

The Art of Change and Community Building in Civil Society Potentials and Challenges in European Community Psychology

Suggested as a Symposium at the 11. European Congress for Psychology in Oslo, Norway

Abstract

The future potentials and the challenges of a European Community and its civil societies within global change will be based heavily on social skills like a “sense of community”, the ability to build and nurture integrative communities, and to initiate empowerment processes for individuals and groups, in order to create individual and collective well-being, happiness and social justice.

Community Psychology in Europe and elsewhere in the last decades has developed a considerable body of knowledge and many hands-on tools based on research and practice to take on common challenges of integration and both psychological and societal community building.

This symposium will look at the challenges of global change affecting Europe from the view of research, teaching and practice; and show what the discipline of community psychology has to offer by linking different sectors of society as well as the scholarly wisdom of different disciplines.

By presenting examples from different countries how an interdisciplinary approach linking micro- and macrosystem factors can promote social change and social justice, we would like to discuss the potentials of psychology to contribute to social innovation.

Convenor:

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Wolfgang Stark is Professor for Organizational and Community Psychology at the University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany and at the Instituto Superior Psicologia Aplicada in Lisboa, Portugal. He is President of the European Community Psychology Association (ECPA).

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