

ECREA
Temporary Working Group on Crisis Communication

Annual Report 2014

Foundation: June 2011

Chair:

- Andreas Schwarz, Ilmenau University of Technology, Germany
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Vice Chairs:

- Winni Johansen, Aarhus University, Business and Social Sciences, Denmark
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- Alessandra Mazzei, IULM University, Milan, 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 TWG advocates a broader understanding of crisis communication, which includes work in different sub-disciplines of communication such as journalism, public relations, corporate communications, organizational communication, audience research, media psychology, political communication, health communication, computer-mediated communication, and international/intercultural communication. The Temporary Working Group on Crisis Communication is a platform to look for common patterns of how crises are socially constructed by involved actors, how the media bring up and frame crises, but also the way different audiences perceive and make sense of crises.

For further details about the goals of the TWG and its modus operandi see this website: <http://www.ecrea.eu/divisions/twg/id/24>

Membership

February 2015: 140 members (growth rate since 2011: ~240%). They are scholars coming from more than 20 countries in Europe, Asia and the Americas.

5th European Communication Conference, Nov 12-15, Lisbon 2014

In 2014, in occasion of the 5th ECREA Conference in Lisbon, the TWG organized a panel based on a call for papers. The TWG collected 13 abstract proposals and selected five for presentation including recognized scholars in the field of crisis communication from different countries in Europe and overseas such as Robert R. Chandler (USA); Anne laajalahti and Marita Vos (Finland); Juliana Raupp (Germany); Christopher Galloway (New Zealand); as well as Toni van der Meer, Piet Verhoeven et al. (Netherlands). The TWG Crisis Communication panel had a reasonable attendance and triggered inspiring discussions.

In addition, the TWG Crisis Communication was partner of the preconference "Crisis Communication Management" held in Lisbon on November 11 before the 5th ECC. The co-chairs of the preconference were Francisco C. Pereira, António Marques-Mendes, and Andreas Schwarz (chair of the TWG Crisis Communication). William Benoit from Ohio University in the US was invited as keynote speaker. The preconference dealt with topics such as Image Repair Theory, the role of social media in crisis communication, crisis communication in Portugal, or food safety crisis in New Zealand. All in all, 11 papers were presented and the sessions were well attended.

Third Business Meeting at the 5th ECC in Lisbon 2014

The third business meeting of the TWG on Crisis Communication took place on November 14, 2014 during the 5th ECC in Lisbon, Portugal.

The Agenda was the following:

1. Welcome note, the TWG CC at ECREA 2014
2. Elections of the TWG management team
3. Past business: Conference Report, Crisis3 in Erfurt 2013
4. Future business:
 - a. Next conference: 'Crisis4' 2015
5. Group communication
6. Open slot for members

1. Welcome note

During the welcome note, the TWG chair Andreas Schwarz addressed the status quo of the Temporary Working Group (TWG). This included the following aspects:

- 124 members
- 31 countries represented from Europe, Asia, North America
- Objectives:
 - discuss theoretical approaches and empirical findings
 - collaborate across disciplines
 - work in different sub-disciplines of communication
 - strengthen global network of scholars
 - support doctoral students or junior scholars
 - turn TWG into a full section (long-term objective)
- How to join the TWG:
 - Being an ECREA member is prerequisite
 - Register on website: www.ecrea.eu/divisions/twg/id/24

2. Elections of the new management team

First, the current management team from 2012-2014 was presented:

Chair: Andreas Schwarz (Technische Universität Ilmenau, Institute of Media and Communication Research, Ilmenau, Germany)

Vice Chair: Winni Johansen (Aarhus University, Business and Social Sciences, Denmark, Aarhus V, Denmark)

Vice Chair: Alessandra Mazzei (IULM University Milan, Milan, Italy)

After they built the management team for two years, there had to be a new election of a management team. No other candidates put forward their candidacies for being part of the new management team (there have been calls in advance of the business meeting). Thus, the current management team put forward their candidacy for a second term. Juliana Raupp (member of TWG) coordinated the election procedure. Among the attendants of the business meeting, unfortunately, a very low share were actual members of the TWG.

Result of election:

Total of valid votes: 3

Total of valid yes-votes: 3

Total of valid no-votes: 0

= The 'old' management team was therewith re-elected.

3. Conference Report "Crisis3", Erfurt, 2013

The TWG chair reported on the Crisis3 conference in Erfurt 2013 (see the TWG's annual report 2013 for more details).

4. Future business: Next Conference "Crisis4", Lund/Helsingborg, 2015

It was announced that the Crisis4 conference will be held at Lund University at Campus Helsingborg from 7th to 10th October, 2014. A representative of the organizers informed about the following aspects of the conference:

- Call for Papers available (printed version is handed out)
- Partner: TWG on Crisis Communication, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
- Keynote speaker: Professor Arjen Boin (Leiden University)
- CfP, four primary intersections:
 - Corporate – political
 - Social – traditional media
 - Management – stakeholders
 - Internal – external
- Abstracts: max 500 words
- Submission deadline: 15th April 2015
- Inquiries to the conference chairs should be directed to Jesper Falkheimer (jesper.falkheimer@isk.lu.se)

5. Group communication

The TWG chair presented the new website of the TWG Crisis Communication as well as the LinkedIn discussion group:

- Website of the TWG: www.ecreacrisis.wordpress.com
- LinkedIn Group for discussion, announcements and exchange

6. Open slot for members/Announcements

Ines Romba (Catholic University of Portugal, Lisbon) presents the idea of a two-day seminar/workshop in Lisbon in summer of 2015 or 2016. As possible topic she mentioned "Internal and external crisis communication". Further information about it will be announced via the TWG.

Robert C. Chandler (Nicholson School of Communication at the University of Central Florida) calls attention to the upcoming Crisis and Risk Communication Conference "Accountability, Metrics and Critique", 2nd to 4th March 2015 at the University of Central Florida.

Andreas Schwarz speaks shortly about the preconference of "Crisis management and communication" that was held in advance of the ECREA on Tuesday, 11th November 2014 at Lusófona University in Lisbon.