

Digital Participation among Ethnic Minorities:

Policy, Access and Engagement

Call for a Conference at TU Dortmund University, Germany (at the Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism), 8-9 September 2011, jointly hosted by the Media of Diaspora Research Group (MDRG), Faculty 15 of TU Dortmund University, the Institute for Journalism (IfJ) at TU Dortmund University, and the Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism (EBI), an affiliate of TU Dortmund University.

The digital revolution, especially the rapidly increasing impact of social media, is coinciding with a massive demographic shift in developed nations as ethnic diversity leaps upward everywhere in three respects: regarding numbers, regarding the diversity of groups represented in a given context, and regarding the degree of institutionalized accommodation accorded minorities – formerly routinely marginalized – by states and civil societies.

The conference aims at exploring topics at the criss-crossing of these two lines. Scholars across Europe and beyond are invited to present contributions on all aspects of the digital participation among ethnic minorities, including e. g.:

- Access and participation of ethnic minorities in mainstream digital media (both outlets of old-style mass media and new media, including moderation processes and user-generated content)
- Digital media for and by ethnic minority groups, including moderation processes and user-generated content
- Geo-ethnic storytelling and civic engagement by ethnic minorities in digital media
- Transnational & diaspora-linking digital media outlets, including those transcending or blurring traditional majority/minorities dichotomies
- Uses and gratifications of digital media by ethnic minority members, including usage that transcends the traditional roles of communicators and audience
- What is the role of policies (states and civil society stakeholders including at the UN, EU, national, regional and local levels) in fostering internet literacy and digital participation among citizens, but also in regulating access?
- How visible are women in the online environment?

Additional Conference agenda

An edited book on the theme of the conference is planned, as is the formation of an interdisciplinary research group with its own scholarly journal (working title: Journalism of Diaspora; online, hardcopy, or both), building on consensus achieved at the MDRG conference in Lincoln, UK in September 2010, and in the subsequent debates on the group's weblog: <http://mediaofdiaspora.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/>

Keynote speakers

Several keynote speakers have been invited; please check for updates as they become available on the conference website, <http://www.mdrdg-conference2011.tu-dortmund.de>

Submissions

Please send your abstract (300 words) on any of the thematic issues to mdrg-conference2011@tu-dortmund.de. Deadline for submission is June 20, 2011.

The members of the Scientific Committee (Ola Ogunyemi, University of Lincoln, UK; Susanne Fengler, Daniel Müller &

Horst Pöttker, TU Dortmund University) will send a feedback on completion of the review process by July 15, 2011

Conference fee

The conference fee for the two-day conference is EUR 100,00 (EUR 50,00 for students). There is limited funding to support postgraduate students and scholars from developing countries (cancellation of conference fee, subsidy for travel expenses). Please write a short application at the end of your abstract if you wish to apply. The Conference Committee will make the final decision based on acceptance of your abstract and availability of funds.

The Conference fee should be remitted by July 20, 2011, to the conference bank account, IBAN DE51500105175406481293, BIC INGDDEFF, with the subject "MDRG Conference Fee 2011". Please make sure any costs for the transaction are covered as well, and that your full name is included in case you don't transfer from your personal bank account.

Accommodation

Accommodation is not included in the conference fee. The Conference Office at mdrg-conference2011@tu-dortmund.de will assist in finding and booking rooms at various price levels.

Travel information

Dortmund (pop. 600,000) is the major city of the Eastern Ruhr area, the former industrial heartland of Germany, a metropolitan area stretching to Düsseldorf, the capital of the state of North-Rhine-Westphalia, and Cologne, its largest city. Dortmund has its own midsize airport and important railway station, and Düsseldorf and Cologne-Bonn airports are among the largest in Germany. From Düsseldorf there is a metropolitan train line (S1) with Dortmund Central Station as its terminus; the stop "Dortmund Universität" is on this line, so you can reach the University from Düsseldorf airport without changing trains. There are also good bus/subway connections in the city, and on campus (currently 22,000 full-time students) there is a futuristic sky-train (just google "H-Bahn" if you want to take a look). The Conference Office will be happy to provide individual travel information, just contact mdrg-conference2011@tu-dortmund.de.