



Biennial Report of Research Network 29

1. Name and Number of RN

Social Theory, RN29

2. Names and email addresses of:

a. outgoing Coordinators and board members (past term)

Coordinator: Marta Soler marta.soler@ub.edu

Co-coordinator: Craig Browne craig.browne@sydney.edu.au

Board Members

Hubert Knoblauch hubert.knoblauch@tu-berlin.de

Mikael Carheden mc@soc.ku.dk

Sanem Güvenc sanemguvenc@gmail.com

Benno Herzog benno.herzog@uv.es

Advisory Board

Gallina Tasheva gallina.tasheva@uni-muenster.de

Csaba Szalo szalo@fss.muni.cz

b. incoming Coordinators and board members (new term after this year's conference)

Coordinator: Craig Browne craig.browne@sydney.edu.au

Hubert Knoblauch Co-coordinator hubert.knoblauch@tu-berlin.de

Board Members

Benno Herzog benno.herzog@uv.es

Mikael Carheden mc@soc.ku.dk

Sanem Güvenc sanemguvenc@gmail.com

Esther Oliver estheroliver@ub.edu

Ilaria Riccioni Ilaria.Riccioni@unibz.it

Francisco Salinas f.lemus.15@ucl.ac.uk; f.lemus15@ucl.ac.uk

Advisory Board

Marta Soler marta.soler@ub.edu

Gallina Tasheva gallina.tasheva@uni-muenster.de

Csaba Szalo szalo@fss.muni.cz

Frank Welz frank.welz@uibk.ac.at

3. Activities:

Mid-term Conference, Research Network Stream, RN Website, Promotion of Social Theory,

a. Did you organise a mid-term conference?

Yes.

Title: Rethinking Social Change

Venue: Institut d'Estudis Catalans; Barcelona, Spain

Date: August 29-30, 2016

Organizer: Marta Soler and Esther Oliver

Number of Papers: 54

Number of Participants: 60

Event Assessment: The Mid-Term Conference provided an excellent opportunity to engage with current social theory discussions of social change. There were exceptionally well-attended parallel sessions over the course of the two-day conference and many highlights. The 2017-2019 President of the ESA, Professor Frank Welz, delivered the opening plenary address. He surveyed the critical themes in contemporary sociology and clarified the theoretical and practical contributions that social theory makes to them. There was another plenary session that dealt with the progressive social change from different perspectives: 'Equity and Democracy Grounds for Societal Change', with presentations by Mark Gould (Haverford College USA), Ramon Flecha (University of Barcelona, Spain) and Gallina Tasheeva (University of Munster, Germany). There were many excellent papers by established and emerging social theorists, which reinforced the intellectual significance of the Research Network, as well as its contribution to current social theory discussions. The conference benefitted enormously from the support Catalan association for sociology and the participants especially enjoyed the beautiful venue. The conference organizers Marta Soler and Esther Oliver arranged a number of well-attended and enjoyable social events, including a conference dinner with a guest speaker, which contributed enormously to the conference experience and sense of community. The Mid-term conference commenced a process of support for postgraduate participation. The participants would have left the conference with

a deeper understanding and appreciation of Spanish and Catalan politics and culture. It was a brilliant event.

b. Please report on your activities at the ESA Conference of this year:

RN 29 Social Theory organized sessions, including parallel sessions, it held a very well attended Business Meeting that discussed matters relevant to future planning and held elections for the board and coordinator positions, it held a similarly well-attended dinner social event after the business meeting, the RN Coordinators participated in ESA information sessions. Members of RN 29 formed part of the outgoing and incoming executive of the ESA.

RN 29 Social Theory had 18 Sessions, 81 presenters - including co-presenters. A few of the presenters were unable to attend and in a couple of instances their co-presenter represented them. A number of sessions were explicitly addressed to the conference theme.

RN 29 members, including the 2015-2017 coordinator, were presenters at the 'Mid-Day Special' sessions and they provided other additional presentations to the ESA executive.

Several RN 29 Members were candidates for Executive, including the 2015-2017 coordinator Marta Soler.

The RN 29 Coordinators attended the Research Network meeting of the conference.

c. Did you establish a Newsletter of your RN? If so, how often is the Newsletter published; is it sent through the ESA RN website?

No

d. Does your RN have a website of its own, other than the space on the official ESA website?

Yes, the RN 29 Social Theory has its own website: <http://www.social-theory.eu/>

e. Publications related to RN sessions and/or midterm meetings?

The Author Meets Critics session at the mid-term conference dealing with Rodrigo Cordero's book generated subsequent publications by one of the discussants: Simon Susen 'Between Crisis and Critique: The Fragile Foundations of Social Life a la Rodrigo Cordero' *Distinktion* 18(1) 95-124 and a response to this piece by Roderigo Cordero (*Distinktion* Vol. 18 (1)). There are many journal articles, book chapters and book publications that derive from work originally presented at RN 29 sessions and mid-term meetings. Since the coordinator is most familiar with his own work, his mid-term conference presentation related to the 'Conclusion' of his book: *Habermas and Giddens on Praxis and Modernity: A Constructive Comparison*, Anthem Press, 2017.

f. Any action to be taken to improve participation of PhD students and early career researchers?

Yes, excess funds available from the 2016 Mid-Term Conference will be used to support PhD student and early career researchers' participation in the 2018 Mid-term conference. The inclusion in 2017-2019 of a PhD student among the RN Board Members provides important representation for PhD students, and the information provided by this board member will assist us in improving PHD participation.

- g.** Any action to be taken to expand membership, especially from countries with overall weaker ESA membership? Also, are there members from outside Europe?

The Mid-term Conference will be widely promoted through national and international sociology associations. It is expected that this profile will expand the RN membership. The membership list will be scrutinized to assess which countries have a weaker representation amongst RN 29 Social Theory and appropriate promotional activity will be undertaken.

Yes, there are a number of members from outside Europe, including the 2017-2019 coordinator and a number of other scholars at various stages of their career. In particular, there are several members from outside Europe who are undertaking PhDs and postdoctoral research in Europe who are members of the RN.

- h.** Any collaboration within ESA with other RNs? If so, please give details. Do you plan to improve collaboration across RNs?

The RN has co-organized sessions of conferences, including plenary sessions, and it plans to continue collaborations in the future. It is expected that sessions will be proposed for the next ESA conference that involve some collaboration with other RNs.

- i.** Any action to be taken to improve opportunities for publication of papers presented at the RN meetings and sessions?

The 2017 Coordinators plan to discuss publication opportunities with the board members, with a view to developing edited volumes or special journal issues dedicated to the work of RN publications, especially that presented at the Mid-term Conference and the main ESA conference.

- j.** Any other important activities undertaken by your RN?

The RN intends to take some initiatives to promote awareness of the current persecution of academic scholars in some European and non-European nation-states. Some members of the RN are currently affected by the policies of nation states with governments hostile to open academic inquiry.

- k.** Any plans for further activities of your RN?

The RN plans to update its profile on the ESA website and to enhance its website.