

= Press release =

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Dutch study focuses on youth, news media and civic engagement

Dutch youth do not wish to receive news or background information on their mobile phones, they are not very keen on contributing to news themselves, nor do they feel youth sections will stimulate them to read daily newspapers more often, according to a new study.

The study, "Youth, news media and civic engagement," is based on a survey of over 1,000 Dutch youth ages 15- to 29- years, followed by focus group interviews.

The authors, Nico Drok and Fifi Schwarz, warn against generalizations about youth. They see clear distinctions between young people who read newspapers on a daily basis and those that do not, in terms of both their interest in news and their civic engagement.

Mr. Drok is professor in Media & Civil Society at the Windesheim School of Media in Zwolle.

Ms. Schwarz is managing director of Stichting Krant in de Klas (Newspapers in Education), the educational organization of the Dutch Newspaper Publishers' Association.

The study found that, overall, respondents:

- judge news media fairly positively
- use a wide range of news sources
- prefer relevance - that is, they want to know how what is going in the world, affects their own lives.

The researchers noted that young people who read newspapers often clearly appreciated in-depth coverage, context and opinion that newspapers provide and showed a greater involvement in political and social affairs.

A download of the research publication, which was published by the Hogeschool Windesheim and Stichting Krant in de Klas, is available in Dutch on www.jongerennieuwsmediaenbetrokkenheid.nl

The report uses data collected in 2008 through an online survey coordinated by the research agency DECODE as part of an international benchmark project of the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers. Stichting Krant in de Klas and Windesheim School of Media were partners for the Dutch portion of the study, which was financed by the Dutch Press Fund and the Stichting Democratie en Media (Foundation for Democracy and Media).

The first copy of the publication was offered to the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Ronald Plasterk, in the Hague. Upon receiving the study, Minister Plasterk emphasized the importance of an independent and pluriform press for democratic societies, as well as the need for young people to learn how to inform themselves through newspapers.

Note to the editor, not for publication:

For further information on the research publication, please contact Fifi Schwarz; fifi@krantindeklas.nl or ++31.20.430.9195