

ECREA Diaspora, migration and the media (DMM)

Chair: Koen Leurs (Utrecht University, the Netherlands)

Vice-chair: Irati Agirreazkuenaga (University of the Basque Country, Spain)

Vice-chair: Kevin Smets (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium)

Young scholar representative: Melis Mevsimler (Utrecht University, the Netherlands)

Website: <https://www.ecreadmm.com/>

The management team was elected during the ECREA DMM business meeting, part of the 6th European Communication Conference ECREA meeting in Prague, 9-12 november 2016.

The team took up various activities after being elected. First, the team setup a new website (<https://www.ecreadmm.com/>), and established a stronger community presence on social media (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/521804364497541/> and <https://twitter.com/ecreadmm>). Upon election, the team commenced planning for a 2-day section workshop to be taking place 2-3 November, 2017 at the University of the Basque Country in Bilbao, Spain. Vice-chair Irati Agirreazkuenaga was the local conference host. The theme of the conference was “Migration and communication flows: rethinking borders, conflict and identity through the digital”. We distributed an open call for papers from mid-february onwards. We received an overwhelming 110 submissions, after selection eventually we planned 18 parallel sessions with 85 presentations. 89 participants registered. Keynotes were delivered by Prof Marie Gillespie (Open University) who spoke about “Syrian Refugees and the Digital Passage to Europe: Smartphone Infrastructures and Affordances” and Prof. Óscar Álvarez Gila (University of the Basque Country) whose talk was titled “From a River of Iron to the River of Silver: The Historical Landscape of Migration”. This keynote was delivered during a boat excursion on the Nervión river, which took conference participants from the city centre towards the sea and back. During this boat trip Dr. Gavan Titley’s book *After Charlie Hebdo. Terror, Racism and Free Speech* was launched with a presentation and Q&A. The second day of the conference also featured a roundtable “Bridging theory & practice of journalism” which brought together journalists working on the theme of the conference in Europe and beyond.

Several new initiatives were developed:

Melis Mevsimler, the ECREA DMM young scholar representative, took the initiative to setup a PhD workshop on the 2nd day of the conference. 11 selected PhD candidates participated in the workshop. The workshop was led by the keynote speakers Prof. Marie Gillespie (Open University) and Dr. Gavan Titley (Maynooth University) led the workshop. PhD students prepared by reading an excerpt from the book ‘What is a case study’. During the session, participants first were asked to share a problem/issue that they were facing in their PHD research, related to the reading material. Subsequently they were asked to identify the main strengths and the limitations of the theoretical framework they had adopted. Finally, they were asked to visualize their research design. Throughout, they had the chance to discuss their own projects and receive feedback from each other and the workshop leaders. Participants positively evaluated the session, and the section aims to host another PhD workshop during the 7th European Communication Conference ECREA taking place in Lugano.

We handed out two paper awards, one for a junior and one for a senior scholar, which were supported by Sage and Intellect publishing. Syntia Hasenöhr (University of Vienna, Austria) was selected for the Young Scholar best paper award for her paper “Articulating identities from an intersectional perspective. Mobile constructions of gendered belongings in a digital Malian diaspora space”. Prof. Dolors Palau (Universitat de València, Spain) was selected for the Senior Scholar best paper award for her paper “Reporting migration in depth. Narrative journalism to explain the Central American complexity”.

A selection of the proceedings from the ECREA DMM Bilbao workshop will be published in 2 journal special issues. With a selection of 6-7 articles, one special issue themed ‘Migrant Narratives’ will be published in the *European Journal of Cultural Studies* (edited by the section board). A second issue with 5-6 articles will be published in a special issue on “Global identity and conflict through diaspora media” *Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture* (edited by section member Ola Ogunyemi). In addition, Koen Leurs and Kevin Smets have recently signed a contract to co-edit with section members Myria Georgiou (LSE), Saskia Witteborn (Chinese University of Hong Kong) and Radhika Gajjala (Bowling Green State University) the *SAGE Handbook of Media and Migration* which will also feature work by members of the section.

In 2018, the ECREA DMM section is proud to facilitate discussions on diaspora, migration and the media during the 7th European Communication Conference (ECC) to be held in Lugano (31 October-3 November, 2018). The focus on ‘Centres and Peripheries: Communication, Research, Translation’ resonates strongly with academic, societal, political and cultural discussions our section seeks to reflect upon and intervene in.

In 2019 the ECREA DMM section aims to organize a 2-day workshop in Brussels, Belgium with support of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts and the Vrije Universiteit Brussels, Belgium.