

YOUNG SCHOLARS (YECREA) NETWORK ACTIVITY REPORT FOR 2008

1. NETWORK HISTORY/ORGANIZATION

The Network (set up by Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Liina Puustinen, and Tamara Witschge) was established and approved in 2006 (first as a network of ECCR). The objective of the Young Scholars' Network of the European Communication Research and Education Association (YECREA) is to give a voice to and provide a network within ECREA specifically for the young generation of European Media and Communication scholars.

The executive board from 2006-2008:

Chair: Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt

Vice-Chair: Liina Puustinen

Vice-Chair: Tamara Witschge

Membership:

We now have 105 members from 25 different countries.

2. ACTIVITIES

- a) The network has developed an active and extensive website (<http://yecrea.eu>), which is an important tool of information provision as well as community building among young scholars. It provides information on conferences, jobs and scholarships, research activities such as summer schools and other doctoral courses and links relevant for young scholars. It currently shares the platform with the Summer School, an activity run by the chair of the Network (see point b).
- b) The European Doctoral Summer School has run over the course of the term of the previous board and has had its home in Tartu, Estonia for many years. This initiative involved ECREA in different ways: attended by students from the institutional members, as well input from the sections, their coordinator Nico Carpentier and input from the François Heinderyckx.
- c) The Summer School has featured a book series and the latest addition was the fourth book in the Researching and Teaching Communication book series (published in 2008): Democracy, journalism, and technology: New developments in an enlarged Europe: The intellectual work of the ECREA's 2008 European media and communication doctoral summer school (Edited by Nico Carpentier, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Kaarle Nordenstreng, Maren Hartmann, Peeter Vihalemm, Bart Cammaerts, Hannu Nieminen and Tobias Olsson). The book has been distributed to the institutional members of ECREA and is freely available at: www.researchingcommunication.eu/reco_book4.pdf.

- d) Tamara Witschge has, as the representative of the Young Scholars' network, been participating in ECREA Executive Board meetings. She has also been active in the organising committee of ECC2008, where YECREA had several activities (see point e),
- e) With the help of Iñaki Garcia Blanco, YECREA organised four very successful meetings with young scholars: i) A very pleasant informal meeting before the conference at the Palau de la Música Catalana, which was attended by some 35-40 young scholars; ii) The business meeting where the new board was elected (which also attracted some 35 people, one of the best attended ECREA business meetings, see also point f)); iii) The YECREA panel, well-attended by 'young' and 'old' scholars and featuring interesting input from the audience regarding YECREA initiatives such as the website and the Summer School; iv) The YECREA party at the Sidecar: the best attended of all, with young and old scholars and many of the volunteering students from the organisation celebrating the success (and end) of the conference.
- f) Organisation of elections: YECREA organised elections during the Second ECC in Barcelona (26 November). The business meeting was attended by 31 members, two non-members. 37 members voted (6 members through e-mail) in favour of the proposed board:
 Chair: Tamara Witschge
 Vice-Chair: Benjamin de Cleen
 Vice-Chair: Joanna Redden
- g) Both Benjamin and Tamara are members of the editorial board of "PLATFORM: Journal of Media and Communication", a biannual open-access online postgraduate publication. They are both engaged in making this initiative (launched in November 2008) take off, and have been advertising it within the network.

3. FUTURE PLANS

- a) Further development of the website <http://yecrea.eu>: Two new web editors have become involved (Itir Akdogan and Jeremy Depauw). Plans include:
- Development of a database for young scholars, so that they can search for people with similar research interests;
 - Post pod casts with public lectures by senior scholars as well as young scholars;
 - Develop and fill in the current categories of information;
 - Develop a lively debate on the site.
- b) Section representatives: We would like to develop representation in the thematic sections, where the idea is to have one young scholar per section who forms the link between the sections and YECREA. The representative would provide information to young scholars about activities within their section. Depending on both the sections and the representatives this involvement could be extended to

help think of future activities, help organise such activities and other possible input. Ten out of 15 sections have already come back very positively on this idea.

- c) National representatives: next to the section representatives we would also like have representation of countries, to have as much diversity within YECREA as possible, while at the same time making sure that young scholars of different countries (also those normally not very much linked to the international scene) have the information necessary and possibility for linking up with activities throughout Europe. The representative would provide YECREA information to young scholars in their country, and provide information to the network about activities, graduate programmes, summer schools, jobs and scholarships, conferences etc., plus establish, and maintain links with the young scholars' divisions of national communication organisations.
- d) Symposium 2009: We are currently discussing with Communication & Democracy, Gender & Communication and Film Studies about organising a symposium together. YECREA will seek to be represented at the other section symposia as much as possible.
- e) Summer School 2009: This will be the last year that the SuSo is organised in Tartu. After that it will move to Ljubljana (with Ilja Tomanic as coordinator). We will discuss the role that YECREA can play in future SuSos.
- f) Newsletter: We are currently developing a young scholars' newsletter. Panayiota Tsatsou will edit this newsletter and it will feature news, interviews and information relevant to young scholars.