

REPORT

9th CPLOL congress, Florence, May 2015

Organization

The 9th CPLOL scientific congress “Open the doors to communication” was held at the Palazzo degli Affari and Palazzo dei Congressi in Florence, Italy, from 7 to 9 May 2015. The CPLOL Executive Committee (EC), Federazione Logopedisti Italiani (FLI), and Italy Destination Labs - An Uvet American Express Division (Uvetamex) cooperated in the organization of the event. The congress website www.cplolcongress2015.eu was set up for the event and will continue to be accessible until the next Congress in 2018. .

Participants

659 participants representing 44 countries and five continents registered to the congress. 270 (41%) participants were from Italy and 389 participants were from other countries. The Netherlands (N=49) and France (N=41) had the largest delegations after the Italian one. The congress was particularly well attended and the number of participants was higher than in previous congresses in The Hague and in Ljubljana, but did not reach the attendance of the Berlin congress (Table 1).



The high number of participants from countries other than the host and the broad geographical representation show that the CPLOL congress is attracting the interest of an international scientific audience and practitioners. CPLOL’s commitment to scientific dissemination through its previous congresses seems to be gaining an ever-increasing audience.

The choice of location (Firenze) for the congress was very successful and seemed to encourage many participants to attend the congress. Florence is a city with a rich historical and art heritage, a popular and attractive tourist destination, which may have been a decisive factor.

Scientific programme

340 abstracts were submitted to the Scientific Committee for blinded reviewing. In total, 145 abstracts were submitted in the Child Language section (reviewers: K. Hansson, R. Iossifova), 47 in the Child Non-language section (reviewers: T. Masdottir, M. Kaufmann-Meyer), 48 in the Adult Language section (reviewers: M. Overton-Venet, F. Constantinidou), 60 in the Adult Non language section (reviewers Y. Maryn, H. Kalf), and 40 in the Initial Education section (reviewers I. Vernerio, B. Leijenaar).

Three keynote speeches were held during the congress (Prof. J. L. Nespoulous, Prof. V. Volterra, Prof. J. Stansfield). For the first time in CPLOL congress history, an honorary speech was given by Prof. Dorothy Bishop. Two invited sessions (ASHA, Prof. K. Verdolini-Abbott) and a Round Table discussion were also organized during the congress.



The final programme included 22 parallel sessions (131 presentations), 12 workshops, and 146 poster presentations.

The poster presentations were an important part of the congress programme. Besides scientific posters, eleven SLT professional organizations of CPLOL member countries presented their associations.

All abstracts were published in the Book of Abstracts (ISBN 978-2-9552505, ed. B. Trinite). The opportunity for a published abstract is a very important factor for new researchers. All abstracts were edited in both English and French (M. Vlassopoulos, M. Kaufmann-Meyer).

Table 1. Comparison of participation and scientific programme with previous congresses

	CPLOL congresses			
	Berlin 2006	Ljubljana 2009	The Hague 2012	Florence 2015
Participants	900	320	380	659
National/ non national	600/300	90/300	200/180	270/389
Oral presentations	42	60	74	131
Workshops	0	6	9	12
Poster presentations	49	105	49	146

Overall evaluation of the congress

The congress was evaluated using SurveyMonkey online platform. The request to give feedback was sent to all congress participants. 255 (39%) of the participants responded. 84% of respondents were professional SLTs, 8% students.

Concerning first information about the congress, 51% (131) of the participants reported that they received it from their national SLT associations, 26% (67) from the CPLOL website, and 22% (57) from other sources, such as websites of other associations (British Voice Association,

ASHA), Universities, colleagues, professors, leaflets available at other congresses, from congress organizers' mails, through internet search and Facebook.

Concerning main reasons for attending the congress, 38% of respondents mentioned the overall congress programme as the most important reason, 33% in order to present their research, 13% of respondents were motivated by the keynote speakers, 11% scheduled the congress in their calendar due to Florence being an attractive destination, just 3% due to the reasonable registration fee and finally 2% due to the offered workshops.

The mean value of the overall congress rating is 3.96, which is slightly higher than previous congresses. Figure 1 shows the mean values of evaluated criteria.

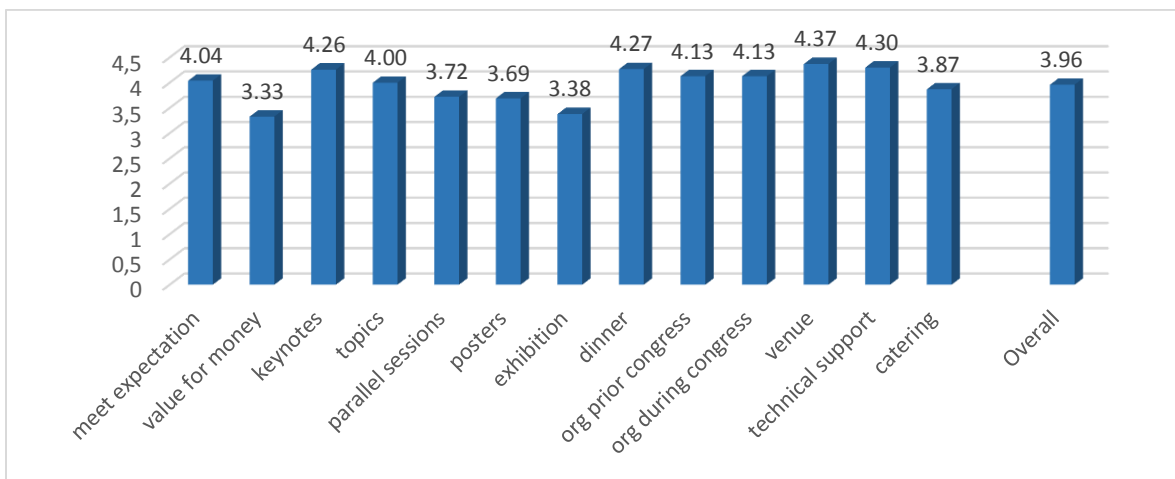


Figure1. The overall evaluation of the Congress 2015

In general, the congress met the expectations of participants (mean 4.04). The highest ratings are for the congress venue (4.37), technical support (4.30), keynote speakers (4.26), and congress dinner (4.27).

The value of the registration fee and exhibition were rated with the lowest scores (3.33 and 3.38 respectively) as traditionally may be seen in previous congresses.

The rating of the scientific programme is shows that respondents find the topics of keynote speakers relevant to their profession (4.00). The parallel sessions were rated with the mean value of 3.72. The parallel sessions of Child language disorders, Adult language disorders, Voice, Multilingualism, and Initial Education were mentioned as the most relevant for professional practice in the respondents' responses. "The CPLOL congress seems to be the only platform to exchange new and valid information concerning SLT education across Europe", mentioned one of the moderators and possibly this direction should be upkept and improved for the next CPLOL congresses. The overall rating of the poster session was (3.69).

Both the organization prior to the congress and during the congress had good ratings (4.13). Satisfactory ratings were received concerning the congress website (3.99), the on-line registration system (3.79), and communication by e-mails (4.11).



The overall rating for the catering was satisfactory (3.87). The respondents who attended the gala dinner in Palazzo Borghese were very satisfied (4.27) because the dinner was organized in a splendid place with additional cultural value.

Conclusion

Congress 2015 offered many novelties, such as the honorary speech, a round table discussion, invited sessions and the congress quiz in the preparation period. It was successful financially and had a large number of submissions.

Baiba Trinite

Vice President Congress

October 3, 2015