

ECREA Temporary Working Group

“Communication and Sport”

Objectives

As a growing social and economic phenomenon, sport plays a key role in contemporary societies. The societal role of sport is inextricably linked to mediated communication. Sport is distributed, consumed and even practiced via media. It has proven the driving force behind the emergence of new media. Hence, communication studies all over the world have witnessed a growing interest in the field as an area of study and research. The ECREA Temporary Working Group “Communication and Sport” fosters European scholarly understanding of the complex relation between communication and sport.

In studying how communication processes influence sport as well as how sport influences communication processes, the TWG covers the nexus of mediated communication and sport in all its complexity. Subject of research are (semi-)public news and social media as well as (emerging) media technologies that affect the distribution, consumption and practicing of sports. By sports, the TWG understands the whole range of sporting activities from popular high-performance sports via marginalized/minority disciplines to leisure sports. The TWG applies existing theories and models on wider communication. However, it also takes sports role as a proven driving force of media development seriously and strives to develop new concepts to explain and predict phenomena which are not necessarily restricted to sports communication. Hence, the TWG collaborates with existing ECREA Thematic Sections and Temporary Working Groups. Moreover, interdisciplinary networking to other disciplines such as sports management, sociology, economics, health research, and psychology is supported. The TWG invites work from all methodologies and epistemological views.

Topics that are covered in the Temporary Working Group include – but are far from restricted to – the following:

- communication efforts by athletes and sports organizations,
- strategic communication of sport-related issues by politicians, companies, etc.,
- sports journalism,
- equality and diversity in sports coverage: gender, sexual and race diversity in sport, disability sport, sport and social inclusion,
- mediatization of sports,
- media, sport and cultural citizenship,
- advertising in sports,
- emerging technologies and sport: mobile media, e-sports, virtual reality and beyond,
- patterns of media sports consumption,
- effects of sports communication on fans and the wider public,
- fan communication and mediated engagement with sport.

The Temporary Working Group “Communication and Sport” is particularly interested in bringing together researchers on sports communications from different parts of Europe and to pool their expertise.

It pursues the following main objectives:

- provide a platform to share and discuss pan-European research on all kind of issues related to mediated communication and sport,
- build a network of European researchers to bundle expertise and to stimulate collaborative projects to facilitate grant applications and enhance global visibility,
- work towards the authoring and editing of books, special journal issues and – in the long run – the establishment of a European journal on communication and sport,

- collaborate with other Thematic Sections and Temporary Working Groups of ECREA in areas of mutual interest,
- initiate collaborations with other national and international associations of the field,
- organize regular symposia (also inviting practitioners in sports communication) and panels at the bi-annual ECREA conferences,
- provide support for young scholars at the beginning of their academic career,
- facilitate the exchange of information about academic teaching in the field of sport communication and promote its integration in university curricula of communication and media studies,
- enhance the public visibility of European research on communication and sport through public engagement activities (e. g. by issuing appropriate comments or position statements about public matters that implicate the relationship between communication and sport),
- initiate contacts to sports media professionals and exchange academic and practical expertise on sports communication.