

Call for papers ECREA conference

(Mis)understanding political participation

Munich (Germany), 11-12 October 2013.

Organised by the ECREA's Communication & Democracy, Gender & Communication sections.

Supported by the Media and Communication sections of the German Communication (DGPK) and Sociology Association (DGS) and YECREA.

It is commonly accepted that political participation and civic engagement are cornerstones of a healthy democracy. Going beyond established academic discourses about the decline of citizens' political participation in institutional politics, and the rise of alternative forms of political participation, this conference aims to explore the issues, the platforms, the actions, the locations, and the motivations of politically active citizens today.

Political participation is nowadays characterised by ambiguities: Despite the evidence of growing disenchantment with institutional politics, electoral turnouts in some countries are increasing; despite increased possibilities for participation through online media, these are often dismissed as 'clicktivism'; despite celebratory discourses on the uses of social media in the Arab spring, the Occupy movement, in the Pussy Riot case, the same-sex marriage debates in France and the UK and in recent LGBT+ protests, they were grounded and performed in particular physical spaces; despite their possibilities for challenging the mainstream, online media technologies are mostly profit-driven.

We need to discuss the opportunities and challenges that these conditions entail for the ways in which digitally-mediated social interactions, practices and environments shape everyday participation, engagement or protest, and to analyse their implications for politics, culture and society. This includes asking whether "clicktivism" is eroding the physical or embodied participation constituting traditional offline activism, and if new 'digital divides' and political, social and cultural inequalities will result from mediated participation and engagement. Crucially, it also warrants critically re-assessing the relations and interplays between institutional and non-institutional politics, and traditional definitions of what is considered 'political'.

We invite paper and panel proposals from a wide range of disciplines (media and communication studies, cultural studies, gender studies, sociology, political sciences etc.) related to the central theme of the conference, including (but not limited to) the following topics:

- Mediatization of political participation and civic engagement
- Media practices and mediation of political participation, engagement and protest
- Relationships between national media systems and participation
- NGOs, mainstream media and social media
- Media representations of engagement, protest and new masculinities
- Feminist protest and new media
- Intersectionality and media
- Gay and lesbian rights, the queer movement and the media
- Issues of surveillance and data privacy
- Digital divides, hierarchy and marginalisation in civic engagement

- Historical accounts of mediatisation of participation and engagement

We specially invite empirical case studies (comparative and/or single-case studies). Panel and paper proposals from PhD students and early career scholars are also very welcome. We also encourage authors to submit policy papers, applied case studies or artistic reflections for a special poster session.

Extended abstracts should be no longer than 700 words, written in English and contain a clear outline of the argument, the theoretical framework, methodology and results. Panel proposals should consist of a rationale for the panel (max 400 words), abstracts for individual panel presenters (max 200 words each), name of panel chair/organiser, name and affiliations of participants.

All proposals should be submitted by May 15th, 2013 to <https://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=eceapepms2013>. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out after June 15th, 2013.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers  
Bart Cammaerts (LSE)  
Christina Scharff (King's College London)

Local Conference Organisers:  
Cornelia Wallner, Jeffrey Wimmer

Conference venue:  
The conference will take place at the Department of Communication Science and Media Research at Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany.

Conference date:  
October 11-12th, 2013.

Go to <http://www.ecea-symposium.ifkw.uni-muenchen.de> for more information on the conference venue and registration.

Scientific Committee:  
Marian Adorf, Tina Askanius, Carla Cerqueira, Iñaki Garcia-Blanco, Frederik Dhaenens, Tanja Thomas, Iolanda Tortajada, Julie Uldam, Cornelia Wallner, Jeffrey Wimmer, Rainer Winter, Nicole Zillien

The conference is supported by the Chair for excellence in communication Rovira i Virgili University (URV)-REPSOL