



Objectives

ECREA Temporary Working Group “Mediatization”

The present as well as the historical change of mediated communication is deeply interrelated with further processes of social and cultural change. Increasingly the concept of ‘mediatization’ is used to analyse as well as to theorise these processes of interrelation. In core, the various approaches of ‘mediatization’ understand media not as ‘neutral mediators’ but as institutionalised technologies and cultural forms that have a certain specificity of changing the ways we communicate and interact in social and cultural contexts. However, at the same time media are not given but are objectifications of human agency. Therefore, mediatization research does not investigate a certain ‘medium as a message’, but tries to reflect the characteristics of various media in their relevance for communicative action and consequently for our social and cultural construction of reality.

In such an understanding the concept of mediatization does not refer to a closed theory of media change, but is a much more open approach of investigating the interplay of media communicative change, on the one hand, and further process of change – like for example globalization, individualization or economization – on the other. Such an approach has gained relevance over the last years because ‘the media’ can no longer be understood as a separate sphere or system of society. Due to the increasing media saturation of our present life worlds, we have to investigate in a much more fundamental way how the various forms of making sense of the world are interwoven with different forms of (digitalised) media communication.

The aim of the ECREA Temporary Working Group “Mediatization: Changing Communication, Culture and Society” is to bring the European mediatization research together and to stimulate an open, rich and informed exchange on theoretical and empirical questions of mediatization. Especially the following topics are in the focus of the working group:

- Developing the theoretical discussion on mediatization and related questions of change.
- Stimulating and discussing empirical research on mediatization, focusing on present as well as historical changes.
- Articulating a critical understanding of the interrelation between communicative, social and cultural change based on a well-informed approach of mediatization.
- Supporting a sustainable cooperation and exchange of mediatization research with other fields of media and communication research and practice.