

Call for Papers

“Psychology, Global Threats, Social Challenge, and the COVID-19 Pandemic: European Perspectives”

A Special Issue of *European Psychologist*

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The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is being felt keenly across Europe and the world. Whole populations have been affected in ways that would have seemed unimaginable at the beginning of 2020. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control in its latest update at the time of writing has described it as an “unprecedented threat” and also the stringent physical distancing measures introduced to control it as “highly disruptive to society, both economically and socially” (<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/rapid-risk-assessment-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-pandemic-tenth-update>).

Psychologists have responded with research and insights drawn from the existing knowledge base across the discipline. These areas have included behavior change to support policy makers in virus containment; mental health and well-being especially related to stay at home policies and continuation of mental health service delivery; work and organizational in particular support for front line workers; and the needs of specific populations such as older adults who have been more severely at risk in this pandemic, and the needs of children and young people whose education and peer support systems have been disrupted.

The stakes for the people of Europe have probably never been higher in peacetime, in terms of risk to lives and livelihoods. Psychological knowledge continues to be needed at all stages of pandemic management including how best to implement emergency measures, assessing and managing longer term adverse impact at the individual and community level, and adaptation to the “new normal”. There is urgency in relation to the likelihood of future waves of this pandemic or other potential novel threats. Governments, relevant agencies and the public all need to be well

informed and prepared and ready to use existing emergency plans in order to be better able to cope.

It is important to delineate the key elements of what is already known about the psychological consequences of disasters and of ways of coping with them. There are numerous findings and helpful guidelines for many different disasters, but relatively few in relation to viral pandemics. We assume that knowledge about other forms of disasters can also be useful for helping us cope with the COVID-19 pandemic's psychological and social consequences.

We are interested in theoretical or review papers that explore, discuss, and have potential to fulfill the above needs, in particular papers that contribute to some cross cutting themes that arise from managing disasters and this pandemic in particular:

1. What unites and distinguishes different disasters and implications for approaches to management (what are the special features of the COVID-19 pandemic).
2. Which social, political and economic factors in terms of collective and individual reactions play a role (networks, social movements, social capital, social support and altruism, collective violence and antagonisms, collective coping options, radicalization of political behavior, conspiracy theory beliefs, etc.).
3. Which individual conditions are involved (personality traits and dispositions, developmental history, socio-graphic important features like gender, age, socioeconomic status).
4. Which environmental conditions (from living circumstances up to societal phenomena) are influencing risk.

5. Which individual consequences can be seen (mental disorders, strain, altruism, etc.).
6. Which theories and models are relevant (e.g., collective coping, vulnerability stress models, health-belief models).
7. Which forms of intervention have produced results at collective and individual level.
8. What is the utility of multidisciplinary collaboration and community co-production in research in pandemics, and what are the main research deficits.
9. What strategies and approaches are most effective in having impact, sharing the knowledge and expertise of psychology to benefit societies.

Research specifically related to COVID-19 is of course at a very early stage. The ability of many scientists to work at pace in pushing the frontiers of knowledge despite the enforced challenges to working processes of measures to contain the spread of coronavirus has been one of the impressive hallmarks of this period. In asking for review papers, we anticipate that in the field of psychology it will be possible to analyze and synthesize the results of work that is being developed with existing work in the field in order to produce important new insights to create opportunities to have an impact on policy and practice.

Reviews should be systematic, e.g., based on PRISMA-models; meta-analysis are welcome.

Topics

Sample topics may include (but are not limited to):

1. Trust in government and health authorities, conspiracy theories, and impact on social and protective behaviors.
2. Influencing conditions during stay at home measures at varying life stages, and on families and community groups; adverse effects and mitigation, and positive life changes arising.
3. Increased violence in the home, prevention and support.
4. Social and operational consequences of changing work and education.
5. Impact on front line workers (not limited to health but including, e.g., transport, food production and retail, and essential community services).
6. Cultural influences in dealing with the pandemic.
7. Harnessing community strengths and resilience during and post pandemic, and (re)building more sustainable and equal societies.
8. Innovative means of service delivery including but not restricted to education and mental health.
9. Social, political and psychological interventions (principles and results)

Deadlines

The deadline for submission of full papers is **January 4, 2021**.

All manuscripts will undergo regular peer-review, with a target publication date in **June 2021**.

Manuscript Preparation and Submission

Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the journal's author guidelines available on the journal's website at

<https://www.hogrefe.com/j/ep>

Submissions should be submitted exclusively via the online submission system:

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/ep>

Manuscripts should have a maximum of 7,500 words (including tables, and references). The manuscript should follow the standard formatting of papers published in the *European Psychologist*, and include a conclusion/summary section that spells out the key take-home messages of the article. While not all contributions should necessarily solely be authored by European-based scholars, each manuscript should have a European perspective, or highlight its relevance for the European context.

European Psychologist is the official journal of EFPA (European Federation of Psychologists' Associations), with 38 country members which represent some 300,000 psychologists, and article summaries go out to members in regular newsletters. The journal has now an impact factor of 2.907 (2019) and showcases cutting edge developments in psychology from across Europe. *European Psychologist* now publishes solely review and integrative articles. Therefore, articles submitted to the special issue should take a broad, synthesizing view, which would illuminate the topic generally for our readers and give shape to the direction of further research.

Contact Details

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