

Section management

Management team

In December 2018, a new management team for the Womens' Network was elected led by Ayşegül Kesirli, Arianna Mainardi and Jolien van Keulen. Valentina Anania was selected as YECREA representative.

Network objectives

We have updated the network objectives in order to include other disadvantaged groups such as LGBTQ+ scholars and to address different, intersecting, inequalities in academia. The updated objectives can be found here: <https://ecreawomensnetwork.wixsite.com/website/network-objectives>.

Visibility/communication

One of our first tasks was to increase the network's visibility. We created a website (<https://ecreawomensnetwork.wixsite.com/website>), a Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/348976009038672> - 143 members), and a Twitter account (https://twitter.com/ecrea_women - 63 followers). ECREA newsletter #5 contained a piece on the plans and updated objectives of the network.

Events

Workshop Women in Academia, Istanbul Bilgi University

During the Female Agency and Subjectivity in Film and Television Conference (Istanbul Bilgi University, April 11-13, 2019), 30 scholars gathered in our workshop to speak about structures and practices that fuel gender inequality in higher education and collectively think of ways to make a difference. Topics that were addressed include gendered perceptions of professions and fields of study, 'mansplaining' and 'imposter syndrome'. Social dynamics such as rising conservatism in Turkey is also seen as a factor in developing feelings of inadequacy. Scholars talked about how there is still a perception of academia being 'a man's job' and how this perception results in the feelings of not belonging and insecurity. Since women feel like their jobs could be taken from them in any minute, they become over-ambitious and choose to overwork for long hours. Other challenges expressed by the participants were the perceived 'ghettoization of gender studies' and the dominance of student evaluations in measuring performance in academia. The workshop ended with the question of 'what can be done?' in the near future to

overcome these challenges. The importance of gathering together and talking about these issues is underlined.

Media, Gender and Sexuality in Europe conference, University of Padua

This conference, held at the University of Padua on 15 and 16 November 2019, was organized by the Gender & Communication section in collaboration with the Women's Network and Film Studies section. During the conference, we organized a roundtable and an open business meeting.

Roundtable Gender and Knowledge Production in Contemporary Academia

In this roundtable, precarization of academic work was debated in relation to gender and knowledge production processes with Annalisa Murgia (University of Milan), Clarissa Smith (University of Sunderland), John Mercer (Birmingham City University), and Karen Ross (Newcastle University). Based on the introduction of the book *Gender and Precarious Research Careers: A Comparative Analysis*, Annalisa Murgia opened the roundtable by pointing at three levels of analysis to discuss the relation between gender and academic work: the institutional, the organizational, and the subjective. Precarization is shown by a growing number of non-standard jobs in academia, with limited social security. Organizational changes such as the adoption of managerial methods, the construction of 'the ideal academic', and the focus on individual excellence produce substantial inequalities. Uncertainty, insecurity and stress are a transversal experience in academia, but precarization processes do not interact neutrally with regard to gender, and early career researcher experience precariousness in different life domains. Besides the role that gender plays in terms of job security or lack thereof, some of the significant issues raised during the roundtable were the unrealistic expectations placed on academics, the role of intersectionality, the difficulties of researching sensitive topics, and, finally, the importance of mentoring and building networks to disseminate examples of good practice.

Business meeting

At the Media, Gender and Sexuality in Europe conference we held a business meeting. About 20 scholars and research students were in attendance. The update network objectives and outcomes of the Istanbul workshop were shared, and future plans such as the propositions for ECC 2020 were shared and discussed.

YECREA pre-conference

Currently in progress is the organisation of a workshop for the Braga 2020 pre-conference, jointly with other YECREA representatives. The theme being labour and health in academia, our contribution aims at

capitalising on the outcomes from the Padua roundtable, to bring the discussion forward and help ECRs develop coping mechanism to resist the pressures of neoliberal higher education systems.

ECC Braga

In order to follow up on the Padua roundtable on gender and knowledge production, a call for papers for the ECC 2020 conference was distributed in which we invite contributions around this topic.