

ECREA

**“Crisis Communication Section”**

**Annual Report 2021**

*Foundation:* June 2011 by Andreas Schwarz (Ilmenau University of Technology), Winni Johansen (Aarhus University), and Alessandra Mazzei (IULM University)

*Transformation into full ECREA section:* summer 2015

**Current management team**

*Chair:*

Audra Diers-Lawson, Kristiania University College, Oslo, Norway

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*Vice Chairs:*

Florian Meißner, Macromedia University of Applied Sciences, Cologne, Germany

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**Mission**

The group aims at building a platform for European and international communication scholars to critically discuss different theoretical approaches and empirical findings on crisis communication and to collaborate across sub-disciplines.

The Crisis Communication Section advocates a broad understanding of crisis communication, which includes work in different sub-disciplines of communication such as journalism, public relations, corporate communication, organizational communication, audience research, media psychology, political communication, health communication, computer-mediated communication, and international/intercultural communication. The Section is a scholarly platform that helps recognize and develop common patterns of how crises are socially constructed by organizations and involved actors, how the media bring up and frame crises, and how different audiences perceive and make sense of crises.

For further details about the goals of the Section and its modus operandi see this website:

<https://ecrea.eu/Crisis-Communication>. The Crisis Communication Section websites are:

* <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ECREACrisisComm/>
* and the newly developed <https://ecreacrisis.com/>

**Membership**

The section counts 188 members. They are scholars and practitioners coming

from more than 30 countries in Europe, Asia and the Americas.

**Activities in 2021**

## *1. Permanent website*

At the beginning of 2020, the Section launched a permanent website (<https://ecreacrisis.com/>) in extension of the already existing Facebook group. The website is constantly updated to announce the Section’s activities and events, news from its members, and share any other relevant content (e.g. annual reports).

## *2. Crisis2021 virtual conference*

In order to support and maintain the risk and crisis communication community in 2021, the Section planned an online conference combining monthly live panel sessions as well as pre-recorded full presentations made available on the Section’s website – [www.ecreacrisis.com](http://www.ecreacrisis.com/?fbclid=IwAR3IiOhU7JqQ_1q9r6OZXim2SqbNICl3OUjWbbUO5MYC4D8VWxFu3wNocRA). All live sessions were free to attend and took place of each month beginning in February and running through July 2021. The dates and themes of the panels were as follows:

* February 5, “Learning & Consequences for Crisis Communication Research, Practice”
* March 5, “Scandinavian Pandemic Response. Perspectives on Crisis Communication During the Pandemic in the Nordic Countries”
* April 9, “Exploring a More Sustainable World: Crisis, Activism, and Stakeholders”
* April 30, “Creating High Impact Crisis & Risk Communication Messages: Applications of the IDEA Model”
* June 4, “Managing Crises in the Digital Age: Using Computational Methods to Reduce Information Overload”
* July 2, “Exploring Institutional Crises and the Complex Relationships Negotiated”

## *3. YECREA Crisis Communication virtual PhD Workshop 2021*

As part of the online activities throughout the first half of 2021, the Section planned the YECREA PhD Workshop in collaboration with the Young Scholars Network (YECREA) representative Janina Klingelhöfer (LMU Munich). This event took place on May 6 and 14 via Zoom and was also free to attend.

## *4. 8th ECREA virtual conference postponed to 2021*

In the light of the Covid-19 global pandemic, ECREA decided to move the 8th European Communication Conference “Communication and Trust: building safe, sustainable and promising futures” from 2020 to 2021 (6-9 September) and make it an online event. Abstracts that were accepted for 2020 were still be accepted for 2021.

The ECC8 conference program comprised 4 panels with 19 presentations. The Section panels included:

* The Language of Crisis Communication
* Challenges in the Communication of Science, Risk, and Trust
* Cultural, National, and International Complexities in Political Crises
* Mediated Crises - Challenges for the 21st Century

A special session was also part of the Section’s program:

* Far away but connected. The communication and social aspects of COVID-19

**Business Meeting at ECREA 2021**

During the conference, a business meeting was held (September 8th, 2021). The meeting was chaired by Audra Diers-Lawson. The agenda was the following:

1. Discussing the section’s activities throughout the pandemic
2. Identifying community engagement opportunities (e.g., Facebook group & website)
3. Discussing publishing opportunities
4. Discussing the schedule of events for 2022-2023

During the meeting, the election of the Section’s management team took place. The current team was re-elected for the next mandate: Audra Diers-Lawson as Chair, and Florian Meißner and Silvia Ravazzani as Vice-Chairs.

**Next conferences**

## *1. 9th ECREA conference*

The 9th European Communication Conference will take place from 19 to 22 October 2022, hosted by the Department of Media and Journalism Studies, Aarhus University and the City of Aarhus, Denmark. Under the theme ‘Rethink Impact’, the Crisis Communication Section will invite submissions centered around how the field of crisis and risk communication is evolving and learning from the experiences of the last two years. Prior to the main conference, a virtual two-day pre-conference will also take place inviting, in particular, scholars unable to attend the physical event in Aarhus (day 1) as well as young scholars who want to discuss their Ph.D. projects in a workshop format (day 2).

*2. Crisis7 postponed to 2023*

With the ECC rescheduled for 2021, the *7th International Crisis Communication Conference* hosted by the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, will take place in 2023. Conference theme: “Crisis communication in a multi-public society”. Dates to be announced.

## *3. Future hosting*

In relation to the prospects of hosting (Crisis8 onwards), the Section will adhere to a flexible approach in case bids are not submitted. Such an approach would place the administration of the conference on the leadership team but also give the team the flexibility to target different regions.