

**Research Network 24 /SSTNET - Sociology of Science and Technology
Network
Biannual (2015-2017) report to the ESA**

12/02/2018

1. RN24 board members: past term

SSTNET coordination board members 2015 – 2017:

Harald Rohracher (chair) – Sweden; harald.rohracher@liu.se

Inge van der Weijden (co-chair) – the Netherlands;

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Katarina Prpić – Croatia; katarina@idi.hr

Aaro Tupasela – Denmark; aatu@sund.ku.dk

Fabienne Crettaz von Roten – Switzerland; fabienne.crettazvonroten@unil.ch

Ana Delicado – Portugal; ana.delicado@ics.ulisboa.pt

Marcela Linkova – Czech Republic; marcela.linkova@soc.cas.cz

Bernhard Wieser – Austria; bernhard.wieser@aau.at

Heta Tarkkala (coopted PhD representative & RN24 secretary) – Finland;

heta.tarkkala@helsinki.fi

RN24 advisory board members 2015 – 2017:

Luisa Oliveira – Portugal; luisa.oliveira@iscte.pt

Fred Stewart – UK; F.Steward@psi.org.uk

Nadia Asheulova – Russia; simar@bk.ru

Ulrich Dolata – Germany; ulrich.dolata@sowi.uni-stuttgart.de

Michel Dubois – France; mdubois@msh-paris.fr

Laura Cruz-Castro – Spain; Laura.Cruz@csic.es

2. RN24 board members elected for the 2017 – 2019 period:

Harald Rohracher (chair) – Sweden; harald.rohracher@liu.se

Fabienne Crettaz von Roten (co-chair) – Switzerland; fabienne.crettazvonroten@unil.ch

Inge van der Weijden – the Netherlands; i.c.m.van.der.weijden@cwts.leidenuniv.nl

Katarina Prpić – Croatia; katarina@idi.hr

Aaro Tupasela – Denmark; aatu@sund.ku.dk

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Heta Tarkkala (coopted PhD representative & RN24 secretary) – Finland;

heta.tarkkala@helsinki.fi

SSTNET advisory board members elected for the 2017 – 2019 period:

Luisa Oliveira – Portugal; luisa.oliveira@iscte.pt

Franc Mali – Slovenia; franc.Mali@fdv.uni-lj.si

Ulrike Felt – Austria; ulrike.felt@univie.ac.at

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Ulrich Dolata – Germany; ulrich.dolata@sowi.uni-stuttgart.de

Michel Dubois – France; mdubois@msh-paris.fr

Laura Cruz-Castro – Spain; Laura.Cruz@csic.es

3. RN24/SSTNET activities during the past two-year term

3. a) SSTNET/RN24 mid-term workshop/conference: The sociological gaze on science and society relations. Lisbon, 20th-21st June 2016.

The 2016 interim workshop of SSTNET took place in late spring, at the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon, under the general subject of science and society relations. During two days, dozens of sociologists of science and other scholars gathered together to present their work on issues as diverse as biobanking, renewable energies, research evaluation or citizen conferences.

The opening session comprised short speeches by the SSTNET Co-Chair Inge van der Weijden, the Director of the Institute of Social Sciences, José Luís Cardoso and the Workshop Organising Committee chair Ana Delicado. The event had two keynote speakers, Massimiano Bucchi, professor at the University of Trento and new editor of the journal *Public Understanding of Science*, on the first day, and Maja Horst, Head of Department of Media, Cognition and Communication at the University of Copenhagen on the second. Massimiano Bucchi delivered a lecture on the legacy of Robert K. Merton, addressing the role of Mertonian norms in contemporary post-academic science and the different meanings of reputation. Maja Horst talked about engaging publics in the discussion of scientific social responsibility, by drawing from the project *Breaking & Entering*. Both lectures are available online and at the Workshop website.

Out of 30 abstract submissions, 24 were selected for presentation, but the final programme comprised only 19 papers. Authors came from eight different European countries (Portugal, Switzerland, Finland, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands, Germany, and Poland) and Canada. The papers were organised into six two-hour sessions, with never more than four papers each, which gave ample time for discussion. The sessions brought together papers that addressed common issues such the health sciences, the environmental sciences, biotechnology, scientists and their publics, citizen science. The papers covered a wide array of theoretical approaches, though mode 2 of knowledge production, theories of transition and models of participation, among others, were recurrent features. The presentations were also based on an ample diversity of methods, from surveys to scientists to analysis of policy documents, from laboratory ethnography to social media analysis, from case studies to participatory design processes. Close to 40 people attended the workshop. Participants maintained informal discussions over light lunches served at the 5th floor of the Institute and during the social dinner held at Casa do Alentejo on the evening of the 20th of June. A book based on selected presentations of the workshop is expected to be published in 2018.

3. b) SSTNET activities at the ESA 13th Conference, Athens 2017

RN24 call for papers entitled *The (un)making of Europe through science and technology* (in line with the ESA conference main theme) was disseminated via the conference website but also via related international organizations (ISA RC23 and EASST) as well as through several national sociological and/or STS associations and email lists. We received a total of 56 abstract submissions to its regular sessions. After thorough reviewing (8 evaluators) 47 presentations (all paper presentations) were accepted and finally presented. They were organized in 13 paper sessions (two of them parallel). The sessions were thematically structured around the most relevant topics in science & technology studies (STS). It is

important to stress that several doctoral students presented their PhD research, completed or in progress. SSTNET sessions were successful due to attendees' scientific interests and active participation in them.

The SSTNET business meeting was also well-organized and successful. A detailed report of RN24 activities in 2015-2017 with future activities was prepared, presented and discussed at the meeting. Elections of members to coordination board and advisory board to RN 24 also took place at the meeting.

3. c) Newsletter. RN24 does not have a formal newsletter, but operates since its beginnings an email list (SSTNET list) which includes all RN24 member and further researchers interested in the sociology of science and technology and RN24 activities. The email list is moderated by Heta Tarkkala, University of Helsinki and secretary to RN24, and is used to spread information on RN24 activities, but also for relevant job announcements, conferences and workshops.

3. d) Website. RN24 has updated its presentation on the sub-page at the website of ESA and does not run a separate website for the research network. We are content with the support provided by ESA and the ability to make our own changes on the website.

3. e) Publications related to RN sessions and/or midterm meetings. No separate publications have been prepared based on the contributions to the ESA conference in Athens. However, a book publication of the RN24 midterm conference 2017 is currently under way.

3. f) Actions taken to improve participation of PhD students and early career researchers: RN24 had a good participation of PhD students at the conference in Athens. Moreover, a representative of PhD students has been co-opted to the ESA board since many years. We do not feel that PhD students are a neglected group in our network.

3. g) Expanding SSTNET membership. SSTNET membership has been continuously expanding from 39 members in September 2011 to 59 members on 13 October 2013. In 2015 a peak of 78 members had been reached. Meanwhile the membership has slightly (but not worryingly) backed a bit to 67 RN24 members at the time of writing this report. Of these members, 8 are from non-European countries. SSTNET membership policy has been oriented to motivating new (formal) members, but is also open to wider membership.

3. h) Any collaboration within ESA with other RNs. RN24 is open to cooperation with other research networks, but this is not an urgent policy. Currently a closer cooperation with ESA RN20 "Qualitative Methods" is under way and further discussions will be led at the RN20 midterm conference in St.Gallen. Otherwise there are usually cooperations at the ESA conferences to organize joint session.

Moreover, RN24 is cooperating with other research networks and associations which share a focus on Science and Technology, such as the European Association for the Study of Science and Technology (EASST) and ISA Research Committee 23 - Sociology of science and technology. Thus: a) The EASST President and the President of RC 23 board are included in the SSTNET advisory board; b) SSTNET calls for papers for midterm workshop and session

streams at ESA conferences are spread through the EASST- Eurograd mailing list and on the ISA RC 23 site.

3.8. Future plans. The plan of immediate SSTNET activities includes: a) organizing the next midterm SSTNET workshop in Ljubljana in 2018; b) organizing SSTNET participation at the ISA conference in Toronto in summer; c) reorganizing and updating the SSTNET web-space on the ESA site; d) professionalising the mailing list, by transferring it to google lists or listserv; e) continuously expanding SSTNET membership yet having an open membership policy.