The London School of Economics and Political Science is one of the largest colleges of the University of London and constitutes the largest Social and Economic Science faculty in Britain. The School's major commitment is research, in combination with the teaching and training of undergraduates and postgraduates, many of whom come from overseas. LSE was ranked second (following only the University of Cambridge) in the most recent research assessment rankings carried out by the Universities Funding Council. The field of media and communications is an expanding area at LSE.

Professor Sonia Livingstone

As a Professor of Social Psychology, Sonia Livingstone currently directs the MSc Programme in Media and Communications at LSE. In her teaching and research she combines the two disciplines of social psychology and of media and communications, and having been appointed to the LSE in 1990, initiated the MSc in Media and Communications in 1993.

Dr Leen d'Haenens

The common denominator of the research activities of Dr. Leen d'Haenens could be described as "empirical analysis of media contents and audiences with a view to responsible media policy-making." Studies which analyze the use (e.g., exposure, interpretation, recall, appreciation) of both traditional and new, interactive media contents – with the emphasis on their informative function – by different audience groups fit in this general framework (d'Haenens, 1996a, 1996b; d'Haenens & Heuvelman, 1996). Experiences were conducted in which cognitive (e.g., retention) and
affective (e.g., appreciation) reactions towards information were tested with adults. Retention and appreciation of online newspapers versus traditional newspapers are currently being tested.

In terms of audience groups, ethnic minorities are an important part of the core of the research. On the one hand content analyses of the news on ethnic minorities in both the press and on television were conducted. Both routine and crisis news-making were analyzed. On the other hand reception analyses with Turkish and Maroccan youths and adults were carried out by means of both surveys and homogeneous focus groups dealing with media use, exposure and attitude (d'Haenens & Saeys, 1996). A second important audience group looked into are children and teens (d'Haenens, 2000; Van der Rijt, d'Haenens et al., 2000; Beentjes, d'Haenens et al., 1999).

Against this background of audience studies and user patterns of both "old" and "new" media, attention is being paid to context factors for and consequences of the developments in the media and telecommunications policy-making in Europe (d'Haenens & Saeys, 1998a, 1998b), sometimes in comparison with the VS and Canada (d'Haenens, 1999a, 1999b; d'Haenens & Proulx, 2000). The role of the Government as so-called "inclusive society builder" is central here.

**Professor Carmelo Garitaonandia**

With a background as a Doctor of Political Sciences, B.A. in Law (University Complutense of Madrid) and Master of Information and Audiovisual Communication (University of Paris VII), Professor Garitaonandia has been teaching "Communication History" and "Media Ethics" for undergraduate students and a Ph.D. course on "Digital Television", in the Department of Journalism, at the University of the Basque Country.

A research group created in 1992, and led by Professors Miquel de Moragas (director of the INCOM) and Carmelo Garitaonandia, specialises in studying the decentralisation processes of television, in connection with the role of Regional and Local Television stations. The first research project to be published was entitled "Decentralisation in the Global Era" (Moragas and Garitaonandia, eds. London: John Libbey 1995). An advance of the research entitled "The role of regional television stations was presented to the European Parliament (Brussels) at a public hearing held in March 1993 (Parliamentary document: PE.208.155). The last book, "Television on your doorstep" (Moragas, Garitaonandia and
Lopez, London: University of Lutton, 1999) goes on to describe the regulatory framework and the different types of regional and local television.

He is also very interested in the new technologies and their influence on children and teenagers, and on their habits and their relationships. I am also carrying out research on the changes to people's day-to-day lives provoked by the multichannel packages (cable and satellite) which are now available.

He is also the editor of ZER, the principal Spanish Journal on Mass Communication and Journalism (version on-line, http://www.ehu.es/zer), and a member of both the International Communication Association (ICA) and the International Association for Mass Communication Research (IAMCR-AIERI).

Dra. Dafna Lemish is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Communication at Tel Aviv University. Her research interests include: (1) children and media, with a particular interest in the role television has in young viewers' lives, understanding the medium and its genres (“Kindergartners’ Understanding of Television” Communication Studies) as well as effects of television violence (“School as a Wrestling Arena” Communications: European Journal of Communication Research); (2) Gender-related issues of media representation and consumption (“Still Marginal: Women in Israeli 1996 Election Campaign” Sex Roles, with Tidhar; “The Whore and the Other: Images of Female Immigrants from the Former USSR” Gender and Society; “Four Mothers: The Womb in the Public Sphere” European Journal of Communication, with Barzel); (3) Construction of gender identity in girls (“Spice World: Constructing Femininity the Popular Way” Popular Music and Society). In her efforts to make research relevant for social change, she has served as an adviser and curricula developer for the Ministry of Education in Israel in the area of media literacy and is the author of several textbooks for the various grade levels. In addition she is publicly active in conscious-raising regarding gender portrayals in the media and is currently Chair of the Feminist Scholarship Division of the International Communication Association.

Professor Tamar Liebes is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and Journalism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and has acted as chair of the Smart Institute of Communication between 1994-1999.
She is a member of the Board of Public Broadcasting in Israel. Her research interests include: (1) the study of consumption of popular culture by audiences in the context of globalization and multiculturalism (see Liebes and Katz, The Export of Meaning: Cross Cultural readings of Dallas, Polity Press), and conceptualization of the theoretical issues involved in media reception (see “On the convergence of theories of mass communication and literature regarding the role of the viewer,” Progress in Communication Sciences, Able); (2) the study of television as the locus of political and cultural socialization (see “Decoding TV news: The political discourse of Israeli hawks and doves,” Theory and Society, “Will I be pretty, will I be rich: teenage girls’ images of future success,” Reseaux; (3) the study of the evolution of journalistic genres in the era of the electronic press, focusing on the coverage of conflict (Reporting the Arab-Israeli Conflict: How Hegemony Works, Routledge, “Television’s disaster marathons: A danger for democratic processes?” Media, Ritual and Identity, Routledge). Currently Professor Liebes is completing a book on globalization looked at from the receiving end (American Dreams, Hebrew Subtitles: The Domestication of Global Forms, Hampton Press), and working with colleagues on a book of essays which proposes a ‘canon’ for the study of media, entitled Canonic texts in Mass Communication: Are there, should there be, how about these?

Dr. Moira Bovill is original field of study was English Literature and after graduating she lectured for three years in the University of Singapore. On returning to England, she taught briefly in a secondary school in a poor inner London dockland area, where she became interested in the problems and educational repercussions of social deprivation. This led to her interest in Social Psychology, which she went on to study at the London School of Economics, completing her PhD with Hilde Himmelweit. Her thesis involved researching communication patterns between teachers and under-achieving adolescents in inner-city classrooms and their educational consequences. She subsequently worked in the BBC's Audience Research Department carrying out both qualitative and quantitative ad-hoc research projects on audience reactions to programmes and broader issues relevant to the BBC's role as a public service broadcaster. For two years she managed the BBC's adult and children's Television Opinion Panels and worked on monitoring the reception of the BBC's schools programmes. She is
currently a research officer at the LSE, working on the 'Families and the Internet' project with Sonia Livingstone.

**Professor Tom H.A. van der Voort**

**Key Words**
- Media
- Media environment
- Traditional media
- Moral panic
- Information Technology (IT)

**Research subject**
Little is known about how today’s children and young people are using rapidly developing new technologies, nor about the impact these technologies are having on their individual, social and cultural development. There are many concerns, and many interesting questions surrounding young people and these new media, most importantly the Internet, multimedia computing, multi-channel and global broadcasting and the emerging Information Technology services.

In view of the surprisingly few high quality social scientific research studies involving children’s uses for new media, a key aim of the project *Youth and the new media: a European comparative analysis* has been to provide a description and explanation of those patterns and practices.
which exist, and whether this reveals cross-national similarities or differences. The collaborators in each country involved in this project have identified the major dimensions of comparison (demographic, cultural and media-related) among children and young people in 11 European countries and Israel, revealing the ways in which these underpin the social meanings and impacts of changing media technologies.

Abstract

This research project focuses on the diffusion, uses and significance of media and Information Technology (IT) among 6-17 year olds across 11 European countries and Israel. In each of the 12 participating countries the aim of the research was: a) To chart the patterns of ‘old’ and ‘new’ media use among children and young people and to set a baseline against which to measure future changes; b) To explore the impact of the ‘new’ media on ‘old’ media and non-media use; and c) To understand the changing role of the media within family life and wider social contexts and to explore modes of involvement with different media forms, including interactive media.

A qualitative methodology is used in the research, using individual and group interviews with approximately 16,000 participants.

The general conclusions are that technological expansion must ultimately accommodate to the slower pace of social change. Media both shape and are shaped by the meanings and practices of young people’s everyday lives. Evidence of gender inequalities was also found.

Methodology

In nine countries in-depth individual and group interviews have been held. These interviews followed a mutually agreed agenda.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Type of interview</th>
<th>Approx. numbers interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Groups in school and day clubs</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual interviews at home</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Groups in school</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Groups in school</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual interviews at home</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Groups in school and at home</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family interviews at home</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Groups in school</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Groups in school</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual interviews</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Individual interviews in school</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Groups in school 80
U.K. Groups in school 150
Individual interviews at home 50
Individual / group interviews with Internet users 40

In addition each of the twelve participating countries has carried out a survey on a nationally representative sample of children and young people, using the same core questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Type of interview</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Approx. numbers interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium (Flanders)</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>6-17</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>6-17</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>7/9-10/12-13/15-16</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>6-17</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>6-17</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>7/9-10/12-13/15-16</td>
<td>1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>13-14/16-17</td>
<td>1680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>In home</td>
<td>6-17</td>
<td>1355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>6-7/9-10/12-13/15-16</td>
<td>937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>7-16</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>6-7/9-10/12-13/15-16</td>
<td>1680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>In home</td>
<td>6-17</td>
<td>1303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substantial cross-national analysis has exploited the full potential of this huge body of comparative data.

**Initial investigation objectives**

The aims of the research in each of the 12 participating countries were:

1. To chart the patterns of ‘old’ and ‘new’ media use among children and young people and to set a baseline against which to measure future changes;
2. To explore the impact of the ‘new’ media on ‘old’ media and non-media use; and
3. c) To understand the changing role of the media within family life and wider social contexts
4. d) To explore modes of involvement with different media forms, including interactive media.

**Main results from the investigation**

*The media and children’s leisure preferences*

In every country the evidence showed that children and young people do not prefer the media to outdoor/more social leisure activities. Being with friends was prized above
everything else by children and young people everywhere. However there were some small
groups who do spend large amounts of time indoors with media.

Children’s and young people’s representations of the media

The “old/new” distinction as applied to media by adults is not important to young people in
any country. Their interests centre less on what is modern or traditional but on how media
fit into their lifestyle. ‘Old-fashioned’ is however an important criterion, and a pejorative
term which can be applied even to ‘new’ media (if for example they are associated with
parents or are not stylishly designed). Old and new uses of media make more sense to them
than old and new media themselves.

Screen versus print

Countries would seem to place reading within very different moral frameworks. In some
countries (e.g., Britain), screen media are seen by parents and teachers as threats to reading,
which is considered morally superior. Some other countries (Denmark for example) do not
establish the same opposition between books and television viewing, for example, or see
the latter as posing a threat to the former.

The media and social divisions

There were widespread differences between countries in the availability of the newest
technology. In Finland even less affluent and rural children had experience of the Internet
through free access in schools and libraries. In Britain and Italy for example only tiny
minorities had any direct experience of it. However there were similar social class
differences in access to, and gender differences in interest in, Information Technology
everywhere.

Media and family life

Countries across Europe differed in the amount of communal family viewing still taking
place. In most there was evidence of fragmentation of the television audience and an
increasing tendency for family members to watch alone. There were however signs that
television and other media could be foci for different types of family interaction – fathers
and sons around the computer, mothers and daughters watching soaps for example.

The role of the media in children’s social relations

In no country was media use commonly found to be a substitute for social interaction. It is
now woven into the stuff of children’s everyday lives, influencing and instigating real-life
contacts.

The media and children’s development of identity

Fan cultures still flourish, are often founded on media use or personalities and are promoted
through the media (consumerism). However some evidence emerged that adolescents are
becoming more distanced, or reflective in their attitudes and relations to media contents. They are often critical of popular television programmes, even if they still watch them, and are eager to establish to interviewers that they are selective and individualistic in their choices.

Reception issues

Soaps were identified as a genre of particular interest. The popularity of particular shows raised issues connected with gender, the “adult-like child” and local versus global contents. In several countries (Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Israel, France) children and young people are watching “global” soaps (Australian or American – *Melrose Place*, *Beverley Hills* and *Baywatch*) but “local/national” soaps were particularly popular in most.

Children, young people and expectations of the future

Expectations of the future for information technology seem particularly gendered (girls seem more interested in uses and boys in technologies per se). The fact that the early adopters of new media technologies tend to be boys, middle class and better off, makes this a political as well as sociological issue. Who is being empowered by new media and who is being left behind?

Conclusions

Perhaps the main lesson learned from our wide-ranging study of young people in 12 nations is that technological expansion must ultimately accommodate to the slower pace of social change. Media both shape and are shaped by the meanings and practices of young people’s everyday lives. Evidence of gender inequalities was also found. For example girls everywhere are less likely to own media (apart from books). In particular girls are less interested and involved in computers and less likely to have access to a computer in the home.

It is in the area of equal opportunities that the school has the potential to play a compensating role. Although policy initiatives to provide resources and technical infrastructure vary across Europe, particularly in terms of whether ICT is introduced before or during secondary education, the scale of these initiatives has resulted in some 60% of European children using computers at school. Access however varies considerably, from only 1 in 3 pupils in Spain and Germany to over three quarters in those countries identified as more advanced in ICT, namely the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, where school-access to ICT is particularly widespread.

This debate hints at more deep-rooted cultural issues: our cross-cultural research has highlighted how the implicit values of traditional print cultures can militate against recognition and support of children’s positive uses of computers. This is most evident in the variable quality of the informal opportunities for using computers in school, including teachers’ assumptions regarding the relation between screen media, play and learning;
again, we find the Nordic countries to be to the fore in recognizing the educational potential of audiovisual media.

**Main contribution to the objectives of the YFE Programme**

This collaborative project has allowed children and young people in 12 countries to express their views about their changing media environment and has highlighted problems of gender inequalities and socio-economic status. These views and associated findings have been widely disseminated through a number of channels.

National reports have already been published in Belgium, France, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, and are forthcoming in Denmark, Finland, Spain and Sweden. Other dissemination drives have ensured that project findings have been circulated to a non-academic, more policy-related community internationally.

First, the comparative project was presented in an invited plenary session to the Second World Summit on Children’s Television, held in London, March 1998. Second, members of the European project teams were invited by the Rector and President of the University of Trento and the Municipality of Trento to participate in a seminar entitled, ‘New media, children and social policy’.

Third, a comparative report, detailing findings from each of the 12 European projects was invited for publication by Dr Cecilia von Feilizen for the UNESCO volume in the International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence. This volume is entitled ‘Children’s Media Education and Participation’ and has, like the first volume in the series, reached an international policy and academic audience. In addition, there are plans to use the launch of the comparative book later this year to disseminate findings further, possibly, funding permitting, to the European policy community in Brussels.
Professor Sonia Livingstone

While always considering media and communications as an interdisciplinary field, Sonia Livingstone's background in social psychology has resulted in research interests that focus particularly on media audiences. Her general approach to audiences, focusing on their interpretative engagement with different media genres, is discussed in her book, Making Sense of Television (2nd edition, Routledge, 1998). This book takes the soap opera as its case study, exploring diverse methods for researching the interpretative activities of the television audience, while her research on the talk show as, potentially, an emerging player in the mediated public sphere, is published in Talk on Television (with Peter Lunt; Routledge, 1994). More recently she has extended this approach to include crime drama (with Robert Reiner), here taking a historical approach to surveying crime drama and crime audiences through the postwar period. Most recently, she has become interested in children and young people as a particular audience, leading a pan-European team in exploring the access, uses and meanings of media – old and new - for children and young people. Looking across 12 European countries, and integrating qualitative and quantitative methods, we have reported on the extension of the 'child audience' into 'new media users', focussing especially on such screen-based media as multichannel television, video games, the personal computer, the Internet and E-mail. The project is in many ways an update on a seminal study carried out also at LSE during the mid-50s, when television was first introduced into British homes (Himmelweit et al's Television and the Child).

The British report has been published as Young People, New Media (LSE, 1999). After some further work, it will appear during 2001 as an academic book, entitled Young People and the New Media (Sage). An edited volume, focussing on the cross-European project, entitled Children and the Changing Media Environment in Europe (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates) is currently in press and will appear early in 2001. Having now obtained funding for a new project, Professor Livingstone has begun an project investigating children's use of the Internet at home and at school, using observational methods as well as interviews with children parents and teachers.

This recent work signals a theoretical shift in Professor Livingstone's research from the audience for mass media to that for changing forms of media and information technologies. This shift is also represented by her co-editorship of the Handbook of New Media (with Leah Lievrouw, to be published by Sage in 2001). Otherwise, Professor Livingstone remains interested in all aspects of media audiences, and publishes theoretical and empirical articles in a variety of communication and psychology journals. She has held visiting professor positions at the Universities of Copenhagen and Stockholm, and is on the
editorial board of several media journals, including New Media and Society, Political Communication, Journal of Communication and European Journal of Communication.

Professor Livingstone teaches on the core courses in the MSc Media and Communications programmes at the London School of Economics and Political Science, as well as supervising doctoral students broadly working in the field of media audiences.

Research Partner Organisations

- **The Department of Communication of the University of Nijmegen**: Dr. Leen d'Haenens is a full-time Associate Professor at the Department of Communication of the University of Nijmegen, which participates in the *Netherlands School of Communications Research* (NESCoR). NESCoR is the Dutch center for institutionalized graduate training and research into communications. The establishment of NESCoR formally confirms the collaboration between communication research groups from the universities of Amsterdam, Nijmegen, and Twente. With the participation of these three universities, all Dutch social science faculties in the field of communication science are represented in one research institute. NESCoR aims at contributing to knowledge on the political, social, psychological, cultural and economic aspects of communications infrastructure and production, contents, and effects, in a society characterized by the increasing importance of, and dependence on, communication and information. NESCoR aims at realizing this mission by addressing fundamental scientific research questions. The school has a Ph.D. training program for young researchers from the Netherlands and abroad. The research of NESCoR is rooted in the empirical tradition, where research is aimed at theory development and theory testing based on empirical data. The research is characterized by methodological pluralism: quantitative as well as qualitative in orientation, large-scale as well as individual case-based and using original as well as archival data. Surveys, experiments and content analysis are the main methods of data collection.

The six main research areas for NESCoR are: "(In)equality in access"; "The economics of information"; "Commercialization of traditional mass media"; "Media, Citizenship and Public Sphere"; "Media effects on social and political attitudes"; "Effective communication amidst information abundance".

The research activities of Dr. Leen d'Haenens are closely connected to three of the six main lines of research of NESCoR: (1) "Communication policy with a view to access"; (2) "Audience analysis" given the commercialization of traditional mass media; (3) "Media, Citizenship and Public Sphere".

- **University of the Basque Country** ([http://www.ehu.es](http://www.ehu.es)) has 56,913 enrolled in official courses in 40 centres, amid them the Faculty of Social Sciences and Communication, with 3,637 students in Journalism, Advertising, Audio-visual Communication, Political Sciences and Sociology. This Faculty with the Faculties of Information of the University Complutense of Madrid and the Autonomous University of Barcelona produce the most important slice of the Spanish Research on mass communication.
- **Radio Television of the Basque Country** (Euskal Irrati Telebista-RadioTelevision Vasca, EITB-RTVV) Created in 1983, Radio Television of the Basque Country ([http://www.eitb.com](http://www.eitb.com)) serves a population of over two million in the Basque Country (Spain). Basque Television has two television channels on the air: ETB-1, which broadcasts in Basque, and ETB-2, in Spanish. Moreover, there is one satellite channel, ETB SAT. EITB has been a driving force behind all types of cultural, musical, artistic and theatrical activities and undertakings. It has specifically led to creation and development and audio-visual production industry, and its Research Department has developed research works on audience studies, habits and cultural consumption.

- **Department of Communication, Tel Aviv University**: The Israeli project was coordinated at the Department of Communication at Tel Aviv University. The Department of Communication is a located in the Faculty of Social Sciences and is committed to academic excellence. The goal of the program is to provide students with knowledge and analytic tools in order to understand the social, psychological, cultural, linguistic, legal, economic and political aspects of how the mass media re organized and operate in society and the effects they have on people and institutions. The program emphasizes universal trends and issues as well as problems of communication in Israel.

- **Leiden Center for Child and Media Studies**: The Leiden Center for Child and Media Studies is a research center in the Department of Education at Leiden University, the oldest university in the Netherlands. The Center's research program is devoted to the role media play in children's socialization and development. The primary focus is on children's out-of-school use of print and electronic media. Children's media use is investigated from two different angles. On the one hand, media are viewed as socialization agents. From this perspective, it is investigated how media help to shape children's cognitions, attitudes and behaviors. On the other hand, media are examined as an object of parental and educational intervention. This perspective is taken in investigations of parental guidance of children's media-related behavior and curricular interventions designed to encourage children to become mindful and critical consumers of media. In the most recent research assessment carried out by an international examination committee under the auspices of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the research done at the Center for Child and Media Studies was characterized as being "outstanding and highly internationally visible."
Introduction. The relevance of the topic chosen for the article is manifested by the fact that young people having the right to vote constitute a significant segment of the citizens of the Russian Federation. 


promotion of youth participation in mass media through creation of youth-orientated mass media, training of young activists in information activity; encouraging youth volunteer movements, including support for creation and financing, as well as in formational support for volunteer centers; support for youth projects and initiatives