

Our roots date back to 1959, with the foundation of “Centre Européen des Relations Publiques”, known with the acronym CERP, in Orléans, France.

The centre is immediately active and several milestones are achieved in the first two decades, including the International Code of Ethics (Code of Athens) adopted by CERP and IPRA in 1965, as well as the European Code of Professional Conduct in Public Relations (Code of Lisbon) adopted by CERP and 18 national associations from 15 European countries in 1978.

In 1989, CERP is restructured in 3 autonomous parts: CERP Consultants, CERP PRO, CERP Education. At the end of the 90s, CERP Education finally becomes CERP Education & Research (CER): research takes its place besides education. The soul of the association we see today is taking shape exactly in these years.

From that decade, we can remember the launch in 1995 of the glossary Electronic Dictionary of Communication Terminology (ELeCT). In 1998 the CERP Education Award becomes the Jos Willems Award, currently still active under the new label EUPRERA Master Thesis Award for Excellence.

2000 is another important year, as it sees the publication of EBOK (European Body of Knowledge), the cooperation with the international symposium BledCom, which still lasts, and the decision to run the CERP Education & Research conference yearly, instead of every 2/3 years.

CERP has grown up, its strategy and activities are taking shape and need to be reorganised under a more comprehensive name. In December 2000, CERP Education & Research officially becomes EUPRERA: the European Public Relations Education and Research Association.

The EUPRERA Board of Directors and members are immediately dynamic and pursue the mission to be a “network where the members attract, convey, disseminate and create innovations in public relations and communication”.

In 2004 the second edition of ELeCT is published and it will see also a third edition in 2008 (ELeCT 2.0 and ELeCT 3.0). In 2006 the first spring symposium is organised to monitor the impact of social media on public relations. The spring symposium will be held yearly, beside the autumn annual congress, until 2012.

2007 is another crucial year with the launch of the European Communication Monitor, which will celebrate its 15 years of research in 2023; the launch of the Günter Thiele PhD Award, currently substituted by the EUPRERA PhD Award for Excellent Doctoral Thesis; and the launch of the EUPRERA PhD Seminar, which is still a flagship event in our association.

With all these activities, the complexity is growing and requires a new order. Therefore, in 2008 a new structure and new statutes are voted by the general assembly. The reshaped association is ready to grow again: engaging new members, preparing new internal procedures, adopting new management tools.

The following decade is characterised by a professionalisation of the association management, thanks to the new Board structure and to the information technology which allow to improve the services rendered to the members. It's the time of an annual congress which is every year more successful and the time of communication: a more interactive relationship with the members, a new website and newsletter, the use of social media allow EUPRERA to reach more and more colleagues around the world. Not only attracting new members, but also interacting with several partner associations.

Today, EUPRERA counts approximately 500 members from 40 countries interested in advancing academic research and knowledge in strategic communication. The academic staff and researchers constitute the explicit public group of the association. However, the association is equally essential for any practitioner who wants to keep informed about the most recent developments regarding fundamental and applied research and about the new trends in the educational field.

Never motionless, EUPRERA works today on a medium-term strategy, bringing new initiatives every year and engaging its members, who also run several cross-national and comparative research and education projects as well as thematic networks.

History is made by persons. We have to be thankful to our founders for what we have today: to the founding father Jos Willems, as well as to Anne-Marie Cotton, Gerard Bütschi, Toni Muzi Falconi, Bertil Flodin, Axel Grijspeerdt, Inger Jensen, Sue Wolstenholme, Betteke van Ruler, Dejan Verčič. And we are also grateful to the presidents who did and will lead the association, as well as to that great part of members who commit themselves in the strategic activities which are the core value of EUPRERA.