
Call for Abstracts

Preconference of the ECREA Temporary Working Group “Communication and Sport”

“Strategies and European Sports Communication”

Aarhus University, Denmark (hybrid with onsite and online panels)

October 19, 2022

The relationship between media and sport can for many good reasons be characterized as entirely strategic, both in a historical and contemporary perspective. In this one-day preconference hosted by Aarhus University on October 19 2022, the ECREA Temporary Working Group on *Communication and Sport* **calls for papers exploring strategic dimensions of the sport-media nexus from diverse perspectives and on many levels**. The aim is to share and nuance our existing knowledge about the many ways in which mediated communication about sport in Europe is developing in close connection with various forms of strategic concerns in the realm of sports, in media and/or wider societal contexts.

For more than a century some sports and events have been vital content for certain media businesses to achieve pivotal strategic goals, like attracting more or new audiences/users, create traffic and data, and build up new markets, perhaps in connection with processes of rebranding. And for an increasing number of sports organizations and managers, partnerships and contracted collaborations with media organizations have been crucial elements in the development of still more complex business models involving a range of other strategic business partners. These formalized collaborations have together with more informal relationships with independent journalists all been important for the public image of many sports and organizations. Not to mention nations, regions or cities using hosting/organization of sports events of different scales as vehicles for social, economic or infrastructural development or a ‘soft power’ strategy seeking political and cultural recognition on a global or international scene.

Digitization has added new dimensions to this broad picture of strategic intertwinements between powerful media and sport, which we are interested in. The profession of journalism and the working conditions for journalists have changed profoundly, requiring new strategies from them to get access to sources and thus to produce sports content. We witness a wave of sports activism, where athletes use their status as (media-created) icons and the direct access to fans and the wider public on social media to pursue different sorts of (political) goals. Sports organizations on all levels in European sports increasingly engage in different forms of digitally facilitated sports activities, sometimes in close collaboration with new types of media businesses. Sports clubs and governing bodies communicate with a wide range of stakeholders via global digital platforms, and the commercially strong organizations build up their own professionally staffed media and marketing units, trying to produce data and get more leverage to the public image of their sports and events.

We call for papers which deal with historic and contemporary strategic dimensions in European sports communication, including both theoretical and analytical perspectives on the tensions, conflicts, many dilemmas and negotiations involved, like when power balances are changing and different strategic interests co-exist or merge around the same sport or event.

We invite **abstracts between 300-500 words** submitted in English language **by July 8 2022** via e-mail to the Chair of the TWG JProf. Dr. Daniel Nölleke (d.noelleke@dshs-koeln.de).

To support the integration of as many scholars as possible, we invite to 1-2 onsite panels and 1 online panel. Please **indicate clearly whether the abstract is for onsite or online presentation**. Authors will be notified about acceptance at the end of July.