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The 31st **International School Psychology Association** (ISPA) Conference will be held in Malta from 7-11th July 2009. The conference theme is *School Psychology for Diversity*.

Diversity is inherent in the work of school psychologists. In the latest issue of *School Psychology International*, Annan et al. (2008) focus on educational psychologists' routine role of facilitating teams in which participants hold diverse points of view: they suggest that 'psychologists can support effective interventions by recognizing, understanding and utilizing the diverse views of the people involved in their consultation work.' This is just one example of how school psychologists use diversity for the flourishing of educational communities.

School psychologists everywhere are engaged in enabling caregivers and educators to value each child whatever his or her characteristics and background. This too calls for the ability to 'recognize, understand and utilize' the diversity of student strengths and needs for the development of the potential of each child and the enhancement of his or her membership in the learning community where he or she is being educated. Such work has become more important as people have become more mobile, making communities more diverse in all sorts of ways and children increasingly educated in mainstream schools.

Thus, it is appropriate that the theme of the next ISPA Conference in Malta will be *School Psychology for Diversity*. It is expected that there will be a great diversity of presentations from psychologists around the world on how they are succeeding to facilitate the valuing of children and adults from different ethnicities, cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, languages, beliefs, intelligences, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities. Some of these issues will be addressed by renowned keynote speakers. For instance, Prof. Robert Sternberg, whose long standing and extensive research has widened our concept of intelligence and education goals,

will be touching on issues very close to the work of school psychologists, namely *Teaching and testing for diverse learners*, and Prof. Chris Forlin will address another central challenge for diversity in education: *Learning outcomes in inclusive education*.

It is expected that a wide variety of issues will be raised by speakers in the paper presentations, symposia, workshops, and posters. The following issues have been highlighted in the call for papers:

- Developing professional competence in respecting and responding to all forms of diversity;
- Taking into account the diversity of intelligences, of languages and cultures, and of gender;
- Developing educational systems that enable inclusive education and a quality education for all;
- Enabling understanding and respect for all types of minority and marginalized groups in psychological services and education, such as children with disabilities, ethnic minorities, language minorities, religious minorities, children who are obese, children with a minority sexual orientation, poverty stricken children, street children, HIV/AIDS orphans, migrants, refugees or displaced children;
- Understanding and respecting the educational challenges of children with learning difficulties or giftedness;
- Ensuring equal educational opportunities for both genders in different situations of different countries.

Early Bird Registration is up to **March 15th, 2009**.

The final deadline for submission of abstracts will be **April 30, 2009**.

We hope that the Malta ISPA Conference will enable each participant of whatever belief, culture, or country to feel that he or she can contribute to the international understanding of school psychologists' role for diversity. For more information and facilities for submitting papers and registration, please go to the Conference website on www.muppmalta.org/ispa2009