

ROAL ULRICHSEN TAKES OVER EFPA'S PRESIDENCY - INTERVIEW TO THE ELECTED PRESIDENT OF EFPA

The EFPA General Assembly in Prague on July 8 2007 elected **Roal Ulrichsen** from Denmark as new President of EFPA. He takes over from **Tuomo Tikkanen**, who has been president of EFPA for the last 8 years. **An-Magritt Aanonsen** from Norway was re-elected as Treasurer and Vice-President of EFPA for a second term 2007-2009. **Hrvoje Gligora** from Croatia, **Veronika Polisanska** from the Czech Republic and **Roger Lecuyer** from France were elected as new Executive Council members for 2007-2011

Infocop Online has taken the opportunity to interview Roal Ulrichsen, new president of the European Federation.

INTERVIEW

***Infocop:* Even though this question may be hard to synthesize, from your point of view what is the situation of psychology in Europe today?**

Roal Ulrichsen: It is going well for EFPA and it is going well in our member countries as concerns both practice and science of psychology.

As an umbrella organization, EFPA has 34 member countries with 200.000 individual members. We have legal regulations and national laws in 21 member countries protecting our title and regulating our profession, which is also very satisfactory as is the fact that we are all covered by ethical regulations. EFPA has achieved the status the right to propose to the European Commission on how to promote our interests after the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications was accepted. By having the possibility of developing the EuroPsy Professional Card, EFPA has a very strong and influential position in Europe and in all our member countries. By having been accepted as an International Non-Governmental Organization by the Council of Europe, we have a platform for improving our interests in 46 countries, which has already now been productive as concerns principles for psychologists working with crisis and disaster. Our congresses every second year are well organized and now attended to in Granada by more than 3.000 psychologists and in Prague by about 2.500 psychologists. As concerns our organizational structure, we have a permanent and professionally very well run Head office in Brussels.

Therefore, the status of our profession and our science is improving rapidly, we are gaining influence, and our organization is getting stronger and stronger. The demand for psychology and psychologists is growing, and the number of legal regulations shows clearly the improvement of our status.

***I.:* What type of relation does EFPA have with the Spanish Psychological Association?**

R.U.: EFPA has a very close and prosperous relation to the Spanish Psychological Association. The congress in Granada was an absolute success, and very professionally organized and run with around 3.000 participants. The Spanish Psychological Association is one of the biggest in Europe. It is a great pleasure to know your commitment and to know your willingness and ability to carry some of EFPA's heavier

burdens. It is a great privilege to work together with your organization, your President Francisco Santolaya Ochando and Vice President Manuel Berdullas Temes.

I.: Could you please tell us about your project in EFPA for the next two years?

R.U.: The overall aim of EFPA must be to represent our science and profession on the largest possible scale. Having 34 member countries and realizing that there are 46 members of the Council of Europe the aim is to include all countries. EFPA must stay with and further develop our professional, democratic and non-bureaucratic form of organization. Communication, both internally and externally plays a major role and developing a policy of communication is vital for the unity of psychology in Europe. No chain is stronger than its weakest link and we shall support the new and smaller countries in their strivings to build up national organizations etc. EFPA shall further work for having advisory functions wherever psychological matters are at stake. We shall further develop our possibilities for having influence on policies both nationally and at a European level. In serving the member association EFPA will aim at shorten distances between us, work for combined efforts respecting the sovereignty of every member country.

I.: Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

R.U.: It is my sincere wish to serve both EFPA and every member country and it is now my privilege to do this as President of EFPA. The relation to the Spanish representatives has been very fruitful for which I am very thankful. I am absolutely sure that we will continue along these lines. In EFPA we will link and combine East and West, South and North. It is my sincere belief that one element for achieving this is combining Southern Spain with Northern Scandinavia - a happy and wise mixture that will stay and become even more prosperous.