

Yearly report of the Audience and Reception Studies section (year 2008)

Promotional activities

The section executive team worked on promotional activities to attract new members (e.g., online community platform, articles introducing ECREA and the section in several national outlets read by Communication and Media scholars).

COST full proposal

On the 1st February 2008, six members of the Audience and Reception Studies section - i.e. Geoffroy Patriarche (proposer), Nico Carpentier, Sonia Livingstone, David Gauntlett, Tilo Hartmann and Michele Sorice - submitted a full proposal to the COST European funding programme. The proposed Action was entitled *Transforming Audiences, Transforming Societies* and aimed at coordinating research efforts on the key transformations of audiences with regard to broader social, cultural, political and technological changes. 82 scholars from 21 countries joined the project. The proposal did not pass the second review stage. As it almost reached the threshold, a new preliminary proposal has been submitted (with Nico Carpentier as new proposer) in September 2008.

European Communication Conference 2008

The section received 130 proposals (incl. 6 poster proposals). 21 reviewers took part in the review process and were balanced for scientific background (e.g., cultural, critical, social-scientific). Each paper was reviewed by at least 2 reviewers of appropriate background. The average score (on a scale 1 to 5 = very good) was used as key selection criterion, resulting in 46 selected papers and 4 posters (38.5% acceptance rate).

Minutes of the second business meeting

The 2008 section business meeting was held on the 27th November, 11:15-11:45, during the Second European Communication Conference (ECC08) in Barcelona. 23 persons attended the meeting (19 were section members). Representing the executive team of the section, Tilo Hartmann held the business meeting (due to family affairs, Geoffroy Patriarche and David Gauntlett could not attend the meeting).

After welcoming the audience, Tilo Hartmann briefly introduced the mission statement of the section, and then reported on the current membership status. At the point of time of the business meeting, the section was the biggest ECREA section with 192 individual members (12.8% of all ECREA members). Most members were Belgian, British, Dutch, Spanish, and German (all > 15 members).

Subsequently, Tilo Hartmann reported on the activities of the section in 2008. Primary activities included:

- promotional activities (see above);
- work on a EU COST proposal to obtain section-related funding (see above);
- work related to the ECC08 review process (see above).

In the business meeting, several recommendations and points of discussion were raised by audience members.

- It was suggested to increase the transparency of the review process. Especially the way how sections receive a specific number of open slots to be filled with presentations (e.g., more members = more slots?, more accepted papers = more slots?) did not become clear.
- It was suggested to avoid also at future conferences to have parallel sessions of one and the same section.
- It was noted that the thematic composition of panels was not always perfect.
- Another remark referred to a section-based ECREA book proposal Geoffroy Patriarche and Tilo Hartmann are currently working at: For the proposal, authors of the best-reviewed conference papers were invited. It was suggested to think about an open competition / open call next time.

The main topic of the business meeting was the vote of new section chair and vice-chairs. Tilo Hartmann and David Gauntlett stepped down as vice-chairs. Prior to the meeting (i.e., a minimum of three months before the vote), only one team proposed to run for being the section executive team for the coming 2 years. This new team of candidates included Geoffroy Patriarche (chair), Helena Bilandzic (vice-chair) and Cristina Ponte (vice-chair). Prior to the meeting, the team already sent out around a voting statement to all section members. In the meeting, Helena Bilandzic represented and briefly introduced the new team. In a secret ballot, only section members voted, resulting in a clear simple majority for the proposed team (Yes: 22, No: 0, Abstain: 3; including 6 official electronic votes (Yes) collected prior to the meeting).

Results of the vote were announced. The new team received congratulations, the newly elected vice-chair, Helena Bilandzic, read a "thank-you message" on behalf of Geoffroy Patriarche for the two dismissed vice-chairs. The business meeting was concluded after Helena Bilandzic announced two section-related workshops (one workshop on audience and narratives that will take place in Vienna, April 2009, the other a sequel of the successful *Transforming Audiences* conference that will again take place in London, September 2009).