

Under the
auspices of:



2023 EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF PSYCHOLOGY

Closing Ceremony speech – EFPA 2022

The theme of the conference is *Psychology connecting communities for a sustainable world*. I am not going to discuss our interdisciplinary themes as you will all be far more familiar with them than I am. Instead I want to take a minute or two to explore why we think our overarching theme is critical.

Our overarching theme for the EFPA ECP 2023 is around Psychology connecting communities for a sustainable world.

It can be useful to look at where we came from to give us an indication of the future. We believe that the theme is timely because we seem to be on the cusp of a fundamental shift in a global order – a liberal global order that has been on the ascendancy since the end of the Second World War, and since 1990 has been the dominant global order – a global order that has been built on a sense of liberality in both a political, social, cultural and economic sense and economically the engine for this liberal hegemony has been driven by increasing globalisation.

The shift that we are now seeing seems to be a rejection of that liberal order; an increasing sense of mistrust in the liberal system and a new global anarchy that rejects increasing and deepening globalisation and instead embraces protectionism and isolation. These burgeoning changes have been amplified and played out as Covid rippled around the world, as we see the impact of a breakdown in our 'just-in-time' global supply chains and experience the unanticipated consequences of the war in Ukraine.



We are facing a contradiction of the symbiotic connection between liberalism and globalisation and increasingly questions are being asked around alternative forms of governance and power.

In a sense whilst the world has been united it has also never been more divided. This tension between the old world order and an emerging new one is played out across our four themes when we look at issues of poverty; race; gender and climate crisis. Indeed climate crisis presents an existential threat to all of us. How we respond to the climate crisis will not only guide our future but will reveal much about our nature. Do we make progress towards a more just and equitable future or descend into conflict, sectarianism and nationalism.

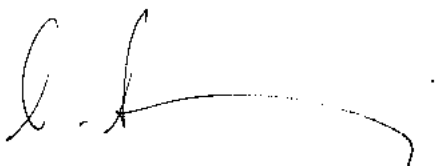
If we take a step back, underpinning all of these issues, and the theme which our conference hopes to explore, are questions around: trust; power; identity and belonging. These are ideas that are intimately connected to, and form the basis of, much of what we learn in Psychology.

The old global order did not come about organically, it was a deliberate project underpinned by theory and ideas. So we need new theories, new ideas and new models that address these central questions of trust, power, identity and belonging and how these are refracted through our four themes. The only discipline that can really do that is Psychology.

But we can't do that alone and so our themes are deliberately interdisciplinary. For too long economics has been the driver of our policy making. Economics gained prominence because it seemed to provide a product that consumers were demanding but economics is increasingly being challenged both within the discipline but also from policy makers who are increasingly interested in behavioural science. Actually, what has changed is that consumers/people are asking different questions and these NEW questions lie at the heart of Psychology.

So our theme is the right theme, the time is the right time and the theories and ideas that underpin the issues are at the heart of Psychology. It is up to us to step up and take our place and Brighton is the place to start.

Sarb Bajwa
BPS Chief Executive



ecp2023.eu

**Psychology:
Uniting communities
for a sustainable world**

3-6 July 2023 | Brighton, UK

Under the
auspices of:



Hosted by:



the british
psychological society
promoting excellence in psychology