC; Phillips & Edwards, 1966). In a typical JTC task, participants are shown two information pools (e.g., two lakes) and their contents (e.g., mostly red vs yellow fish or vice versa). On each trial of the task, participants sample units of information until they are confident enough to decide which pool they are sampling from.

Across two studies, we investigated the negative relationship between conspiracy beliefs and information sampling. Firstly, whereas previous studies use a constrained JTC task with a small number of trials and preset sequences of information, Study 1 uses an expanded, 30-trial JTC task with genuinely probabilistic sequences of fish. We successfully replicated the established negative correlation between belief in conspiracy theories and information sampling.

Secondly, in Study 2 we directly manipulated the normative quality of the data. In half of the trials, each unit of data sampled by participants was reported by an avatar described as reliable. In the other half, data was reported by an "unreliable" avatar who misremembered 25% of the time. Data collection is ongoing, with the hypothesis that people with strong conspiracy beliefs will be insensitive to source reliability, sampling small regardless. These studies shed further light on the way that people with conspiracy beliefs interact with their wider information environment.

## Paper number 236 | Oral

### **(In)congruence between justice beliefs and justice experiences predicts adolescents' prosocial behaviors: Response surface analysis**

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Literature has revealed a positive association between justice beliefs and prosociality, as well as a negative link between unjust experiences (e.g., peer victimization) and prosociality. However, there remains a knowledge gap