



ECREA

**“Crisis Communication Section”**

## **Annual Report 2019**

*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, Leeds Beckett University, UK

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*Vice Chairs:*

Florian Meißner, Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf, Germany

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Silvia Ravazzani, Università IULM, Milano, Italy

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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:

<http://www.ecrea.eu/divisions/twg/id/24>

The Crisis Communication Section websites are:

<http://www.ecrea.eu/divisions/section/id/34>

<https://ecreacrisis.wordpress.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ECREACrisisComm/>

(A new website is currently under construction.)

## **Membership**

The section counts 213 members. They are scholars and practitioners coming from more than 30 countries in Europe, Asia and the Americas.

## **Crisis 6 Conference 'Innovations in Risk & Crisis Communication'**

**31 October – 3 November, Leeds, UK**

The Crisis 6 conference program comprised 17 panels with 44 presentations. The Section panels included:

- Methods of analyzing crises
- Consulting through Crises
- Understanding stakeholder mindsets and emotions
- Managing narratives in politicized environments, disasters, and conflict
- Agency Presentation–Brand Protection, Monitoring Issues & Crisis
- Exploring Crisis Communication Across Africa
- Theory Building in Risk and Crisis Communication
- Risk, Vaccination, and the Global Social Media Debate
- Terrorism & Communication; From Risk Mitigation to Recovery

- Developing & Evaluating Crisis Response Strategies
- Risk Communication –The Pre-Crisis Context Examined
- Reflections on Governmental Crisis Leadership
- Managing Narratives in politicized environments, disasters, and conflict
- Interventions to improve message compliance
- The Rise of the Machines: Risk, Crisis, and AI
- Complex risk and crisis message environments & methods for analysis
- Risk and Crisis Communication within Organizations.

The conference furthermore included two workshops (crisis simulation and social media analysis) as well as four keynotes by speakers from both crisis communication research and practice.

### **Business Meeting**

During the conference, a business meeting was held (October 4th, 2019). The meeting was chaired by Audra Diers-Lawson. The agenda included:

1. Next conference - ECREA 2020
2. Crisis7 - host proposal
3. Point of discussion - future hosting
4. Proposal - permanent website
5. New business - Open slot

#### *1. Next conference - ECREA 2020*

The Section chair Audra Diers-Lawson announced that the next ECREA conference will take place in Braga, Portugal, 2-5 October 2020. Conference Topic: "Communication and Trust: building safe, sustainable and promising futures". Further information will be posted as it becomes available.

#### *2. Crisis 7 – host proposal*

Marina Ghersetti and Bengt Johansson presented a proposal for hosting the 7th International Crisis Communication Conference in 2121, at the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Conference theme: "Crisis communication in a multi-public society".

Dates (to be confirmed): September 30-October 2, 2021.

The section members approved the proposal unanimously.

### *3. Future hosting*

In relation to the prospects of hosting (Crisis8 onwards), the Section chair suggested a more 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.

The section members agreed but also highlighted that, so far, bids have always arrived proactively.

Corina Buzoianu expressed an interest in hosting the conference at the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration in Bucharest, Romania.

### *4. Proposal – permanent website*

The Section chair announced the intention to create in 2020 a permanent website for the section as an integration to the already existing Facebook group. The website will include documents (e.g. annual reports), activities, and any content or announcement that the members want to share.

The section members agreed on the usefulness of the website as a collective repository.

### *5. New business – Open slot*

Florian Meissner expressed the intention to create a network focused on computational methods; members of other ECREA sections are welcome to connect with the network as well. Requests to join the list can be sent to [florian.meissner@hhu.de](mailto:florian.meissner@hhu.de). Timothy Sellnow invited manuscripts for the Journal of International Crisis and Risk Communication Research; he also announced that Audra Diers-Lawson will be the next editor. Amiso George invited members who may be interested to collaborate on the topic of apologies in crisis communication.