We are delighted to kick off the new year with the latest edition of *Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research*. As editors of this journal since 2016, we are eager to share some insights and updates regarding the journal’s progress with our valued readers.

Reflecting on the events of 2023, we would like to highlight a significant milestone: the first in-person meeting of all our associate editors and the book review team at the University of Leuven in June. During this gathering, we discussed key points and made important decisions. One of the most exciting developments is the plan for our upcoming 50th-anniversary issue in 2025. This special edition aims to contribute to the rich history and future of European communication research, and we are looking forward to surprising our readers with it in the autumn of 2025.

Additionally, we have devised a plan for the special issue of 2024, which will be curated by guest editors Heidi Vandebosch (University of Antwerp) and Tobias Rothmund (University of Jena). This issue will be dedicated to the topic of Online Hate Speech from a European perspective, building upon the groundwork laid in the 2023 special issue, expertly managed by Josef Trappel and Talez Tomas (both University of Salzburg), focused on Digital Platforms, Regulation, and Governance.

Another notable achievement is the consolidation of the journal’s title rights, a legacy that dates back to 1975 and was initially held by the German Association for Communication Research (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Kommunikationsforschung), led by the journal’s first editor, Alphons Silbermann (1909–2000). Currently, Stefanie Averbeck-Lietz (University of Greifswald) and Christian Pentzold (University of Leipzig) are at the helm of this esteemed society, following in the footsteps of Herbert Durwen (University of Düsseldorf) and Ekkehard Mochmann (formerly GESIS, Cologne). Edwin Ferger (formerly GESIS) serves as the treasurer of the society, and you can stay updated on their activities via the forthcoming relaunch of their website (https://dgkf-communications.de/). The society actively welcomes new members, and its mission is to support the publication processes and enhance

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**Leen d’Haenens**, KU Leuven, Institute for Media Studies, Leuven, Belgium, E-mail: Leen.dhaenens@kuleuven.be
the visibility of the journal and communication research in general. For 2025, the society has exciting plans to celebrate the journal’s 50th birthday with a special event.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to our associate editors: Denisa Hejlová (Czech Republic), Hillel Nossek (Israel), Philippe Maarek, Tristan Mattelart (both from France), Christian Pentzold (Germany), and Christina Ponte (Portugal). They diligently oversee tasks ranging from reviewer recruitment to communication with authors. In 2023, their unwavering commitment was evident, even in the face of challenging circumstances, such as the tragic terrorist attacks by Hamas in Israel, followed by the Israel-Gaza war, and the campus incident in Prague, Czech Republic. We extend our sincere appreciation to Hillel Nossek at the Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee and Denisa Hejlová at Charles University for their dedicated work during these difficult times.

Our journal owes its existence not only to our associate editors but also to our dedicated book review team, comprising Heidi Vandenbosch, Stijn Joye, and Olivier Driessens in Belgium and Denmark. Their discerning selection of books that explore and discuss European communication studies across a broad spectrum of topics enriches our publication.

Furthermore, we are pleased to welcome a new addition to the Editorial Board, Nicoleta Corbu from the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration in Bucharest, Romania. Board members actively contribute to the selection of reviewers and often provide insightful reviews themselves.

In 2023, we received an astounding 131 article submissions from 43 different countries, marking the highest number of submissions in our history. Coincidentally, this aligns with the lowest acceptance rate we have ever recorded, at approximately 10 percent (excluding the special issue, with some manuscripts from 2023 still under review). Accepted articles came from 28 authors and their co-authors hailing from 15 countries. When ranked by the number of acceptances per country, Germany leads, with six authors and/or co-authors, followed by Poland, with three. Denmark, Greece, Israel, Romania, the Netherlands, and the United States each contributed two authors/co-authors, while Belgium, Canada, Norway, Spain, Qatar, Sweden, and the UK each had one author/co-author. It is important to note that an author’s nationality may not necessarily match the country of their university affiliation, but rather their academic provenance. This diversity in authorship reflects a growing trend, likely driven by an increase in submissions from international and transnational author teams.

We are committed to fostering diversity not only in our authorship but also among our reviewers, taking into account gender and nationality. This effort is supported by the diverse backgrounds and academic contexts of our associate editors and editorial board members. Our primary criteria for selecting reviewers remain
expertise in theoretical and methodological knowledge at the postdoc level, as well as country-specific knowledge, particularly in the context of comparative research.

The most frequently viewed articles of the year 2023 were as follows (source: Google Data Studio), and show that views of the journal have a “long tail,” as one of the most viewed articles of the year is from 2009:

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<th>Manuscript details</th>
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Lastly, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the independent and dedicated reviewers who contributed to our journal in 2023. Your invaluable work is greatly appreciated:


As we embark on 2024, we extend our warmest wishes for a safer and more peaceful year ahead. We eagerly anticipate the submission of your high-quality articles.

Stefanie Averbeck-Lietz & Leen d’Haenens