

## **EHPS ACTIVITY REPORT 2017-2018 - BELGIUM**

### **I) Health Psychology in the country**

### **II) Education, training & professionalization**

#### **1. ADVOCACY AND PROMOTION OF PSYCHOLOGY**

The establishment of the “Federal Council for Professionals in Health Care and Mental Health” (CFPSSM, 01/07/2017) contributes to the protection of the title of Clinical Psychologist and therefore of the title of Health’ Clinical Psychologist. Belgian academics active in health psychology are members of the executive board.

Ilse Van Diest (KULeuven) gave a lecture in Antwerp at the Belgian Week of Gastroenterology (30th edition) and the first BINASTORIA(network for all IBD nurses and study coordinators in Belgium) meeting on potential avenues to behaviorally treat fatigue and gastro-intestinal pain and to improve quality of life in patients with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

#### **2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES/PROGRAMS**

On 12 and 17 January 2018, Stephan Van den Broucke (UCLouvain) gave a course on “Health Literacy: How to assess and account for low health literacy among patients and informal carers” for the postacademic program “Informal Medical Care”, KU Leuven.

In the fall of 2017 Stephan Van den Broucke (UC Louvain) was appointed member of the scientific committee of the UNESCO Chair in Health and Education.

Since 2017-2018, a newly revised clinical psychology program has started at Ghent University, in which health psychology has a more central place. New courses by Geert Crombez, Stefaan Van Damme and Liesbet Goubert, specifically related to health psychology, will start in the third Bachelor year in 2018-2019. Also, in the Master years a number of choice courses on health psychology will be available.

KULeuven is revising the educational program of the Master in Clinical and Health Psychology. In the revised program, Health Psychology will be a very central component. Students will receive 3 obligatory courses in areas of Health Psychology (Introductory course; Prevention and health promotion; Biopsychosocial interactions of stress), and there will be a minor that allow students to specialize in the area of Clinical Health Psychology (additional, clinical-oriented courses + clinical training). The program will be launched in Fall 2020 for the first time.

### 3. **ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS**

#### **Support students/research and training**

The Health Psychology group of KU Leuven hosted the 2-year inter-university postgraduate training *Psycho-oncology* in collaboration with the Cedric Hèle institute for psycho-oncology

#### **Summer schools, seminars, meetings etc.**

The Second International Summer School on Emotional Learning and Memory in Healthy and Psychopathology took place at KULeuven on September 11-15, 2017.

An international symposium on the Error Related Negativity (ERN) and its application in research on symptom perception was organized at KULeuven on May 22-23, 2018.

The Health Psychology group of KULeuven welcomed several internship students, graduate students, post-doctoral researchers and assistant professors from abroad for a short or longer-term stay at their lab.

### **III) Activities**

#### 1. **MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECTS (COMPLETED/UNDER WAY)**

##### **Biopsychosocial interactions in dyspnea**

Andreas von Leupoldt, Omer Van den Bergh, Ilse Van Diest; Health Psychology, KU Leuven, Belgium

This ongoing project (2014-2018), granted by the Research Fund of KU Leuven, examines the influence of social aspects on the perception of dyspnea. In addition, the effects of dyspnea on executive functions are investigated. These effects are studied both at the level of self-report and at the neural level by using electroencephalography.

##### **Care-Test**

“Care-Test: Diagnostic self-tests and Healthcare relationship” is a four year project carried out by a multidisciplinary consortium of three university departments based in Brussels (Department of Pharmacy, Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Huisartsgeneeskunde, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), and psychological sciences research institute of the UCLouvain (UC Louvain), funded by the Brussels Region Research Institute Innoviris. The project, which is coordinated by the UCLouvain (Stephan Van den Broucke ad Sandrine Roussel) aims to explore how the introduction of diagnostic self-tests in the pharmacy influences the

relationships between patients, pharmacists and general practitioners, and to identify the factors that may encourage or impede a partnership relationship between healthcare providers and patients. It will use a mixed-method design will to analyze the perceptions and practices of patients and healthcare professionals with regard to diagnostic self-tests and the way they influence the healthcare relationships. This will inform the co-creation, pilot testing and evaluation of a tool to facilitate a partnership approach for the guidance process that extends from obtaining acquisition about the diagnostic self-test to the follow-up of a diagnosed chronic disease.

### **DREPAKIS: contribution to the management of sickle cell disease in Kisangani**

As part of a Research for Development Project (PRD), in partnership with Professor Roland Marini of the Faculty of Medicine, A-M. Etienne (ULiege) is in charge of the psychological dimension of the project, which aims at conducting research in genetic counseling, psychological and social monitoring.

### **Effects of motor action on pain processing: An experimental analysis**

Funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO; 2018-2022) to Stefaan Van Damme (Ghent University).

### **Examining the phenomenology, impact and underlying mechanisms of injustice appraisals in the context of pediatric pain**

Funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO; 2018-2022), granted to Tine Vervoort (Ghent University).

### **"FearedBack": Fear of movement as a predictor of work resumption after back surgery. A prospective study**

The number of back operations in Belgium has increased substantially during the past decade ("40 percent more back operations" in 2012). After back surgery, however, many patients still suffer from pain complaints. In this group of people, there is often a reduced functioning in daily life, and a considerable part remains long-term incapacitated after the back operation. In view of the high costs for both the individual and society, we wish to gain insight into the factors that promote or impede the recovery (in functioning) and the return to work after back surgery. The identification of pre- and post-operative factors that are predictive of experienced pain complaints, functional recovery, and sustainable resumption of work can contribute to the development of appropriate guidance and interventions before and after a back surgery.

A central premise of this research project is the observation that in many cases there is no clear link between recovery of anatomical damage and reduction of pain complaints. For example, the term "Failed Back Surgery Syndrome" (FBSS) refers to persistent axial or peripheral pain following an anatomically successful surgical procedure. In addition, people with chronic back pain often no longer have any identifiable anatomical lesions.

The long-term effects of a back operation are very variable, also in anatomically successful surgical procedures. Moreover, the factors that can explain individual differences in postoperative pain, recovery, and resumption of work are largely unknown at the moment. The already available evidence points to an important role of cognitive and behavioral factors

on postoperative recovery and the maintenance of pain complaints. More specifically, negative emotions, catastrophic (mis) interpretations of pain, fear of painful movements and optimism appear to have a significant influence on functioning after back operations. In this longitudinal, prospective study, we want to map the influence of these cognitive-behavioral factors on recovery from pain complaints and sustainable work resumption after back surgery. Early identification of risk factors for a defective recovery can also be informative for patient-specific interventions. These risk factors will be measured on the basis of both self-report (questionnaires) as well as more objective computer tasks.

### **Food for Gut (Innovative nutrition research on obesity based on colic nutriments)**

This is an interdisciplinary Excellence research project funded by the Walloon region (Belgium) involving UCLouvain, Université libre de Bruxelles and Université de Liège. The PI is Nathalie Delzenne from the Louvain Drug Research Institute (LDRI). Olivier Luminet is the coordinator for the behavioral aspects. The project, which started in 2014 was renewed in September 2016 for an additional 30 months. The psychological work package examines the cognitive and affective factors, both explicit and implicit, that can affect the consumption of vegetables rich in colic nutriments. Supervisors' backgrounds cover cognitive, social and health psychology. Five researchers and five professors are involved in the project.

<http://sites.uclouvain.be/FOOD4GUT/>

<https://uclouvain.be/en/research/louvain4nutrition>

### **From acute aversive sensations to chronic bodily symptoms**

Johan Vlaeyen, Ilse Van Diest, Andreas von Leupoldt, Omer Van den Bergh; Health Psychology, KU Leuven, Belgium

This is an ongoing research programme aiming at expanding the knowledge on the development and clinical management of common chronic health complaints. The project examines perceived unpredictability of aversive sensations (WP1), inhibitory learning and control (WP2), and individual variability in personality, genetics, and neural sensitivity (WP3). Much of the research is conducted in close collaboration with partners in biomedics (e.g. psychiatry, anesthesiology, gastroenterology, pneumology, rehabilitation, genetics) and physics (e.g. experimental oto-rhino-laryngology), inside and outside KU Leuven. The Asthenes research program is a structural funding - Methusalem grant by the Flemish Government, Belgium.

### **From Pavlov to viscerosception? The role of interoceptive fear conditioning in the development of gastrointestinal symptom-specific anxiety, and its impact on viscerosception.**

Ilse Van Diest, Jonas Zaman, Lukas Van Oudenhove; Health Psychology, KU Leuven, Belgium

This new project, granted in November 2017 by F.W.O. Vlaanderen, aims to elucidate mechanisms underlying fear towards gastrointestinal sensations, as well as its impact on visceral symptom perception. It builds further on our previous work demonstrating that fear of gastrointestinal sensations can be experimentally established through Pavlovian learning processes and that such fear learning changes the way persons perceive gastrointestinal stimuli. In healthy volunteers, we will investigate the effects of fear learning to an initially non-painful gastrointestinal stimulus on different perceptual outcomes that are relevant for chronic visceral pain, including discrimination (the ability to discriminate slightly different stimuli) and habituation (decreased intensity perception upon repeated administration of an identical stimulus). These effects will be studied both at the self-report and the neural level (using electroencephalography).

### **Holiday-related Predictors of Wellbeing in Seniors**

This is an interdisciplinary project funded by the Walloon region (Germaine Tillion grant for social innovation in research) involving UCLouvain for the health psychology part (Olivier Luminet, coordinator) and Université Libre de Bruxelles (Anya Dickman, coordinator for the tourism part). There has been an increase in research on the relationship between holidays and wellbeing in the last decade. However, only a few studies have investigated this association in seniors and the impact of holiday-related predictors of wellbeing is understudied. The aims of the project are to: 1) compare the profile of senior tourists and senior non-tourists on sociodemographic indicators, health, physical activity, and social relations, 2) compare the profile of senior tourists and senior non-tourists on wellbeing, after adjusting for control variables, and 3) examine the impact of holiday-related predictors (frequency, mean duration, frequency of physical, social, cognitive and relaxing activities, degree of perceived health benefits) on wellbeing of senior tourists, over and above the role of various relevant covariates.

### **IC-Health**

UCLouvain participates as a partner in this research project funded by the EU within the Horizon 2020 programme. The project, which is coordinated by the Government of the Canary Islands, runs from November 2016 to October 2018 and aims to develop a series of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to help improve the digital health literacy of European citizens. Countries involved in the project are Spain, Italy, Belgium, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Sweden, Germany and Denmark. In 2017 a series of MOOCs have been developed in eight languages (English, French, Italian, Danish, German, Swedish, Dutch and Spanish), using a co-creation approach. The Belgian health psychologists collaborating in this project are Stephan Van den Broucke and Jessica Vandebosch. The UCLouvain team has developed a MOOC consisting of five modules to help diabetes patients to enhance their digital health literacy. The MOOC is currently being evaluated with the help of the largest Belgian health insurance organisation, results are expected to be available by October 2018. More information can be found at

<https://ichealth.eu/>

### **Interoception across domains/dimensions**

Funded by the Fund for Scientific research – Belgium (FRS-FNRS). The aim of the project that will start in September 2018 is (1) to develop a set of measures of interoceptive abilities across interoceptive domains (respiratory, gastric and cardiac) and across interoceptive dimensions (accuracy, sensibility and awareness), and (2) to study the relationship between interoceptive abilities measured by these newly developed measures and emotion regulation.

The project is supervised by Oliver Luminet (UCLouvain), in collaboration with Elke Vlemincx (Queen Mary University London), Omer Van den Bergh, Ilse Van Diest, and Lukas Van Oudenhove (KULeuven)

### **Louvain4Ageing**

Louvain4Ageing is a consortium created at the UCLouvain (UCLouvain, Louvain-la-Neuve). It represents a multidisciplinary research platform for projects focused on healthy adult development and aging. It promotes exchanges between researchers and scientist-practitioners who are interested in aging well, working in multiple areas such as psychology, public health, medicine, neurosciences, demography, sociology, linguistics, economics, and new technologies. Among the active projects, the 4LNA (Living Lab Louvain-la-Neuve for Ageing) focuses on life transitions after age 50 and examines personal and contextual factors accounting for successful aging. BIONICS, a project led by Louvain Bionics, aims at developing prostheses and rehabilitation robots for older adults. Another ongoing project, CAREGIVER, brings together researchers interested in assessing physical health among home-based caregivers of older frail adults. For research on health psychology issues, Stefan Agrigoroaei is the responsible person.

<https://uclouvain.be/en/research/louvain4ageing>

### **Medical-Pharmaceutical Consultation**

The project “Evaluation of the implementation of the local medical-pharmaceutical consultation in Belgium” (MFO) was accepted for funding by the Belgian Health Insurance Fund (INAMI/RIZIV) in 2017. The project builds on a previous short-term project monitoring the quality of a new medicines counselling service for asthma patients in community pharmacies in Belgium. It involves a collaboration between the department of social epidemiology of the University of Antwerp (UA), the department of pharmacy of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL), and the psychological sciences research institute of the UCLouvain. It aims to evaluate local collaboration initiatives between pharmacists and physicians, and gain insight in the implementation process of a new policy instrument encouraging these initiatives. Specific attention is paid to the obstacles that pharmacists and doctors experience to participate in the mechanism. For UCLouvain, the project is led by Stephan Van den Broucke and Sandrine Roussel, with the collaboration of Sarah Fakroune.

### **Neural gating of respiratory sensations in health and disease**

Andreas von Leupoldt (Health Psychology, KU Leuven) and Thierry Troosters (Respiratory

Rehabilitation Group at University Hospital Leuven)

This new project, granted in November 2017 by F.W.O. Vlaanderen, will examine the proposed central role of the brain's neural gating mechanism of respiratory sensations in the perception of dyspnea (breathlessness) in healthy volunteers and in patients with asthma, COPD and panic disorder. Specifically, we will investigate whether decreased neural gating is (a) related to increasing levels of dyspnea, (b) related to increased dyspnea-specific negative affect, (c) related to worse clinical patient status and (d) changeable during treatment. The multidisciplinary research team combines expertise from the fields of psychology, rehabilitation sciences, pneumology, psychiatry and neuroscience. In four related work packages, the team will use state-of-the-art scientific methods including psychophysiological, behavioral, neural, clinical and activity tests. The overarching aim is to contribute jointly to an improved multilevel and multidisciplinary model of dyspnea, which potentially leads to improved treatment options.

### **" Pain by association: A classical conditioning approach"**

Funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO; 2018-2022) granted to Geert Crombez and Johan Vlaeyen (Ghent University)

### **Parental burnout**

Moïra Mikolajczak (together with Isabelle Roskam, both at UCLouvain) initiated a large national and international research project on parental burnout. The programme is aimed to study the specificity, etiology, consequences, treatment and cultural variations of parental burnout. The project is funded by the Louvain University Special Research Fund and the Mutualité Chrétienne-Christelijke Mutualiteit. More information on the International part of the project (led by Roskam) can be found at: <https://uclouvain.be/fr/instituts-recherche/ipsy/iipb.html>

### **SACURIMA**

SACURIMA ("Safety Culture and Risk Management in Agriculture») is a consortium established in the spring of 2017 and funded by the European Commission as a COST Action. It aims to co-ordinate research activities and policies with regard to preventing accidents and disease and the promotion of health amongst agricultural workers in Europe. The approach is multidisciplinary but health psychology is well represented in the consortium. Stephan Van den Broucke was elected a core group member of the consortium, and leads a work package on behavioural determinants of agricultural accidents.

### **"Should I stay or should I go? The exploration-exploitation dilemma"**

Funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO; 2018-2022), to Johan Vlaeyen (KULeuven) and Geert Crombez (Ghent University).

Daily life operates as a chain of decisions. Typically, an individual may choose to pursue what s/he already knows (exploitation), or to search for a better option (exploration). This explore/exploit dilemma has been developed, especially when people strive for rewards. To date however, decision processes in aversive contexts — such as when experiencing pain — remain poorly understood, despite their detrimental impact on daily functioning. Indeed, maladaptive avoidance behavior — which may be conceived as (over)exploiting current safety information to reduce or avert threat or harm — is considered a major risk factor in the development and maintenance of chronic pain problems. In the proposed research, we first aim to model decision processes in the face of pain by mapping how individuals balance the exploration/exploitation trade-off. Second, we investigate how decision-making flexibly alters when the exploited option is no longer beneficial. Third, we examine how decision-making behaves when all options include both “negative” and “positive” outcomes. Lastly, we test the idea that individual characteristics affect decision-making, and subsequently affect daily functioning. This research will increase our understanding of decision-making, especially in aversive events such as pain. The results of this research are likely to lead to improvements of current treatments of dysfunctional avoidance behavior in individuals suffering chronic pain and beyond.

### **“Stigma and chronic pain: How does stigma get under the skin?”**

Funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO; 2018-2020), granted to Liesbet Goubert (Ghent University) and to Piet Bracke & Katarzyna Musial–Gabrys.

### **Sustainable insect production system in the western part of the Democratic Republic of Congo**

Insect consumption is an important source of protein for rural populations in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The sale of insects is a source of income for the rural population in the harvesting areas and for those involved in the marketing of these insects. Low annual insect production in some areas is sometimes a cause of famine.

The project will analyse the possibility of creating new production lines for insect products. This will involve work on the domestication, production, conservation and processing of relevant insect species, and research on social representations and behaviours relating to insect consumption, to put in place conditions to make the sector more efficient and more sustainable in order to secure supplies to rural communities and offer new marketing opportunities in urban centres, while ensuring the acceptability of Congolese populations to domesticated species and their form of marketing.

This project involves bio-engineers, economists, sociologists, and health psychologists. Olivier Luminet (UCLouvain) coordinates the health psychology section of the project.

### **Which association between flexible work and workers' well-being: an analysis in the framework of the Belgian reform of the Labour Law on "Work feasible and manageable"**

Annalisa Casini (UCLouvain) is conducting a research aiming at better understanding the determinants of physical and mental health at work taking account of the the new forms of work organization, and more particularly in the dimension of the flexibility of work, and its impact on the well-being of employees. Our interest in this question is also motivated by the fact that these forms of work organisation are more and more present on the Belgian market - this is for example the case of service and home care professions - and they should increase even more in the future following the reform on working time promoted by the Belgian Minister Peeters which comes into force in February 2017. Here we hypothesize that some forms of flexibilization of work create fertile ground for the emergence of subjective psychosocial risk factors for work-related health problems.

## 2. CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

### **French speaking International association of work psychology (AIPTLF)**

From July 10 to 13, 2017, the Université libre de Bruxelles, in collaboration with the UCLouvain and the University of Mons, organised in Belgium the annual conference of the French speaking International association of work psychology (AIPTLF), titled: “Diversity at work: individuals, groups and organisations”. Health issues accounted for a significant portion of the presented contributions. Of the 80 symposia and oral session, 22 were dedicated to occupational health issues such as: workers’ well-being, mental health, self-efficacy, mindfulness, burnout, presenteeism, moral harassment, and the impact of ICT on health and well-being ant work. Moreover, several presentations dealt with the study of intervention aiming at preventing psychosocial risk factors in organizations. Finally, the important role of health and well-being in nowadays work and organizational psychology was reflected by the title of one of the 3 keynote speakers: “Psychological well-being at work, or how to see workers psychological health for the positive psychology perspective” by Véronique DAGENAIS-DESMARAIS – Université de Montréal, QC.

For more information (in French): <http://www.aptlf.fr/>

Annalisa Casini (co-president of the 2017 AIPTLF conference), IPSY, UCLouvain (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium)

The Ghent Health Psychology lab co-organized the annual Pain Research Meeting in Antwerp (September 18-19 2017).

Liesbet Goubert was the chair of the Scientific Program Committee of the 11th International Symposium for Pediatric Pain, 6-9 July 2017, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Liesbet Goubert organizes, in collaboration with Eline Van Hoecke, the European Pediatric Psychology Conference which will take place in Ghent, Belgium, on September 20-21, 2018 ([www.eppc2018.be](http://www.eppc2018.be)).

Liesbet Goubert is a member of the Scientific Program Committee of the 12th International Symposium for Pediatric Pain, 16 – 20 June 2019, Basel, Switzerland.

The Health psychology group of KU Leuven was involved in the organization of the following scientific events:

-An international symposium on the Error Related Negativity (ERN) and its application in research on symptom perception was organized at KU Leuven on May 22-23, 2018.

-In collaboration with Karolinska University Stockholm (Sweden), KU Leuven is organizing an international symposium on October 26, 2018: “Small is beautiful”; Single-Case Experimental Methodology.

-An international symposium on “Avoidance Learning in Health and Psychopathology” will be organized by KU Leuven in collaboration with the FWO Research Communities Pain, Action and Interference, and Learning and Memory in Psychopathology, 24-26 March, 2019.

-Andreas von Leupoldt is member of the program committee of the International Meeting of The Dyspnea Society, Montreal, Canada, June 21-22, 2018

### 3. PUBLICATIONS

Not completed due to the very high number of publications. They can be available through the websites of the research groups and/or individual researchers.

### 4. AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS ETC

Emma Biggs (KU Leuven) won the runner up best poster prize at the European Meeting for Fear Conditioning in Cardiff, Wales

Andreas Burger (KU Leuven) won the best article prize at the annual day for Experimental Psychopathology (EPP) for his work done in Leuven

Michaela Herzog (KU Leuven) has been awarded the Student Diversity Travel Award 2017 of the Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR). October 2017, Vienna, Austria as well as the Student Travel Fund Award 2017 of the Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR). October 2017, Vienna, Austria.

Olivier Luminet (UCLouvain) is president of the Belgian Association for Psychological Sciences since September 2018.

Matos, M., Bernardes, S.F., & Goubert, L. (2016). The relationship between perceived promotion of autonomy/dependence and pain-related disability in older adults with chronic pain: the mediating role of self-reported physical functioning. *Journal of Behavioral*

Medicine, 39, 704-715. This manuscript has been awarded with the Clinical Investigation Award of the Portuguese Grunenthal Foundation.

Kai Karos (KULeuven) won the Battle of the Brains competition at the annual day for Experimental Psychopathology (EPP)

Thomas Reijnders (KULeuven) has been awarded the Student Award 2017 of the International Society for the Advancement of Respiratory Psychophysiology (ISARP). September 2017, Lille, France.

Josef Sucec (KULeuven) has been awarded the Student Diversity Travel Award 2017 of the Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR). October 2017, Vienna, Austria.

Dr. Diana Torta (KULeuven) has been awarded a prestigious Alumni award for the social sciences by the Belgian American Educational Foundation (BAEF).

Stephan Van den Broucke (UCLouvain) was re-elected as member of the Executive Board of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education. He will hold the portfolio of Capacity building and Training until 2019.

Dimitri Van Ryckeghem (Ghent University) was awarded with the 2018 prize of the Belgian Pain Society.

Dr. Jonas Zaman (KULeuven) was nominated for best PhD thesis by the Belgian Association for Psychological Sciences (BAPS)

## 5. **WORKING GROUPS**

Geert Crombez (Gent University) is member of the supervisory committee “Pain Management in Belgium” of the federal government

Geert Crombez (Gent University) is member of the Superior Health Council of Flanders (Belgium)

Liesbet Goubert (Gent University) is member of the IASP / EFIC taskforce “Pain in the most vulnerable”, as representative of the European Pain Federation and as representative of the IASP Special Interest Group on Pediatric Pain (2018-2019)

Liesbet Goubert (Gent University) is council member of the Special Interest Group (SIG) on Pain in Childhood of the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP)(2018 – 2023)

Liesbet Goubert (Gent University) is member of the Workforce Belgian Paediatric Pain Association Chronic Pain in Childhood (2017 – present)

Liesbet Goubert (Gent University) is member of the scientific committee Annual Award of the Belgium Pain Society (2010-present).

Liesbet Goubert (Gent University) is member of the Working Group on Social Media for the journal PAIN (aim = reviewing the social media plan of PAIN and identify goals for enhancing social media use by PAIN)

Olivier Luminet (UCLouvain) is member of the Board of Scientific Affairs at the European Federation of Psychologists Associations (EFPA)

Omer Van den Bergh participates in the European Network On Persistent Somatic Symptoms Across Medicine (EURONET.SOMA). This consortium gathers 2 times a year (2 times in Hamburg, 2016, in Barcelona and Riga in 2017; in Verona and Aarhus in 2018) to develop a common research agenda, to discuss conceptual issues, to develop critical outcome variables for studies, and to develop new treatment approaches.

Stephan Van den Broucke (UCLouvain) was invited to join the “Coalition of Partners (CoP)” set up by the European Office of the World Health Organisation (WHO) to strengthen essential public health services and capacities across the WHO European Region. The CoP is an interactive group of 42 experts who meet twice per year to provide a platform for the exchange of innovative ideas on supporting Member States in reforming their public health services and resources in a meaningful and coordinated manner, and to develop solutions, tools and projects to support the delivery of essential public health operations.

Stephan Van den Broucke (UCLouvain) participated in the Réseau Francophone sur la Littérature en Santé (ReFLiS), a network of researchers in France who work on health literacy. The network is funded through a grant of Santé Publique France and met twice in 2017-2013 to exchange ideas and research findings, in view of improving the assessment of health literacy and the ways to take account of it in medical and public health practice. ReFLiS will organize a first symposium on health literacy in December 2018.

Stephan Van den Broucke (UCLouvain) and Rana Charafeddine (Sciensano, formerly Scientific institute for Public Health) were appointed to represent Belgium in the Action Network on Measuring Population and Organizational Health Literacy (M-POHL Network), established by the Austrian Ministry of Health under the auspices of the Division of Information, Evidence, Research and Innovation of WHO-EURO. Within the Health Evidence Network initiative, M-POHL aims to support the institutionalization of regular, reliable, cross-national European health literacy surveys, including the coordinated and synchronized collection of data on population-based individual health literacy, and to prepare the measurement of health literacy of organizations / settings / systems. It will also facilitate the identification of European survey coordination centers to maintain and continuously improve survey standards and quality and coordinate data collection, analysis and reporting in line with mutually agreed standards. The Network was launched in Vienna in February 2018 and will meet twice per year.

Johan Vlaeyen is member of the IASP Task force on the development of the new ICD-11 classification for chronic pain.

6. **COLLABORATION WITH OTHER SOCIETIES (National and International); PROJECTS; GROUPS ETC.**

The *10th IUHPE European Health Promotion Conference* is organized in Trondheim, Norway, 24-26 September 2018. The conference is jointly organized by the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) and the Center for Health Promotion Research at the Norwegian University for Science and Technology (NTNU-CHPR). It aims to strengthen the role of health promotion in Europe as a source of innovative practices based on solid evidence by gathering health promotion practitioners, researchers and policy makers. Stephan Van den Broucke (UC Louvain) is a member of the Scientific Programme Committee.

The *5<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Asian Health Literacy Association (AHLA)* took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 12-14 November 2017. Stephan Van den Broucke (UC Louvain) was a member of the Scientific Programme Committee and keynote speaker.

Stefaan Van Damme is a member of the board of the Association for Researchers in Psychology and Health (ARPH; <https://www.arph.nl>)

Geert Crombez is strongly involved in advocating a health psychology perspective on pain and suffering at IASP (international Association for the Study of Pain) and at EFIC (European Federation of IASP Chapters)

Geert Crombez is copromotor of an interdisciplinary valorisation consortium “Fusion” of Ghent University, which includes research on eHealth

Geert Crombez is copromotor of interdisciplinary valorisation consortium “Psync” of Ghent University, which focuses upon mental health

Stefaan Van Damme is promotor of an interdisciplinary research project "Unraveling the puzzle of back pain chronicity: An integrative perspective on disturbed sensorimotor control and maladaptive cognitive processes" in collaboration with Lieven Danneels of the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences and Physiotherapy at Ghent University

Liesbet Goubert is international collaborator of the Interdisciplinary strategic Training Program on Pain in Child Health (PICH) of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)

Liesbet Goubert acts as a council member of the multidisciplinary Special Interest Group (SIG) on Pain in Childhood of the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP)(2018 – 2023)

Liesbet Goubert is involved as co-supervisor of a multidisciplinary research project “On the pains of social standing: Understanding the role of patient social status on nurses’ pain assessment and management practices” by the Portuguese National Funding Agency for Science, Research and Technology (FCT) (supervisor: Sónia Bernardes)

Effects of respiratory muscle training on dyspnea and postural control in patients with COPD  
Andreas von Leupoldt (Health Psychology, KU Leuven, Co-PI), Rik Gosselink, Daniel Langer, Marc Decramer (Rehabilitation Sciences/Pneumology at University Hospital Leuven)

This ongoing project (2016-2019, granted by the F.W.O. Vlaanderen, examines in a multidisciplinary fashion the effects of an inspiratory muscle training on the experience and neural processing of dyspnea as well as its effects on postural control in patients suffering from COPD. Outcomes include behavioral, exercise, self-report and neural measures.

## 7. PROMOTION AND MEMBER RECRUITMENT

## 8. COMMUNICATION

The course of Health Psychology at ULiège (PSYC1054-1) was given until 2017 in the format of several ex-cathedra courses coupled to a group work (<https://orbi.uliege.be/handle/2268/200810>). The assessment included a written report and an oral examination. The development of a MOOC seemed to us to be an opportunity to progress in our teaching mission. That's why we changed this device. The students participated this year in face-to-face, at 6 ex-cathedra courses and they followed online, in parallel, on the FUN platform, 5 modules of a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) entitled "Acting for one's Health" ( <https://www.fun-mooc.fr>).

Website development; newsletter(s); social media activities (Facebook, LinkedIn etc.)

<https://ppw.kuleuven.be/ogp>

[https://twitter.com/OGPLeuven?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw&ref\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fppw.kuleuven.be%2Fogp](https://twitter.com/OGPLeuven?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fppw.kuleuven.be%2Fogp)

## 9. OTHER ACTIVITIES

In 2017, the Well Done Health Literacy Award was organized for the 5<sup>th</sup> time. The Award invites grassroots projects aiming to enhance health literacy in one of three categories: community care, first line, and specialized care. Since the launch of the initiative in 2013, 222 projects have been submitted, of which 48 in 2017. Of these, 9 were nominated, one in each category, and three projects were selected to win a 3000€ prize. The Award ceremony was held in the Belgian Parliament and received a lot of national press attention.

In his capacity of Vice-President for training and capacity building of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), Stephan Van den Broucke (UC Louvain) participated in a workshop to advance reflection on the development of an accreditation system for health promotion in Canada, in Montreal on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

## IV) Planned/future activities and initiatives

The 6<sup>th</sup> *Conference of the Asian Health Literacy Association* (AHLA) will take place in Taichung, Taiwan, on October 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Stephan Van den Broucke (UC Louvain) is a member of the Scientific Programme Committee. More information is available at <http://ahla2018.org/>

The 4<sup>th</sup> European Health Literacy Conference will take place in Dublin, Ireland, on 15-16 March, 2019. Stephan Van den Broucke (UC Louvain) has been appointed as chair of the Scientific Programme Committee. More information is available at <https://www.healthliteracyeurope.net/>

V) **Funding opportunities**, with a special emphasis on international and binational programs

VI) **Other issues**