

ORBICOM

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# NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL ISSUE: THE REGIONAL RESEARCH

WINTER 1999

## RESEARCHING THE GAP FOR ORBICOM'S INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

### Secretary General's Message

In this first issue of the 1999 Newsletter, I would like to introduce you to the seven regional research teams (see center pages), each headed by an eminent figure in communications, that ORBICOM has commissioned to undertake background research for its international conference, "Connecting Knowledge: Bridging the Gap Between Training and Employment in Communications".

The primary goal of this research, which will serve as relevant and necessary background information for the conference, is to address a developing crisis in the communications field largely brought on by the advent of new information and communications technologies (ICTs):

*- Is communication education adequately responding to the changing needs of the employment market?*

*- Is there a forum where educators and employers can discuss their respective concerns?*

The research will provide regional diagnoses and recommendations on a topic many perceive as the primary, and growing, crisis in our field; now is the time for us to address it.

As we fast approach the new millennium, it is appropriate that ORBICOM hosts this international conference and vital that all Associate Members and Chairholders attend.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Montreal this April.

Claude-Yves Charron

### Register Now!

Montreal, Canada - April 14-17 1999



**Connecting Knowledge**  
*Bridging the Gap Between Training  
and Employment in Communications*

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### Atribución del Premio Marie Curie de la UNESCO a la Señora Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny

El Director General de la UNESCO, Sr. Federico Mayor, ha otorgado recientemente la Medalla Marie Curie a la Sra. Paquet-Sévigny, Consejera Principal y Secretaria saliente de ORBICOM.

El premio fue atribuido en reconocimiento de la dedicación que la Sra. Paquet-Sévigny ha demostrado hacia los ideales y objetivos de la Organización, como a su valiosa contribución al compartir sus conocimientos y su competencia, según palabras del Sr. Mayor.

La Sra. Paquet-Sévigny ha dedicado toda su carrera a las comunicaciones, trabajó en el sector privado, en el sector académico y en el área internacional como Subsecretaria General encargada de la Información para las Naciones Unidas en Nueva York.



Fotografía: UNESCO/Michel Clande

De izquierda a derecha: Mario Zamorano, Sylvie Coudray, Babacar Fall, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny, Federico Mayor, Alain Modoux, Rosa Gonzalez, Rainer von Schilling

# SPECIAL ISSUE

## LATIN AMERICA



Regional Coordinator  
Carmen Rico de Sotelo  
Directora, Relaciones  
Internacionales  
Universidad Católica del  
Uruguay

### Informe de America Latina

La investigación incluyó cuatro informes: Brasil, Colombia, México y Uruguay. Los resultados preliminares tienen, tal vez, más relación con la carrera de comunicación misma -- su identidad, y lo que se espera de la carrera y de sus graduados, tanto desde el punto de vista de la academia como de los empleadores -- que con una brecha entre la formación y las exigencias de los empleadores con respecto a las nuevas tecnologías. No obstante, los resultados generales apuntan hacia la necesidad de la inclusión de temas teóricos esenciales de las nuevas tecnologías (hipertexto, vínculos, intraredes, la operación de la Internet) en el curriculum de la carrera de comunicación, el diseño de cursos cortos de post-grado -- de actualización -- y el establecimiento de mecanismos que promuevan el diálogo universidades-empleadores, de manera que se beneficie la carrera de Comunicación en su totalidad. Investigadores: Soledad Hernández Montañés (Uruguay), Mónica Arzuaga (Uruguay), Carmen Gómez Mont (México), José Marques de Melo (Brasil), Marisol Moreno (Colombia).

## NORTH AMERICA



Regional Coordinator  
Jean-Paul Lafrance  
Professeur  
Université du Québec à  
Montréal, Canada

### L'avenement d'une société du savoir: nouvelles exigences d'emploi en communication

Pour répondre à la demande étendue de moyens et de services communicationnels, les économies de l'information développent de nouveaux secteurs d'activités qui remplacent progressivement certains emplois traditionnels disparus. Les objectifs de la recherche entreprise sont de déterminer les exigences d'emploi dans le secteur des technologies de l'infor-

mation et des communications en fonction des besoins d'une nouvelle économie centrée sur le savoir. Pour ce faire, l'étude tente de définir le domaine des technologies de l'information et des communications (TIC), d'évaluer l'industrie mondiale, les marchés et les emplois générés par les TIC et finalement de déterminer les secteurs des communications où les emplois sont détruits, créés et transformés, afin de dégager quelques nouvelles caractéristiques du travail. Chercheurs associés: Réal Gauthier, Danielle Verville.

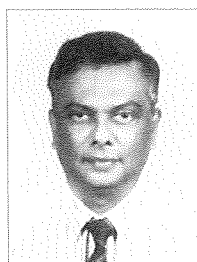


Regional Coordinator  
Ellen Wartella  
Dean  
College of  
Communication,  
University of Texas at  
Austin, USA

### An Assessment of Employment for Graduates of Communication Programs in the United States

This survey of the job market prospects for communication majors suggests that change in the workplace is coming. We found that there are jobs available for growing numbers of communication, media, and journalism graduates from Texas and other US programs. We did not hear employers emphasize training in new media technologies, computer skills, or higher level software knowledge. Rather, employers consistently emphasized the "soft skills" such as basic communication skills, strong work ethics, and persistence. This finding may be influenced by an awareness that the particular technical skills needed in communication industries today are changing and future employees need to be adaptable and flexible. Researcher: Andrew T. Ceperley.

## ASIA PACIFIC



Regional Coordinator  
Anura Goonasekara  
Director of Research  
Asian Media Information  
and Communication  
Centre, Australia

### Problems of Leapfrogging Technological Development

The objective of this study is to examine employment needs in modern communication technologies and the knowledge, skills

and training that are currently being offered for persons entering this field in four Asian countries, China (PRC), India, Malaysia and Singapore. The three areas of concern are: transformation of legal and political frameworks; ways of accessing new information technologies for development; and training for multimedia that take into account the needs of local cultural industries.

The methodology includes a review of relevant literature, and description of communications infrastructure, laws, rules and regulations, and practices relating to the introduction of new communication technologies. The research also examines the training available for those wishing to enter the field of communication and relates these training schemes to what is perceived as necessary training by the managers of communication institutions. Country researchers: S.R. Joshi (India), Ramah Hashim (Malaysia), Huang Changzhu (China) and Serene Tan (AMIC).

## WESTERN EUROPE



Regional Coordinator  
Bernard Miège  
Professeur  
Directeur du GRESEC  
Université Stendhal -  
Grenoble 3, France

### Les perspectives des universitaires en Europe

L'objectif de cette recherche concerne l'analyse des perspectives universitaires européennes au sein du débat en cours.

Voici, à titre d'exemple, une perspective parmi d'autres: « L'un des avantages les plus appréciables (des filières d'information et de communication) est d'avoir su éviter le cloisonnement (entre information et communication; entre journalisme écrit et audiovisuel; entre médias et relations publiques; entre production du sens et développement des techniques). Dans la plupart des cas, des communautés académiques ont été constituées, favorisant les débats et les échanges; les relations internationales se sont développées autant entre étudiants qu'entre professeurs. En bref, l'Université est présente dans le champ de l'information et de la communication, sans pour autant que les moyens affectés par les instances responsables aient atteint un niveau satisfaisant ... Les formations en information et en communication sont loin d'avoir démerité. Elles disposent d'atouts importants pour affronter les enjeux marquants de cette fin de siècle » (France).

# REGIONAL RESEARCH



Regional Coordinator  
Göran E. Sjöberg  
President  
Göran Sjöberg Public  
Relations AB, Sweden

## Employers' Perspectives in Europe

The objective of this research was to examine perspectives of European employers in the communications field and to compare them with views from the academic and professional association sectors. Focus was on trends, tendencies and missing links between training and employment. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, the research included interviews with leading representatives of major IT companies, the European Commission, public relations associations and university leaders. Based on a limited number of interviews, several challenges will be presented in order to stimulate an open debate on how academic training can keep pace with the fast and dramatic changes in information technology and thus in the communications professions.

## EASTERN EUROPE

Regional Coordinator  
Yassen Zassoursky  
Dean  
Journalism Department, Moscow State University, Russia

### Transformation in the Context of Transition: Development of New Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) within Professional, Legal and Political Frameworks

This research covers five countries, Russia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, where increased use of new technologies reflects the growing interest of the private business and telecommunication industries in promoting new markets. Legal and political frameworks are gaining increasing importance in the activities of the Parliaments and governments of the countries of the region. However, these are often too general and are not supported by financial investment and education programmes. Although the prognosis for ICT development in Eastern and Central Europe is not yet optimistic, there are some positive tendencies arising in relation to improving the quality of communication, media and education. Much depends on the success of new business ventures in telecom-

munications and electronic publishing. Researchers: Elena Vartanova (Regional & Russia), Tadeusz Kowalski (Poland), Nelly Ognyanova (Bulgaria), Mihai Coman (Romania), Rosa Nyárády (Hungary).

## ANGLOPHONE AFRICA

Regional Coordinator  
Polycarp Omolo Ochilo  
President  
African Council for Communication Education, Kenya

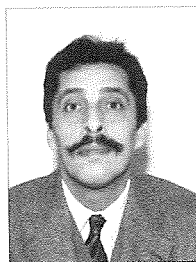


Regional Coordinator  
Ruth Teer-Tomaselli  
Professor  
University of Natal,  
South Africa

### Prospects and Possibilities: New Communications Technologies in Anglophone Africa

The broad objective of this study is to examine the interface between training and employment in advanced communications sectors in 5 English-speaking African countries: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Importantly, we examine ICT's potential in the context of African development. Utilising an applied research methodology, we analyse the role governments and businesses have in promoting usage and availability of ICT (infrastructure, content, and equipment) in the selected countries. Finally, and to propose appropriate strategies for intervention, our study compares ICT availability with current levels of training and education in the region; analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the training programs; examines the prospects for better (and appropriate) training and education in communications; and assesses how ICTs impact development and cultural issues in an African context.

## FRANCOPHONE AFRICA



Regional Coordinator  
Jamal Eddine Naji  
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Regional Coordinator  
Régina Traoré-Série  
Directrice  
Centre d'enseignement et  
de recherche en communi-  
cations (CERCOM), Côte  
d'Ivoire

## Afrique francophone : l'impératif d'un changement radical de cap

L'inadéquation, voire la rupture, entre formation et emploi dans les six pays examinés dans cette région rend impératif un changement radical des objectifs. Aussi bien au Maroc, en Tunisie, en Mauritanie, au Sénégal, au Burkina Faso qu'en Côte d'Ivoire, un changement de cap s'impose pour réformer fondamentalement les cursus de formation, démanteler le carcan administratif qui enclave les établissements de formation par rapport à leur environnement, pour impliquer, de manière structurelle, l'employeur dans les institutions de formation. Un ordre du jour d'autant plus impérieux qu'on assiste dans ces pays à une maturation, lente mais réelle, du credo démocratique et des besoins d'information et de participation qu'il favorise chez les populations (input perceptible des NTIC). La perspective d'une adéquation entre formation et emploi semble passer en conséquence par un désengagement de l'État-Providence qui formait jusqu'à présent, pour ses propres besoins de post-indépendance, des fonctionnaires, y compris dans ce domaine de la communication.

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## FEEL FREE TO CONTACT THE CONFERENCE TEAM!

We would like to introduce ourselves so you can contact the appropriate team member to make your conference experience more memorable.

Ms. Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny remains our Senior Advisor for the conference and is working on securing financing and speakers. Michèle Paré, who edited our recent publication *Freedom of Expression and New Communication Technologies* (and urges you to order your copy now), is our sponsorship and press coordinator. Elsa Carvajal recently joined us to organize our exhibitors' displays, travel logistics and to help manage Spanish documents. Jean-Philippe Côté continues as our Webmaster and technical advisor; he is to be thanked for all new developments on the

ORBICOM Website. Anne-Karine Brodeur is looking after logistics and registrations of participants, so if you are not already registered, please send her your form today.

Sheryl Hamilton is coordinating the Board and General Assembly meetings and conference programming. Kevin Adams is the foundation of the entire team, working as our office coordinator and internal communications manager. Metasebia Woldemariam is our new Newsletter Editor and is coordinating the Regional Research project. And Claude-Yves Charron is, of course, our Secretary General.

Please visit our website for regular conference updates.

## IN THE NEWS

### PRESS CONFERENCE

• ORBICOM recently held its first international press conference to launch the Connecting Knowledge conference. A formal presentation was made to the press during the lunch of the Organizing Committee Meeting on January 14th, and a series of twelve interviews took place both before and after the event. Among others, interviews were conducted by AFP (France), *Le Devoir* (Montreal), L'agence Maghreb (Morocco), Société Radio-Canada (Montreal and Sudbury), *Folha de S. Paulo* (Brazil), and several local radio stations. The Secretariat was very pleased with the distribution and depth of coverage. This

press conference was only the first step in the media campaign, leading to significant international coverage during the conference.

### UN APPUI APPRÉCIÉ

• L'Association canadienne des radiodiffuseurs a appuyé le réseau ORBICOM en publiant dans son récent bulletin d'information un encart annonçant la conférence « Les connexions du Savoir ». L'Association possède un solide réseau de membres associés provenant des universités, des entreprises de production et de finance, et des firmes d'avocats.

### ORGANIZING COMMITTEE MEETS IN MONTREAL

• The Organizing Committee for ORBICOM's international conference held a day long meeting at the offices of Bell Canada. Mr. Marcel Messier, Vice President of Bell Canada and President of the Organizing Committee, chaired the successful meeting. The chilly weather (-30° C) was a shock for some of the international participants (from Morocco, Spain, France, Germany and the USA), but they were all warmed by the gracious welcome reception the previous night at the home of Ms. Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny.

## CHAIRS AND MEMBERS ACTIVITIES

### INAUGURATION D'UNE NOUVELLE CHAIRE EN AFRIQUE

• La Chaire en communication institutionnelle et publique de la faculté des sciences de l'éducation de l'université Mohammed V - Souissi de Rabat, Maroc sera inaugurée le 17 février 1999. Le professeur Jamal Eddine Naji en sera le premier titulaire.

### NUEVO TITULAR

• El actual Director del Departamento de Comunicación UIA, Mtro. José Carreño Carlón, ha sido nombrado recientemente nuevo titular de la Cátedra UNESCO en comunicaciones (Telecomunicaciones y Sociedad) de la Universidad Iberoamericana de Ciudad de México. Mtro. Carreño Carlón reemplaza a la Mtra. Carmen Gómez Mont.

### AWARDS

• Göran Sjöberg, Board Member of ORBICOM became the first public relations person to receive the Club of Budapest's prestigious Planetary Consciousness Award. Consisting of philosophers, artists and spiritual leaders, including the Dalai Lama, Vaclav Havel, Milos Forman, Yehudi Menuhin, Liv Ullman and Peter Ustinov, the Club of Budapest promotes an intuitive and creative comprehension of the world as a complement to the scientific

approach applied by its twin organization, the Club of Rome, founded by Aurelio Peccei. Mr. Sjöberg has long been active in the management of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) where he previously served as President. He contributed to the development of international public relations education and to the creation of quality management systems for the service industry. He has also been active in furthering the profession's ethical codes.

### NEW POSITIONS

• Charles Okigbo, Associate Member of ORBICOM, has moved on from his position as Executive Coordinator of the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE) at the end of his second term. He assumed duties as Associate Professor of Mass Communication at North Dakota State University, Fargo. He remains very active in ACCE, IAMCR, ORBICOM and similar international associations for advancing communication education and practice.

### CONFERENCES

• 25 au 28 janvier, UNESCO, Paris. 10e session du Comité intergouvernemental pour la promotion du retour de biens culturels à leur pays d'origine ou leur restitution en cas d'appropriation illégale. Ce Comité intergouvernemental

(22 membres élus en 1993 par la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO) devrait notamment se pencher sur un document de base relatif au Code international de déontologie pour les négociants en biens culturels afin de lutter plus efficacement contre le trafic illicite des biens culturels, ainsi que sur le document sur la norme Object ID. La possibilité de créer un Fonds pour la récupération des biens culturels et la transmission électronique de l'information concernant les biens culturels volés figurent également à l'ordre du jour.

• 28 au 29 janvier: Communications en temps de crise. Département des communications - Université du Québec à Montréal (Canada). Pour le premier anniversaire de la tempête de verglas, des gens d'affaires, des membres du gouvernement, des professionnels de la communication, des professeurs et des étudiants participeront à ce colloque et tenteront, en adoptant une perspective communicationnelle, de dresser le bilan de cette crise.

### LIBERTÉ D'EXPRESSION ET NOUVELLES TECHNOLOGIES

• Des exemplaires des versions anglaises et françaises de ce dernier livre d'ORBICOM sont disponibles en librairie, ou au Secrétariat international. Hâtez-vous pendant qu'il est encore temps.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY REMINDER

The second General Assembly of ORBICOM Members will be held on Saturday, April 17, 1999 immediately after the conclusion of the *Connecting Knowledge* Conference. A Notice of Meeting and Draft Agenda has been sent to Members by mail and e-mail, and information about the meeting is now also on our website (<http://www.orbicom.uqam.ca/>). All Members should plan to attend this half-day meeting.

On this year's agenda, in addition to regular business, there will be elections for the Board of Directors and the amendments to ORBICOM's statutes, to change the legal status of the network

from an association to a not-for-profit corporation. This change is really the next step in ORBICOM's development, and will better permit the organization to raise funds, operate independently, and raise its international profile.

The General Assembly is a wonderful opportunity for Members to come together and socialize, and discuss links between their work. This year, it will also give members a chance to put a fitting conclusion on ORBICOM's first major international event.