

UNIVERSITY OF INNSBRUCK

SEPTEMBER 3, 2025



YECREA PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

BRIDGING THE GAP: BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL
PROFILE AS AN EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHER

ECREA POLCOMM SECTION INTERIM CONFERENCE

ORGANIZED BY THE POLCOMM SECTION YECREA REPRESENTATIVES
ANNA MARIA PLANITZER & ANDREEA STANCEA



PROGRAM

9.10-9.30

Registration & Morning Coffee

9.30-9.45

Welcome

9.45-10.25

Keynote

Early-Career Perspectives: “The PhD Journey: Navigating Career Transitions, Ambiguity, and Transience”

Azadeh Shamsi, MA MA BSc
PhD Candidate & Research Assistant,
University of Vienna & Central European
University, Austria

10.30-11.30

Plenary I

“How to Survive (and Thrive) Career Switches, Country Moves, and Online Presence Without Losing Your Sanity”

Dr. Dominika Betáková
Postdoctoral Researcher, Centre for
Journalism, University of Southern Denmark
(SDU), Denmark

11.35-12.35

Plenary II

“Building Networks and Profiles Beyond Publications”

Dr. Emilija Gagrčin
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow, Department
of Information Science and Media Studies,
University of Bergen, Norway

12.35-13.20

Lunch

13.20-14.20

Plenary III

“Beyond Borders: Unlocking Opportunities through International Networks and Mentorship

Prof. Dr. habil. Delia Cristina Bălaş (Balaban)
Professor of Communication Sciences and
Head of the Ph.D. School of
Communication, Public Relations and
Advertising Faculty of Political,
Administrative and Communication
Sciences, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania

PROGRAM

14.25-15.25

Plenary IV

“Questions Unplugged: Surviving the Early-Career Stage with AI (and Humans)”

Ass.-Prof. Dr. Viorela Dan

Associate Dean of Studies, Department of Media, Society and Communication
University of Innsbruck, Austria

15.25-15.45

Afternoon Coffee Break

15.45-16.30

Group Inputs & Synthesis

All participants & speakers

16.30-16.50

YECREA: Looking Ahead Together

16.50-17.00

Wrap-Up & Farewell

From 17.15

Informal After-Workshop Drinks

(Sixty Twenty Bar & Cafe, Universitätsstraße 15a, 6020 Innsbruck; open-end, at own expense)

**Preconference
2025:
Political
Communication
PhD Student
Preconference**



Meeting Our Speakers



Azadeh Shamsi, MA MA BSc

PhD Candidate & Research Assistant
PolCom Research Group at the University of Vienna
And Central European University

Keynote on Early-Career Perspectives **The PhD Journey: Navigating Career Transitions, Ambiguity, and Transience**

In this talk, I will reflect on my professional journey from journalism to doing a PhD, commuting between the job market and academia, and navigating ambiguity and transience as an international researcher.



Dr. Dominika Betáková

Postdoctoral Researcher
Centre for Journalism
University of Southern Denmark (SDU)

How to Survive (and Thrive) Career Switches, Country Moves, and Online Presence Without Losing Your Sanity

This talk will begin by exploring how to translate your skills between academia and industry - and back again. We will discuss practical examples, and you will have time to critically reflect on your skillset and the job market. The session will also explore the topic of moving across countries, including practical tips for making such transitions. Finally, we will consider strategies for building an academic online presence (DOs and DON'Ts), and there will be space for you to think about how you would like your online presence to look.

Meeting Our Speakers



Dr. Emilija Gagrčin

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow
Department of Information Science & Media Studies
University of Bergen

Building Networks & Profiles Beyond Publications

The communities you join, service roles you take up and the networks you build can shape your career significantly, and sometimes open the doors that publications can't. This session looks at how to pick community roles you actually enjoy (so they don't just feel like unpaid chores) and how to forge connections that matter, without burning out or spreading yourself too thin.



Prof. Dr. Delia Cristina Balaban

Professor of Communication Sciences
Head of the Ph.D. School of Communication,
Public Relations and Advertising
FSPAC, Babeş-Bolyai University

Beyond Borders: Unlocking Opportunities through International Networks and Mentorship

The presentation focusses on effective networking and mentorship strategies to build a strong academic profile and successful career as a communication scholar. A strategic perspective on identifying skills and research gaps will be highlighted also by focusing on underrepresented or marginalised backgrounds.

Meeting Our Speakers



Ass.-Prof. Dr. Viorela Dan

Assistant Professor of Media Change
Associate Dean of Studies at the Department of Media
Society and Communication
University of Innsbruck

Questions Unplugged: Surviving the Early-Career Stage with AI (and Humans)

Some questions you would never ask your mentors. Maybe you only ask AI - 'Am I good enough?' or 'Will my advisor notice I used AI?' Get honest, judgment-free answers in this workshop, from a human. Submit your questions anonymously by August 30th here:

<https://forms.gle/PnVQmnwgYNKe5zHq5>.

Representatives for the Early-Career Network of the PolComm Section of ECREA



Anna Maria Planitzer

PhD Candidate & Research Associate
POLCOM Research Group
Department of Communication
University of Vienna



Andreea Stancea

Assistant Lecturer & Adjunct Professor
Faculty of Communication
National School of Political Science & Public
Administration (SNSPA)