

Annual Report 2020

ECREA International & Intercultural Communication Section

The ECREA International and Intercultural Section (IIC) has been active since early 2006.

1. Membership

By the end of 2020, the IIC section had ??? members, compared to 304 members in 2019.

2. Management and scope of the IIC Section

Since November 2018, the management team consists of **Romy Wöhlert** (section chair; Kindervereinigung Leipzig e.V., Germany - rwoehlert@googlemail.com) and the supporting vice chairs **Mélodine Sommier** (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands - sommier@eshcc.eur.nl) and **Ricardo Carniel Bugs** (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain - Ricardo.Carniel@uab.cat). The section's representatives for YECREA are **Elke Mahieu** (Ghent University, Belgium - Elke.Mahieu@UGent.be) and **David Ongenaert** (Ghent University, Belgium - David.Ongenaert@UGent.be).

In terms of our mission statement and the section's scope, we aim to support research that explores different forms of cross-border dialogue, exchange and flows between and/or within nations, regions, cultures, communities, and individuals. We explicitly define our section's field of interest very broadly by referring to all types of cross-border, transnational or global communication, as we focus on mediated and (inter)personal forms of communication and do so from the perspective of production, distribution, content and reception. The section also endorses academic work on the social, economic, political, and cultural characteristics and consequences of globalization, power imbalances, and international and intercultural communication processes, as well as research reflecting upon the design and methodology of international and intercultural analyses.

In addition to our ECREA supported website, the management team hosts a Facebook and Twitter account to engage with our members, other stakeholders and peers outside of the organization, and to announce information on upcoming events (e.g., conferences) for our IIC audience. Here, our section's representatives for YECREA also provide young IIC scholars with information about activities, events, relevant articles and opportunities within and beyond the section (e.g., job vacancies, calls for papers).

3. Organization of events

As for most academic activities in 2020, the global impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and, as a consequence, the manifold restrictions with regard to travelling, the hosting of events, and the meeting restrictions in most European countries had a significant impact on the planned events of the IIC section.

In the first half of 2020, the IIC section supported the organization of the international conference on 'Critical Approaches to Cultural Identities in the Public Sphere: From Ivory Tower to Social Arena', which was scheduled to take place in Spring 2020 in Dijon (France). Conference organizer was the 'Text, Image, Language' research unit of the University of Burgundy, France, and the management team of the IIC Section supported the review process

of this conference as part of the scientific committee. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the conference in a first step was postponed to September 2020 and eventually had to be cancelled. Four keynote lectures and 69 participants were confirmed prior to cancellation. The website of the conference includes information about the theme of the conference as well as some of the recorded keynote lectures: <https://blog.u-bourgogne.fr/aci2020/conference-presentations/>. Although the conference did not take place as scheduled, some of the abstracts were selected and will be published as part of a special issue in the journal *Language and Intercultural Communication*.

In October 2020, Romy Wöhlert (IIC section chair) hosted a consultation session for the NIMCR Network of Interdisciplinary Media and Communication Research, to help the participating international scholars with the establishment of an intercultural and interdisciplinary research network. NIMCR brings together an international group of young scholars from diverse cultural backgrounds, within and across disciplines, methods, and boundaries. Its goal is to develop conceptual, methodological, and empirical approaches that extend critical knowledge in media, communications, and media geographical research within local, (trans-)national and intercultural contexts. Romy Wöhlert consulted the network on task-, team-, and context-related challenges in the establishment and collaboration of the network, here also focusing on intercultural, interdisciplinary, and methodological challenges of international research collaboration.

Most recently, one of our section's representatives for YECREA, David Ongenaert, who is also one of the PhD representatives of NeFCA's Intercultural Communication & Diversity (IC&D) section, co-organized an online panel session about diversity issues in academia for young scholars (Master students and PhD students) at the annual Etmaal conference (February 5, 2021). The panel was co-organized together with his fellow PhD representatives and the PhD representatives of NeFCA's Young Scholars Network (YSN). It was furthermore supported by a representative of our IIC section management team, Mélodine Sommier (as IC&D board member). The session consisted of presentations by Prof. Dr. Semiha Denктаş in her function as chief diversity officer of the Erasmus University Rotterdam and Shardia Briscoe-Palmer (Lecturer at De Montford University), as well as peer to peer discussions about the theme (see <https://nefca.eu/etmaal-2021/etmaal-2021-young-scholars-network/> for more information).

The IIC Section management team
February 2021