VILLA CROSSMEDIA
A FRAMEWORK FOR MEDIA WISDOM TRAINING

Research into young people and media wisdom with a view to developing media wisdom training as part of Villa Crossmedia, a project in the Interreg IVa 2 Seas programme

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November 2012

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Introduction

Media wisdom, media literacy and media education have become important terms in contemporary society. Both nationally and internationally, media literacy has become a subject of policy in recent years and there are numerous studies and projects that seek to stimulate and optimise media wisdom among the population at large.

Media wisdom is one of the key terms in the Villa Crossmedia project. This Interreg project of the 2 Seas programme is a collaborative venture between the Flemish cities of Mechelen and Bruges, the UK organisation[1] CSV Media Clubhouse Ipswich and with Thomas More Mechelen as the academic partner.

Villa Crossmedia stimulates and facilitates media education, media wisdom, media participation, media production and media dissemination through cooperation between local media centres and a virtual international youth platform for people aged between 12 and 25. It devotes attention specifically to cultural identity and to making young people more aware and more outspoken (empowerment) at local level.

The project consists of three work packages: (1) media wisdom, (2) media education and production and (3) cultural identity.

The media wisdom package seeks to ensure that young people are aware of the dangers, risks, problems and possibilities opened up by new media. This is being done by means of education and training. The media education and production package aims to establish media centres or to improve existing ones, including visits to partners and other centres in Belgium, the United Kingdom and other locations in the North Sea region, an exchange of young people and the promotion of cross-border media production by young people. The cultural identity package will offer possibilities for exchanges of young people in the North Sea region by means of training programmes for video production, production of digital storytelling, research, development, testing and evaluating a culture and diversity educational package/toolkit and the setting up of a closing film festival.

An accessible youth media platform will be established to stimulate the joint production, cooperation and free sharing of media among young people. Cross-media good practices, media wisdom packages and toolkits will be produced and promoted. Each partner will invest in local involvement and will name youth ambassadors. At the end of the project a conference will be organised to share insights, experiences and good practices with each other and other interested parties.

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[1] Coastnet Plymouth was originally also a project partner, but the organisation went bankrupt in summer 2012

1. Research: objectives and process

1.1. Background to and goals of the research

Active participation in local social life immerses young people in the rich cultural diversity of contemporary society. Villa Crossmedia wants to display multicultural young talent and develop young role models. By offering possibilities to experience the important values of mutual respect and commitment and tackling problems, young people aged 12-25 will get a reference framework for their social behaviour now and in the future.

Local communities need to stimulate actions that enable young people to take part in social, cultural and political life, among other things by using media and ICT-based applications. UNESCO has called for a 'multidimensional approach that focuses on human development rather than on technology as a goal in its own right' [2]. The unique approach of Villa Crossmedia brings young people to the heart of creating inclusive, development-driven media regions. Interactive, democratic experiences and also experiences that make young people more outspoken are crucial in bringing about change in their personal life, and in the life of other people[3]. Making them more outspoken and letting them take control, but also protection, are crucial within a project focused on youth media. Increasing online access and the low-threshold accessibility bring with them the risk of negative influences and misuse. Media wisdom needs to be stimulated everywhere where media are produced or used. Media wisdom is a core concept in any successful youth media project. So we must not only stimulate young people to produce media, we also want them to develop critical skills for analysing and assessing media[4].

For that reason one of the three work packages of the Villa Crossmedia project is dedicated entirely to media wisdom. We are not confining ourselves in this project to a theoretical study of the concept, but want to work out concrete guidelines for putting media wisdom into practice. Therefore, we are designing, testing, evaluating and sharing training packages built around media wisdom. Based on the research results, we are developing hands-on manuals, coupled to everyday practice in the youth media centres of the project partners, with media wisdom modules as an addition to technical training and practice.

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[2] Technology alone will not bridge knowledge divides. Speech by Abdul Waheed Khan, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, at the 23rd World Conference on open Learning and Distance Education, Maastricht, June 2009

[3] Vavrus, J. and Fletcher, A. (2006). Guide to Social Change Led By and With Young People. The Freechild Project.

[4] In line with the European Charter for Mewdia Literacy (2009): "Our young people must develop critical skills for analysing and assessing media."

1.2. Research methods

We have made a distinction in this project between two research paths. On the one hand, we are looking for the media wisdom of European (i.e. Flemish and British) youngsters, while on the other we are examining how media training/production can contribute to increasing this media wisdom. The objective of the first path half is to provide an insight into the target group, its actions and motivations, while the second path focuses on the practical situation and provides a framework for the training packages that will be developed.

To find answers to the research questions, we opted for qualitative research. After all, the research is of an exploratory nature. It centres on young people, and seeks to yield an insight into their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour in relation to media. It is more about understanding than about measuring. For that reason it is not possible to make quantitative generalisations. We are keeping a finger on the pulse of the project target group, and using the data to gear the various actions being undertaken in Villa Crossmedia optimally to them.

The first step was to set up comprehensive desk research. We searched for all available data with a view to identifying the target group in Belgium and the United Kingdom. Statistics, existing literature and secondary analyses of existing surveys and studies provided a greater insight into the media wisdom of young people in general and those in Belgium and the United Kingdom in particular.

We supplemented this information by conducting focus group interviews. This qualitative research method consisted of a discussion led by a fixed moderator with a small group of respondents. The discussion occurred spontaneously based on a semi-structured questionnaire. The respondents were recruited by the project partners, as envisaged in the project plan. Each partner organised two focus groups with respondents drawn from its own target group. This enabled us to reach a highly diverse group of young people in terms of age, level of education and background. All focus group sessions took place using the same conversational guidelines and were carried out by the same interviewer.

This research data was fleshed out with findings from the partners' own media workshops. For a few years now Thomas More Mechelen has been organising media workshops for children and young people in the radio and television studio of the journalism school. This allowed us to gain considerable experience centring on media wisdom and media wisdom training. We coupled to the media workshops in the 2011-2012 academic year a survey among the participants and their supervisors. Some of the survey results were also usable for the purposes of this report.

Finally, we included some findings of the study visits organised as part of Villa Crossmedia. The project partners together visited a number of youth media centres in Flanders and the Netherlands in October 2011, and in the United Kingdom in March 2012. The guided tours and talks with employees provided additional information about the organisation of media workshops.

As mentioned earlier, the object of this research is to provide an insight into the target group, how it acts and what motivates it. To find answers to the research questions, we decided to conduct

qualitative research. Our goal is to provide an insight into the 'field' and the behaviour, views and emotions of the target group. It is more about understanding than about measuring, so we opted for qualitative research methods. As this is a qualitative study, it is not possible to make quantitative generalisations.

But even without further quantitative substantiation this data is reliable as a way of 'keeping the finger on the pulse' of the target group. This is something that we observed through the comparability of the results of the various surveys (triangulation) and it was confirmed at various presentations and workshops at which we discussed the interim findings with experts from the field.

Wherever possible the text of this report has been illustrated by means of quotes. These are literal representations of pronouncements made during the focus group sessions. As they are literal quotes, it was decided not to translate them, so the quotes from the British focus groups are in English, the working language of the interviews.

2. Young people and media

Before we examine media wisdom, we need to provide a picture of our target group and their ownership and use of media. We have done this using existing figures that give us both a general picture of the current situation in Europe and a specific picture of the regions relevant to the project, namely Flanders and the United Kingdom.

2.1 Demography

Villa Crossmedia focuses on media wisdom and media education among young people aged 12 to 25. Before looking at how these young people use media, it is prudent to establish exactly who they are.

Although we will frequently refer in this report to 'the young people', we are keenly aware of the differences that exist within this group. A great diversity is observable not only in terms of age, but also as regards choice of study or occupation, place of residence, social class and ethnic background. This chapter briefly identifies the most important target group characteristics, both the common characteristics and the distinctive ones.

It is not our intention to give here a complete description of the target group, but we nevertheless wish to highlight some important characteristics. For this purpose we will use figures obtained from Eurostat, the statistics office of the European Union. Their website[5] gathers figures of all EU member states and compares them in respect of numerous key indicators and target groups. We used the Eurostat figures for the age category closest to our own target group, namely people aged 15-24, and compared them in each instance with the two partner countries in the Villa Crossmedia project, namely Belgium and the United Kingdom.

On average these people aged between 15 and 24 account for 11.9% of the population in the member states of the European Union. In Belgium and particularly in United Kingdom, the proportion is slightly larger, namely 12.1% and 13.1%, respectively.

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[5] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/
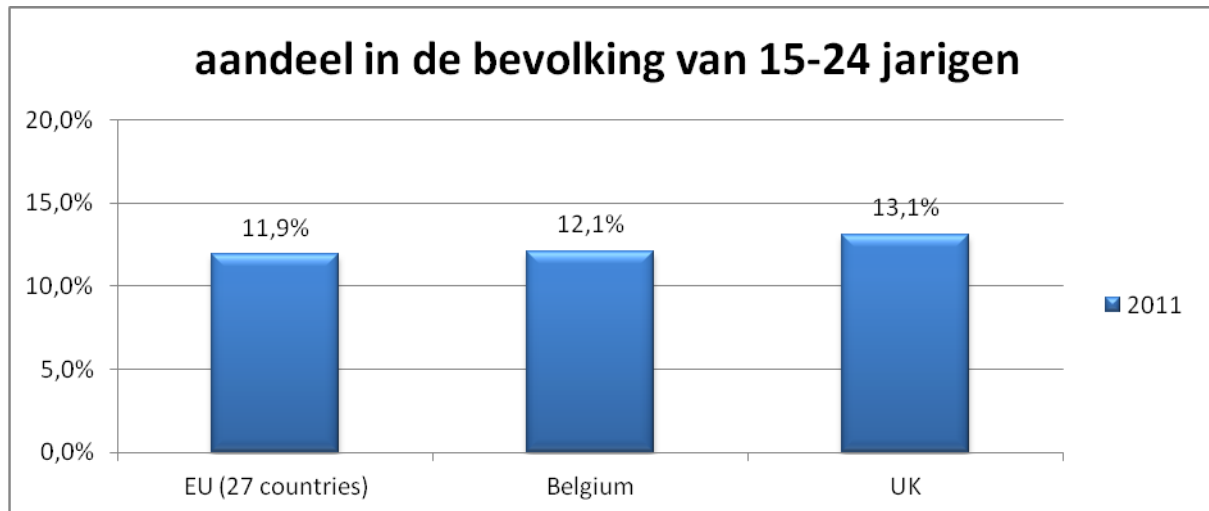
aandeel in de bevolking van 15-24 jarigen

Figure 1: percentage of persons aged 15-24 in the population. Source: Eurostat

A second interesting indicator is the number of people aged 18 receiving formal education. This indicator shows the percentage of all people aged 18 who are taking some kind of education (according to the International Standard Classification of Education, ISCED).

We can see here a very great difference between Belgium and United Kingdom. In Belgium, almost 90% of all 18-year-olds are still receiving formal education, whereas the figure in United Kingdom is less than 60%. The main explanation for this situation is obviously the difference in the compulsory education age, which in Belgium is 18 and in United Kingdom 16.

But this does reveal that within the project target group (people aged 12-25) it is necessary to take into account different compositions at the different project partners. Among the young people in the UK we will find more early school leavers, and we might also need to place different emphases.
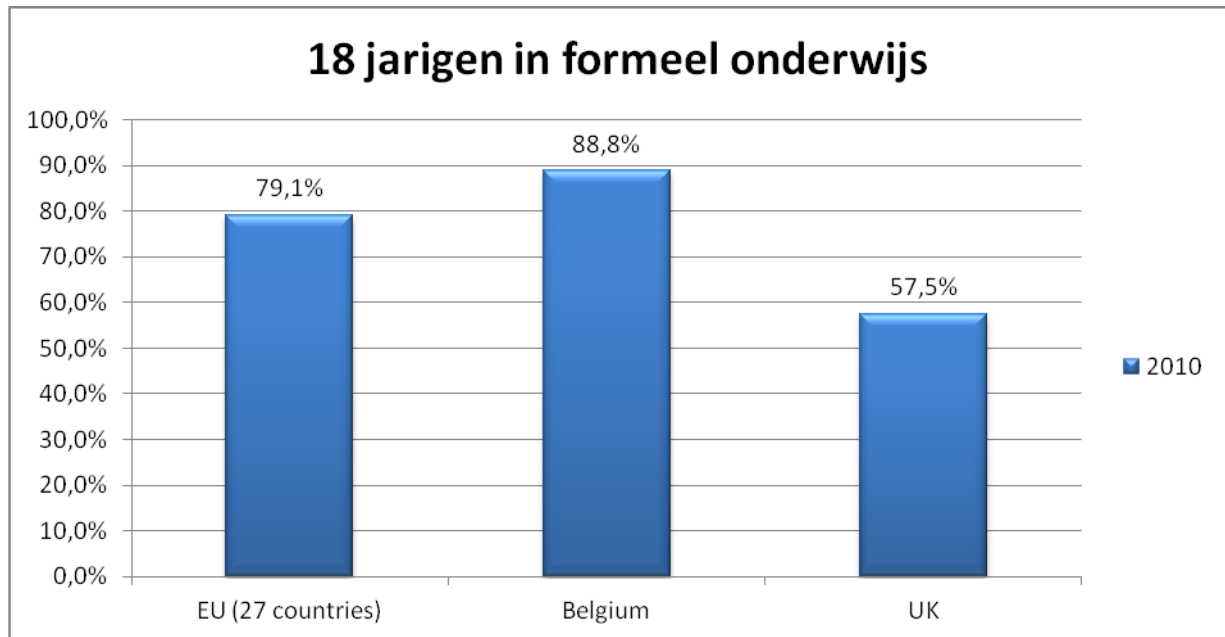
Figure 2: 18-year-olds receiving formal education. Source: Eurostat

We subsequently looked at the rate of unemployment among the target group in comparison with the total population. This indicator expresses the proportion of jobless persons within the total group available to the labour market. Jobless persons are defined as people who:

– do not have any work;

– are currently available (or will be within 2 weeks) for the labour market;

– have been actively looking for work for at least 4 weeks, or have already found work that they will start within 3 months.

Both in the United Kingdom and in Belgium, the unemployment rate among people aged 15-24 is lower than the EU average. Nevertheless, we can still see some differences between the two countries, with more than 1 out of every 5 people aged 15-24 in the United Kingdom being jobless. Relatively speaking youth unemployment is considerably greater than average unemployment among the total population.
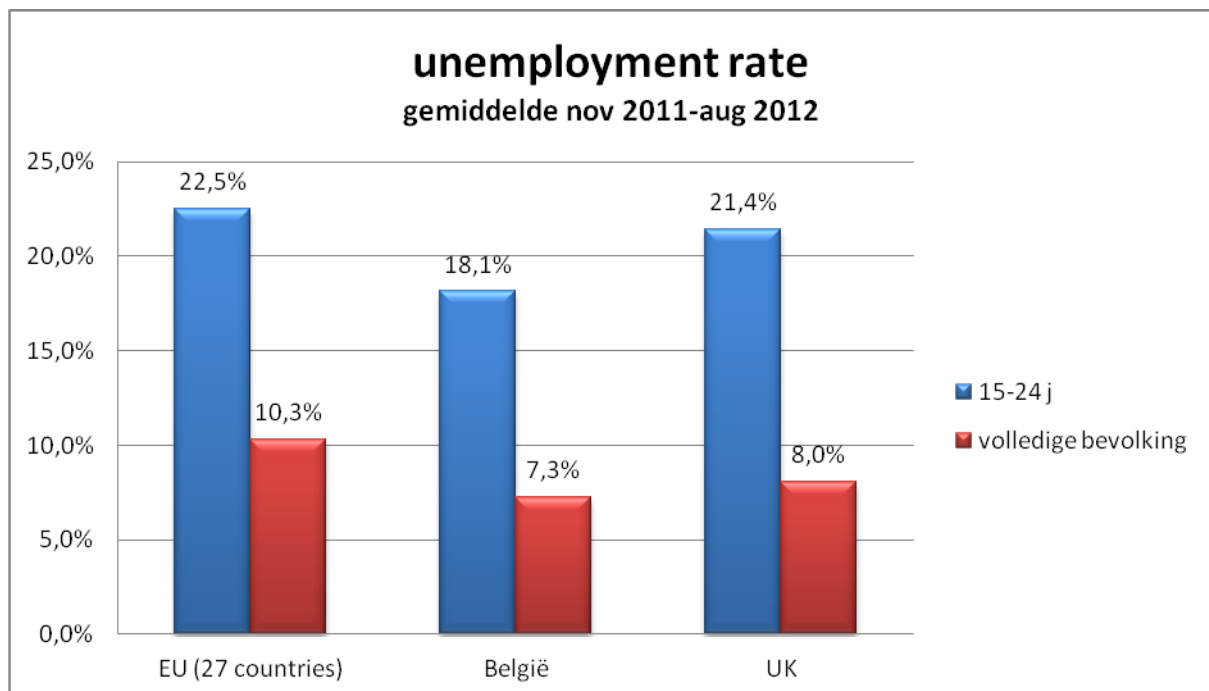

Figure 3: unemployment rate. Source: Eurostat

We also looked at risk of poverty among our target group. This indicator shows the proportion of persons with an income (or family income) below the poverty line. The poverty line has been set at 60% of the national income median. We compared the figures for the under-18s and those aged 18-24.

As regards people aged 18-24, Belgium does considerably better than the EU average; 14.4% of those aged 18-24 runs the risk of ending up in poverty. The figure is 18.3% among the under-18s.

For both of these age groups, the United Kingdom is in line with the EU average. One out of every 5 person in the UK younger than 24 is on the verge of or already in poverty.
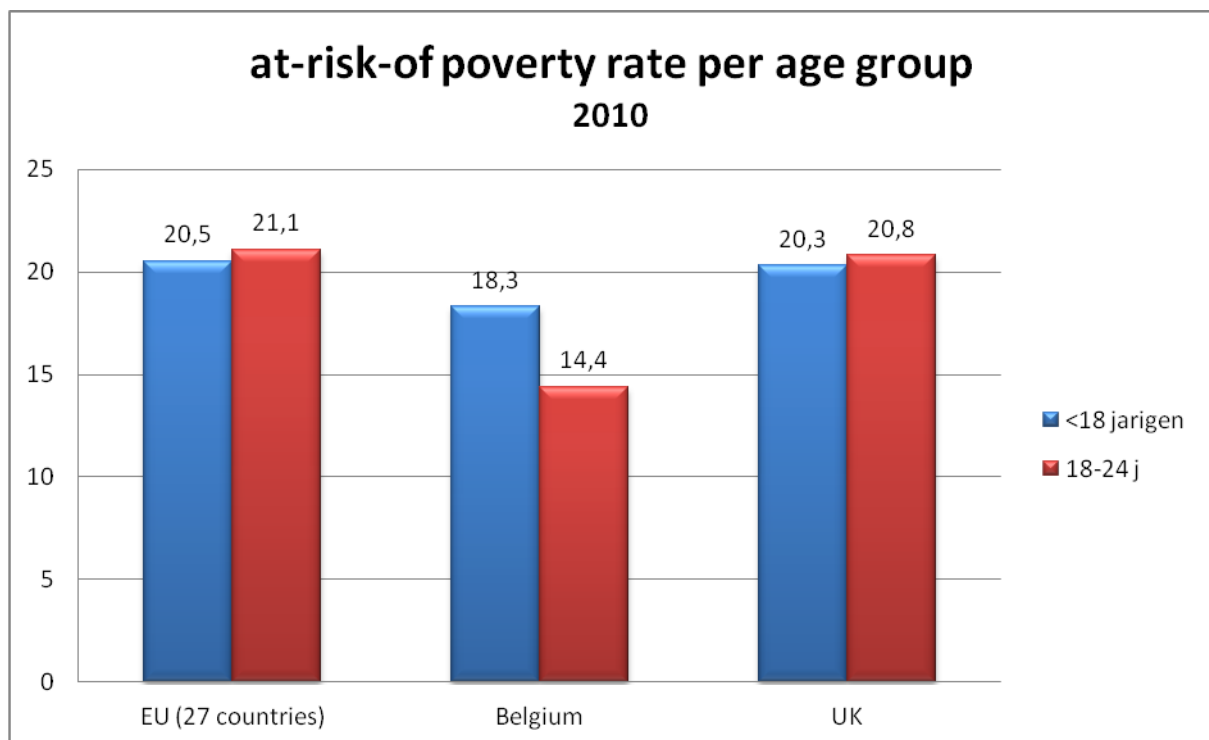

Figure 4: risk of poverty by age group. Source: Eurostat.

It goes without saying that within the project target group there are considerable social inequalities and differences. Therefore, we wish to make explicit efforts to ensure that all young people are able to participate in project activities, and that products, services and initiatives are put in place that meet the needs of all young people.

With a view to our work on media wisdom, we included a final indicator in this overview, namely the proportion of low literacy among 15-year-olds. Reading literacy addresses the proficiency of students for absorbing and using written information in realistic situations. The data comes from the PISA programme (Programme for International Student Assessment), an international standard developed by the OECD. Every three years the PISA research tests the knowledge and skills essential for fully-fledged participation in modern society.

The graph shows the proportion of 15-year-olds who in this test scored one or lower on the proficiency level. PISA defines reading proficiency as '*an individual's capacity to understanding, use and reflect on and engage with written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential and to participate in society*'. So this goes beyond purely decoding information and literal interpretation of what is written in texts. Reading proficiency emphasises the skills of the students in using written information in realistic contexts. Reading proficiency level one or lower means that students are not successful in the basic indicators for reading proficiency measured by PISA. These young people have major problems in decoding and using written information in order to develop their knowledge and capabilities.

The graph below shows the evolution of the proportion of 15-year-olds with low reading proficiency in the 3-yearly test. The figures fluctuate somewhat, and in 2003 there was no data for the United Kingdom. In 2009, the most recent figures, the percentages of 15-year-olds with low reading proficiency in Belgium and United Kingdom were very close to each other at around 18%.

When addressing and approaching the target group and developing training materials, we have to make allowance for the circumstance that almost 1 out of every 5 young people find it difficult to deal quickly with written messages!
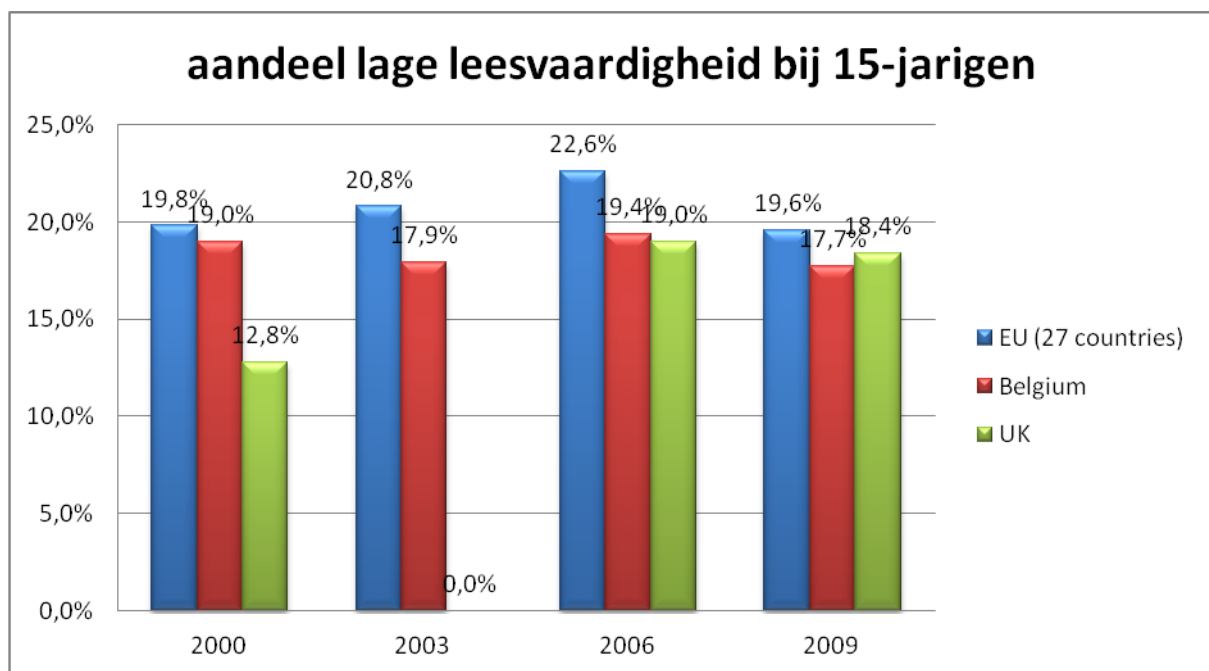

Figure 5: percentage of low reading proficiency among 15-year-olds. Source: Eurostat.

2.2 Media ownership and media usage

Today's young people have a different relationship with media than earlier generations. Dutch trend researchers Boenders and Ahlers refer to the young people born between 1992 and 2010 as 'generation Z'[6] . After the baby boomers, generation X and generation Y, they have defined a new, digital generation. It is a generation that is online anywhere, anytime and for whom social media is a necessity rather than a discovery. These young people are also called digital natives, because they were born at a time when the Internet already existed[7].

Technological advances have changed the place of media in today's society. The stream of information in imagery, audio and text is infinite, omnipresent and constant, and is penetrating our day-to-day life more and more. The same unquestionably applies to the lives of young people. There are youngsters who grow up with the media, but cannot necessarily use them better. In this chapter we look briefly at the ownership and use of media by young people, as a framework for discussing their media wisdom.

For this purpose we have used figures obtained from three sources. They are the figures from Eurostat, the statistics office of the European Union[8], for Belgium (Flanders) the research data of Apestaartjaren 4[9] and for the United Kingdom the Media Literacy Tracker of Ofcom[10].

Wherever possible we have compared the data for Belgium and the United Kingdom, but this is not always possible because different studies are concerned.

But it is clear, as evidenced by other local and international research, that young people live in a 'media rich' environment, and also use the media enthusiastically. An American study conducted in 2010 by the Kaiser Family Foundation[11] demonstrated that youngsters aged 8 to 18 spend just as much time using media as their parents spend at work (7 hours and 38 minutes). The researchers even go as far as to say that this is an underestimate; when multitasking media usage is factored in, they arrive at a time of 10 hours and 45 minutes of media usage per day.

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[6] Boenders, R.C.W. and Ahlers, J. (2011) Generatie Z. Amsterdam: Bertram + De Leeuw Uitgevers BV.

[7] Palfrey, J. and Gasser, U. (2010) Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives. New York: Basic Books.

[8] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/

[9] Apestaartjaren a two-yearly study of Jeugdwerknet and Graffiti Jeugddienst into young people and new media, focusing on ownership, usage and attitudes. www.apestaartjaren.be/node/585

[10] Ofcom is the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK's media industry. It conducts and publishes reserach into different aspects of media and media wisdom. The Media Literacy Tracker was a major survey in 2010. http://www.ofcom.org.uk/static/stats/MLAudit2010Adult.pdf

[11] Kaiser Family Foundation (2010) Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds. http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/8010.pdf

If we look at media ownership among our target group, we do indeed see some high figures. The Apestaartjaren study reveals that almost all Flemish youngsters aged between 12 and 18 have at home a television and a computer with the Internet. And almost all also have a mobile phone. Sixty percent of these young people have their own computer in their own room, and one 1 of every 3 young people have their own television set.
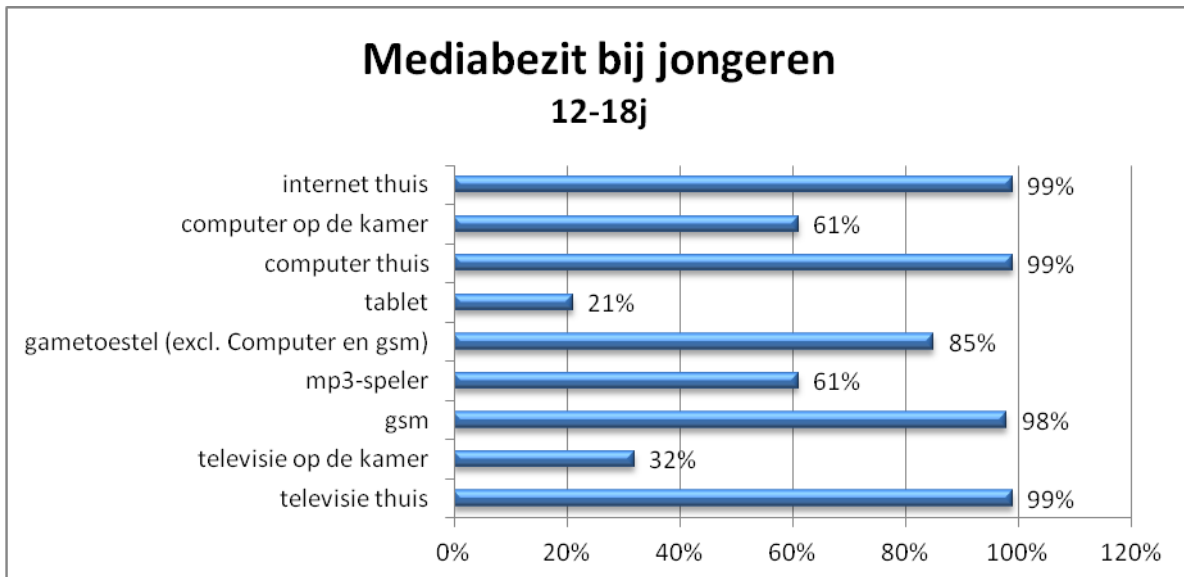
Figure 6: media ownership among 12 to 18-year-olds in Flanders. Source: Apestaartjaren 4 (2012)

We found figures in the United Kingdom about the media usage of our target group. The Media Literacy Tracker of Ofcom included an examination of which media are regularly used by people aged between 16 and 24. The mobile phone came first (94% of the target group uses it regularly), followed by the television (91%) and the Internet (80%).

Figure 7: media usage in the United Kingdom among 16 to 24-year olds. Source: Ofcom Media Literacy Tracker (2011), table 10.

The mobile phone occupies first place among media used by young people. Ninety percent of the target group owns a mobile phone (both people aged 12-18 in the Apestaartjaren study and peo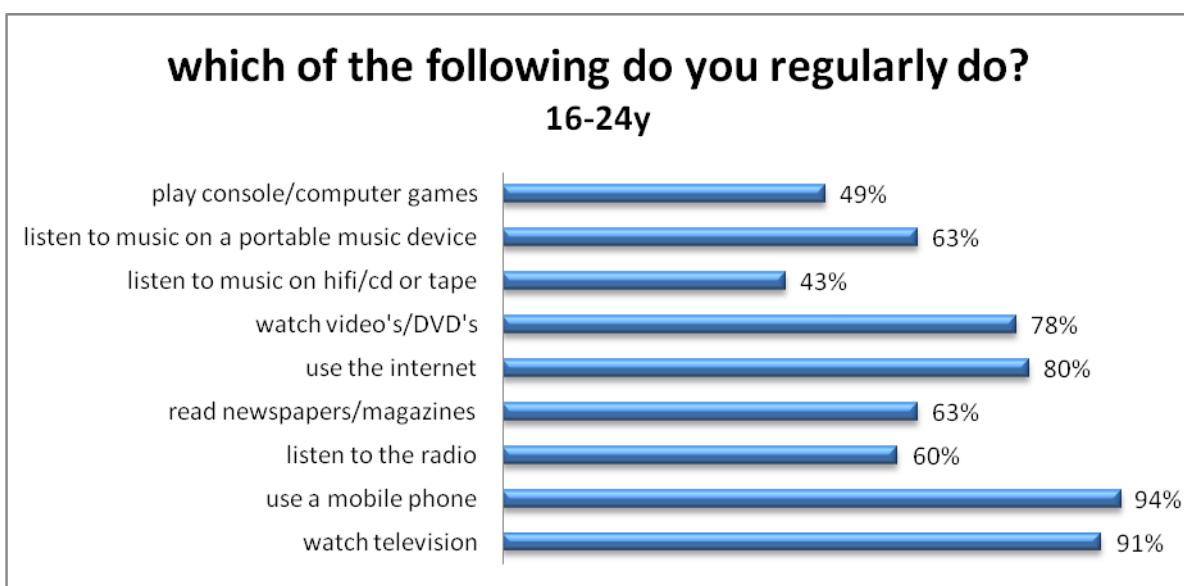ple aged 16-24 in the Ofcom study). The largest share of these is a smartphone: 80% of those aged 12-18 have one, compared with 72% of those aged 16-24.

Figure 8: mobile phone ownership. Source: Belgium (Flanders): Apestaartjaren 4 (2012), UK: Ofcom Media Literacy Tracker (2011)

Both studies also inquired about the functions of the mobile phone. The phone is used primarily for text messaging and for phone calls. People also listen to music via the mobile phone and surf the Internet (surfing + social networking). Internet usage via the mobile phone is significantly lower in Belgium than in the United Kingdom. This is due mainly to the higher prices in Belgium.
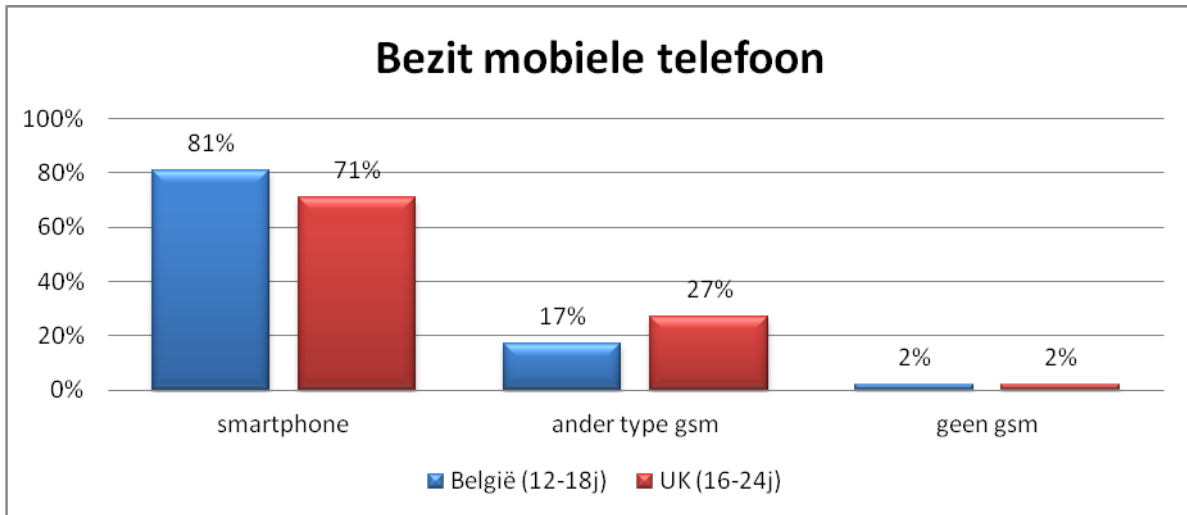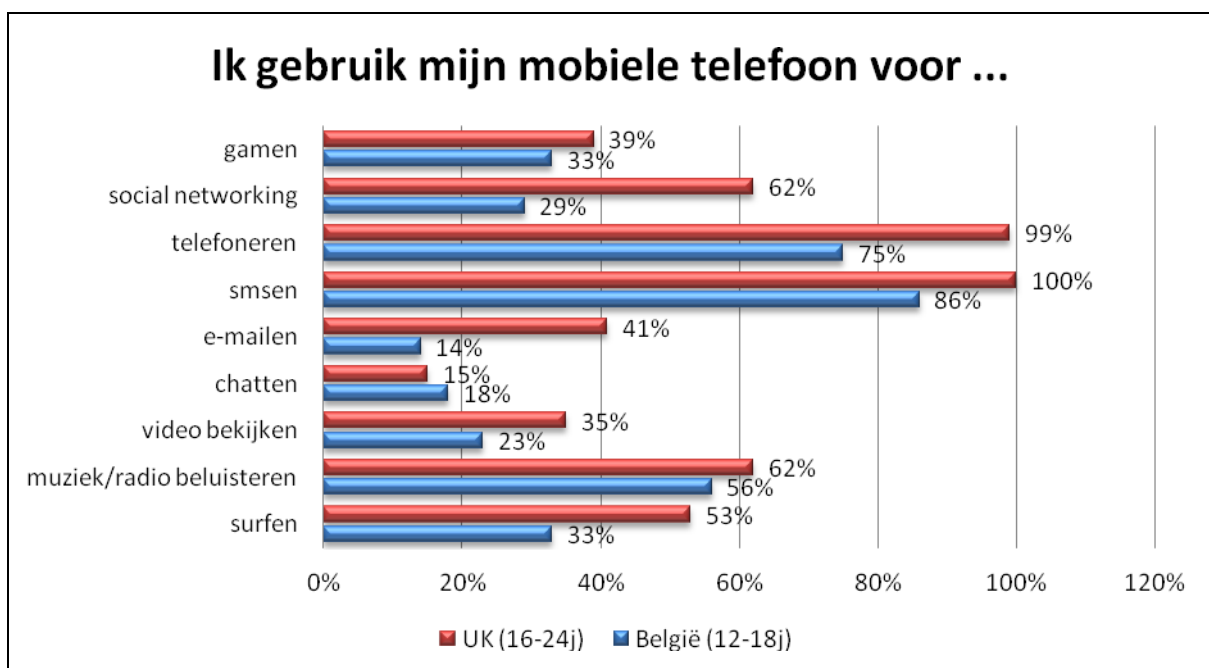

Figure 9: mobile phone usage. Source: Belgium (Flanders): Apestaartjaren 4 (2012), UK: Ofcom Media Literacy Tracker (2011)

Those aged 16-24 are heavy Internet users. The Eurostat statistics reveal that there is a difference in Internet usage depending on the level of education of the target group. Lowly educated people aged 16-24 make less use of the Internet than more highly educated people of the same age. The difference is pronounced especially in the United Kingdom.
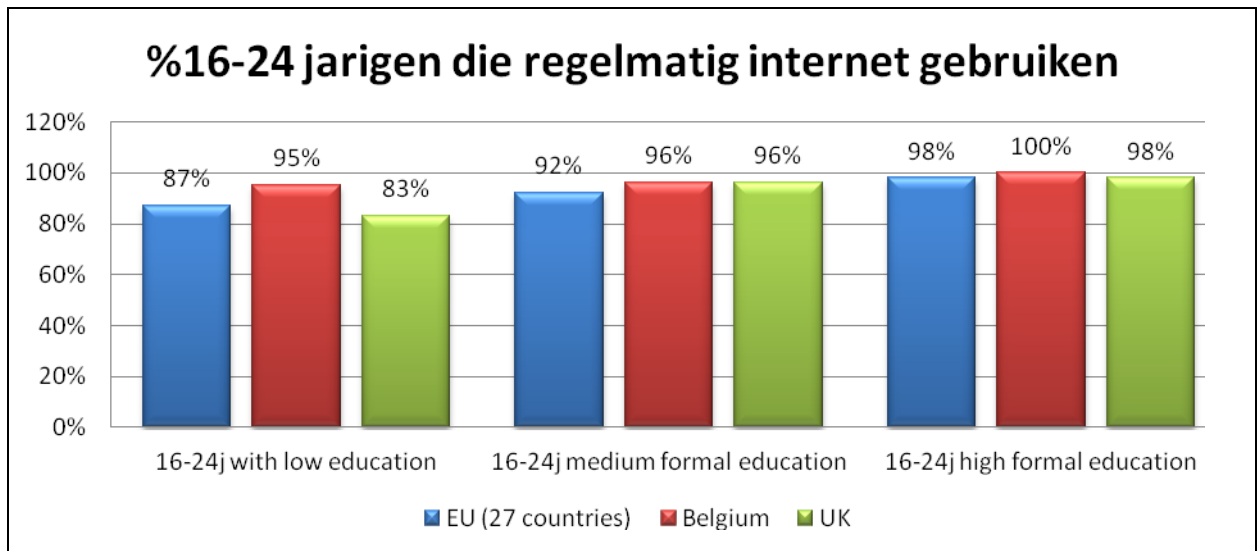
Figure 10: percentage of 16 to 24-year-olds who regularly use the Internet. Data for 2011. Source: Eurostat.
Regular use is defined as at least one hour per week within the three months prior to the study. Usage includes all places and all purposes (including professional use).

With a view to the project tasks and objectives of Villa Crossmedia (media training and production), we also examined the degree to which young people use the Internet to share self-made content. This is done in the United Kingdom by roughly half of those aged 16-24, while in Belgium the figures are slightly lower, with between 30 and 40% of the target group sharing their own content on the Internet.
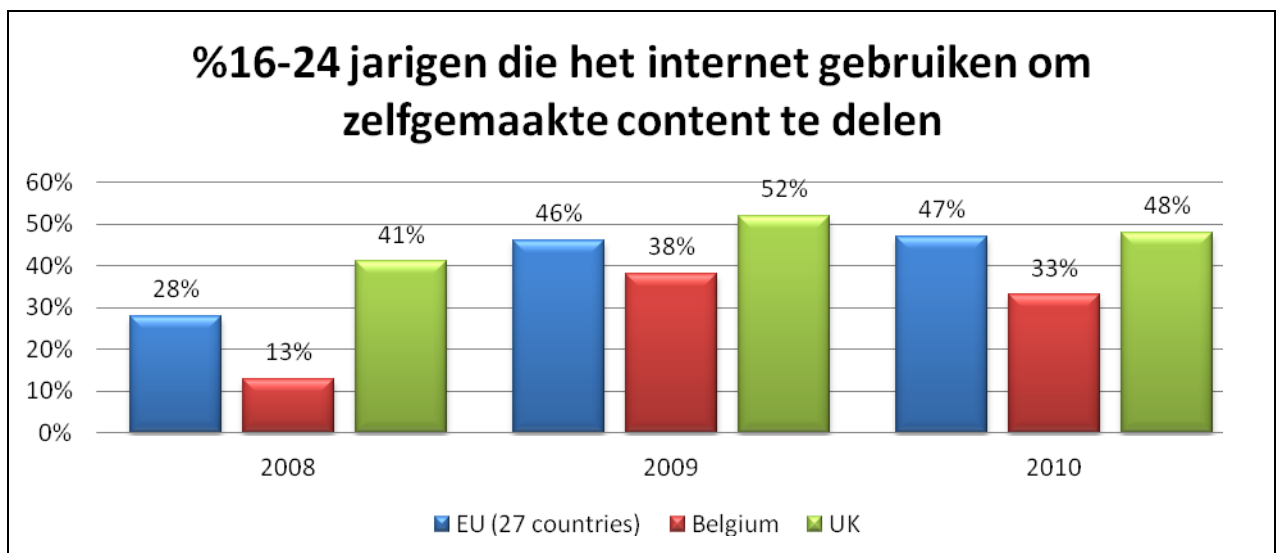

Figure 11: percentage of 16 to 24-year-olds who use the Internet to share self-made content. Source: Eurostat.
Definition: Uploading of self-made content (text, imagery, photos, video, music, etc) to a website in order to share the content with other people in the three months prior to the study.

An important place in the media usage of young people is occupied by the social network sites. Facebook, but also Netlog, Hyves, Bebo and others figure prominently in the daily life of most young Europeans. Eurostat has published figures on membership of social network sites. This indicator shows whether young people have been active on social network sites in the three months preceding the study by creating a user profile, posting messages or other contributions. This data is available for the 16-24 age bracket, but also for the 'students' profile group. The degree of participation is high, averaging in the EU 80% for those aged 16-24 and 83% for the 'students' group. In the United Kingdom, the degree of participation is even higher, but relatively speaking students say they participate less in social network sites. Belgian participation is slightly lower than average: 75% of Belgians aged 16-24 is active on social media sites, and 77% of Belgian students.

However, recent studies indicate that the participation of young Belgians on social network sites has in the meantime reached the same level as the EU average. The Apestaartjaren study shows, for example, that 80% of the surveyed young people (12-18 years old) are Facebook users.
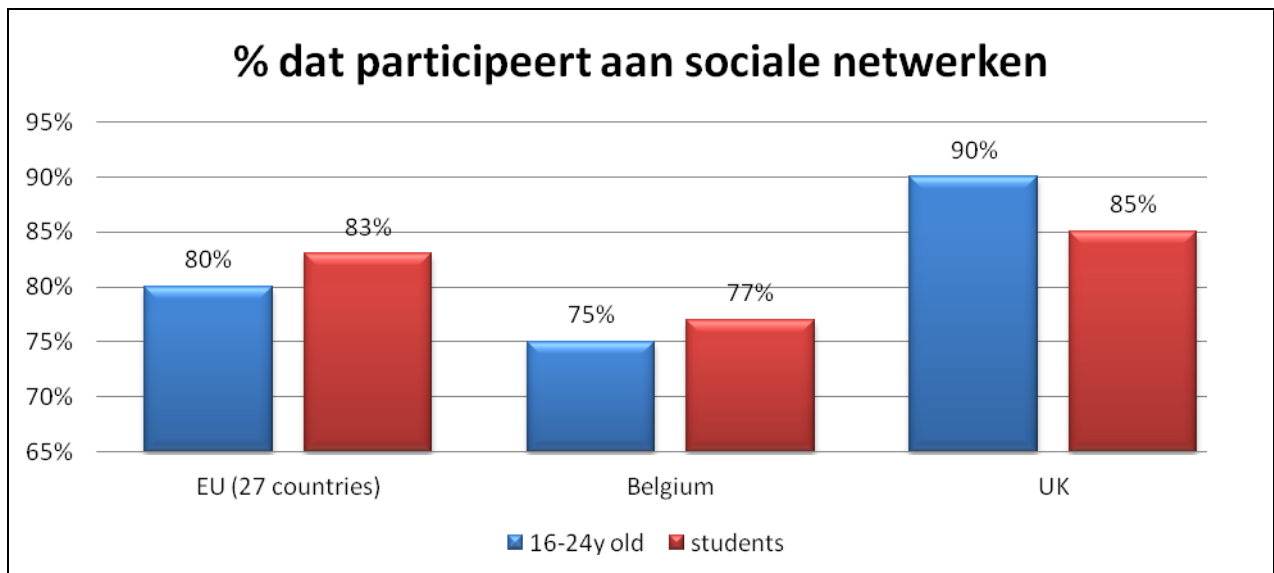

Figure 12: percentage participating in social networks. Source: Eurostat (2011)

Privacy is an important matter when participating in social network sites. Many discussions about media wisdom assert that young people have few concerns about online privacy and have no hesitation in disclosing their private details on the web. Research data shows a more qualified picture, however. The young people surveyed in the Apestaartjaren study appear to protect their profile data and information in their Facebook profile fairly well. The vast majority say they share data only with friends, and share only general data (name, gender and age) with everybody. Nevertheless, 15% have no worries about sharing their photos publicly, and quite a lot of information is also shared with friends of friends.

What information do you share in your Facebook profile? Persons aged 12-18 in Belgium (Flanders)					
	Not on it	Friends	Friends of friends	Everybody	Don't know
First name	3%	25%	10%	58%	3%
Surname	4%	26%	10%	56%	3%
Gender	5%	33%	8%	49%	3%
Date of birth	7%	45%	12%	29%	6%
Relationship status	25%	40%	10%	20%	5%
Photos	4%	58%	18%	15%	4%
Links	26%	42%	9%	13%	9%
Film clips	20%	48%	11%	13%	7%
E-mail address	36%	41%	5%	10%	6%
Home address	72%	16%	2%	4%	5%
Mobile phone number	71%	18%	2%	3%	4%

Figure 13: What information do you share in your Facebook profile? Source: Apestaartjaren 4.

In the Ofcom Media Literacy Study, a similar question was put to the respondents. The results were similar: the vast majority of those aged 16-24 share their information only with friends. Here again, we see that one-quarter of these young people also share their details with friends of friends, while more than 10% share their information and photographs with everybody on the Internet.

What information do you share in your social network profile? Persons aged 16-24 in the United Kingdom					
	Not on it	Friends	Friends of friends	Everybody	Don't know
Personal information (such as relationship status, date of birth, and place of residence)	2%	64%	23%	11%	0%

Photos	0%	62%	28%	10%	0%
Contact details (such as e-mail address, home address and phone number)	19%	60%	17%	4%	0%

Figure 14: What information do you share in your social network profile? Source: Ofcom Media Literacy Tracker (2011)

3. Media wisdom

3.1 What is media wisdom?

Anybody who embarks on a literature study quickly discovers that media wisdom is an umbrella term that covers many things. What's more, there are also many different umbrellas, with just as many different things under them. They are often used simultaneously add interchangeably.

Documents have been published about media wisdom, media literacy, digital literacy, information literacy, new literacy and media education. These terms are often used as synonyms, but they are not.

Media wisdom and media literacy are terms that refer to the knowledge and skill that ordinary people need in order to use media in the modern information society. Katia Segers, chair of the Flemish Media Regulator, defined media literacy as *'The ability to use meaningfully the omnipresent media in three fields: finding media, understanding media and making media. We understand the first of these to be the skill to find the signposts in our information society for which there is no manual. Understanding media is helpful in using media critically: how do they function, what effect do they have on us and what do they have to offer us? Making media means that all skills that enable us actively to help build media and disseminate information and to use the media for our self-expression'* [12]. According to the European Commission, media literacy is about *'The ability to access the media, to understand and critically evaluate different aspects of the media and media content and to create communications in a variety of contexts*.' [13]

The definitions of media wisdom are closely aligned to these meanings. The Dutch Council for Culture defined media wisdom in 2005 as *'The entirety of knowledge, skills and mentality enabling citizens to move consciously, critically and actively in a complex, changeable and fundamentally medialised world*'[14]. According to the Council for Culture, media wisdom is all about three important activities (which concern all citizens, not just children)[15].

- functioning – media wisdom is necessary to function optimally in contemporary society;
- participating – media wisdom is necessary to participate properly in mainstream society;
- producing - media wisdom is necessary because the new media (especially the Internet) invite non-professionals to produce (and publish) content.

Children, young people and adults therefore need to be made media-wise to ensure that when using

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[12] SEGERS, K. Media zonder handleiding. Opinion item published in De Standaard, 13 January 2010.

[13] Recommendation by the European Commission concerning media literacy in the digital environment for a more competitive audiovisual and content industry in an inclusive kknowledge society. 20 August 2009.

[14] Mediawijsheid. De ontwikkeling van nieuw burgerschap. Dutch Council for Culture, 12 July 2005, to be found on www.rijksoverheid.nl.

[15] Zwanenberg, F. and Pardoen, J. (2010) Handboek Mediawijsheid op School. Hoe worden kinderen mediawijs? Praktische gids en inspiratie voor het onderwijs. Stichting Mijn Kind Online, p. 10.

media they are able to express themselves and can take part in society. Media wisdom according to this definition has a lot to do with participation.

Media wisdom and media literacy are obviously broad terms that embrace multiple fields and issues - everything from technological skills to cyber bullying and from resistance to advertising to online privacy.

On top of this there are also numerous different target groups. Media wisdom is relevant to everybody in modern society. An awful lot of studies and initiatives concentrate on specific target groups like children, young people, students, senior citizens, vulnerable target groups, trainers, teachers and library personnel.

So we are confronted by a whole load of names, definitions, embodiments and target groups. This makes it important for us to demarcate terms at the outset of our project. Which name will we choose, how will we define and flesh out media wisdom, and who fall into our target group?

We have chosen to use 'media wisdom' for our work in Villa Crossmedia. We decided against terms like media upbringing, media education and digital literacy. We consciously want to work in a way centred on the entire spectrum of functioning, participating and producing. The term used in English is media literacy. Media wisdom is not used in English-speaking countries. Media literacy is the generally accepted counterpart of media wisdom in those countries.

To encompass as much as possible we have adopted a broadly-based definition of media wisdom. We use the definition contained in the common policy memorandum of Flemish Media Minister Ingrid Lieten and Education Minister Pascal Smet: *'Media* wisdom *is the entirety of knowledge, skills and attitudes that we need to move consciously and critically in a complex, changing and medialised world. It is the ability to use media actively and creatively focused on social participation'* [16].

Our target group has been defined in the project plan of Villa Crossmedia: the project is intended for people aged between 12 and 25. Primarily we will reach young people in the partner cities (Mechelen, Bruges and Ipswich), but by providing access to the research results, methodology and concrete training packages we want to make a broader impact.

Therefore, our objective in Villa Crossmedia is to make all young people (**12-25**) **mediawise** by teaching them how to use media **consciously, critically and actively**.

We are focusing on:

- familiarising young people with media by making media

- imparting technical skills and an insight into content

- making young people aware of their own responsibilities and those of others

- devoting attention to rights and obligations

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[16] http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/nieuws/2012/0510-mediawijsheid.htm

3.2 Media wisdom as a matter of policy

Media wisdom occurs at an interface between different policy domains such as media, culture, youth and ICT. This makes it difficult to list all relevant policy lines and initiatives.

There is considerable attention at European level to media wisdom as a policy theme. The European Commission emphasised the importance of media wisdom in its Recommendation of 20 August 2009 [17]. The Recommendation formulates a number of objectives for the member states and media industry. The Audiovisual Media Services Directive[18], the regulatory framework for the audiovisual industry, contains a number of recommendations concerning media wisdom, and a study provided the basis for setting criteria for measuring media wisdom[19].

In Belgium the federal government's policy is mainly to close the digital gap. The other aspects of media wisdom fall into the Community domain and thus form part of the Flemish government's policy initiatives. In a policy memorandum entitled Media 2009-2014, the government devotes attention specifically to policy on media wisdom. The policy is aimed at ensuring that all media users have sufficient information skills, technical skills and strategic skills and at stimulating responsible and safe use of media. The policy memorandum also states that a central media wisdom knowledge centre will be established in Flanders to promote the building and dissemination of knowledge and to harmonise the different initiatives that exist. In other words, an attempt is being made to bring about greater cooperation and consultation in the Flemish media wisdom field. For its part Villa Crossmedia wants to join this effort, by disseminating and discussing our research results at study days and workshops, and providing and permanently evaluating the training packages and methods that are worked out.

In the United Kingdom media wisdom has been a subject of research and policy longer than it has in the Dutch speaking countries. The 'National Curriculum' developed in the UK back in 1990 already contained a small number of requirements for media education as a part of English lessons. Ofcom, the UK media regulator, was assigned under the Media Act 2003 an obligation to establish working methods for media wisdom[20]. Ofcom conducts research into different aspects of media wisdom, publishes articles on the subject and makes policy recommendations. Within Villa Crossmedia, we will work at youth media centres as part of youth work/social work. This was a conscious choice, because in this way we want to:

- help eliminate inequalities in the opportunities, experience, knowledge and skills that young people need as media users in the 21st century;
- make young people aware of ways in which media influence opinions;
- prepare young people for their role as an active media user.

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[17] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:227:0009:0012:EN:PDF
[18] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:EN:PDF

[19] http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-content/media-literacy/studies/eavi_study_assess_crit_media_lit_levels_europe_finrep.pdf

[20] http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/media-literacy/

We want to work on media wisdom to make young people more resilient in modern society. But by working on the subject of media we also want to impart to young people social and technical skills that they can use in their work or study. We want to facilitate them and give them the experience that will raise their self-confidence and ambitions. Villa Crossmedia wants to give young people opportunities, chances and their own voice!

3.3. Media wisdom competences

Setting down definitions and project objectives is one thing, but measuring the actual success of working on media wisdom is something else. At an early stage of this project, we asked ourselves how we could measure and evaluate the success of our work on media wisdom. What must young people know and be able to do in order to call themselves media-wise?

In Dutch literature we found two instruments for measuring media wisdom competences. The first is the categorisation of media wisdom by the Mijn Kind Online (My Child Online) Foundation in their 'Media Wisdom Handbook'[21]. In this practical guide published for educational purposes, media wisdom has been placed into four fundamental aspects, which together cover the entire field:

- Technology: the command of technical skills (computers) necessary to produce your own media productions and participate in social networks.

- Creativity: the use of media for artistic expression and creative usage of media for participation and innovation.

- Analysis: knowledge of the working and influence of media in general, and the ability to interpret media messages.

- Reflection: being aware of your own attitude and behaviour in relation to other people via media, but also the value of civil rights like privacy and freedom of speech, and moral questions like online respect and tolerance.

We found a second usable classification in the competence framework of mediawijzer.net, which was elaborated in a study entitled Measuring Media Wisdom[22]. This is again based on four clusters of competences:

- Usage: technical use and operation of media hardware.

- Critical understanding: the critical analysis and evaluation of media content and your own media behaviour (including making your own media content and insight into its consequences) and un-

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[21] http://mijnkindonline.nl/publicaties/boeken/handboek-mediawijsheid
[22] www.mediawijzer.net/projects/het-meten-van-mediawijsheid-de-ontwikkeling-van-een-raamwerk-en-meetmiddelen

derstanding the role of media as an institute in the community at large and your own life.

- Communication: active, creative and social media usage.

- Strategy: general choices of media usage, understanding which medium is best suited to which particular function, self-knowledge.

These are clear and qualified classifications, set down with a view to developing an instrument for measuring media wisdom. For our project, however, we need a less 'finely meshed' classification. We want to formulate clear objectives and establish an effect measurement, but the designing of a detailed measurement instrument is not one of the tasks of the project.

Based on the above competence models and our initial research results and experience, we therefore produced our own classification/clustering of important media competences that we wish to address in the project.

- Technology/usage

  - Imparting the technical skills necessary in order to make and use media.

  - Imparting the skills necessary for knowledge and use of settings (such as privacy settings), rights, disclaimers, etc. To assure safe and responsible use of media.

- Creation/communication

  - Showing young people to how express themselves via media: teaching them how to tell a story and express an opinion using media.

  - Showing young people how to get across a message: teaching them the best way and best medium for conveying a message.

- Analysis/critical understanding/reflection

  - Providing an insight into roles and responsibilities (yours and those of others) that accompany the making, sharing and disseminating of media content

  - Providing an insight and critical awareness: showing how media function and teaching young people to adopt a critical stance towards media contents, media carriers and media senders.

We will use this classification of competences as a framework for reporting on research data, and for designing the training packages.

4. Focus group results

4.1. Approach

We organised focus group sessions at the different partner locations to find out more about the media wisdom of young people and to identify their specific problems, wishes and expectations. The project partners were responsible for recruiting the young people, according to criteria laid down in the project plan. This approach guaranteed a distribution in terms of place of residence, age, gender, background and media experience of the respondents. All interviews were conducted by the same moderator, based on a fixed guideline for the talks.

A focus group session is not a structured interview. The prepared scenario was used as a guideline, but the way the discussion evolved was determined by the contributions made by the participants. Not all subjects were discussed in all groups in the same way, in the same sequence or with the same degree of depth. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

A total of eight focus group sessions were held between December 2011 and May 2012:

Plymouth			
Torpoint Community College	14/12/2011, 9:15	11-14 years old	8 participants
Torpoint Community College	14/12/2011, 11:15	15-17 years old	7 participants
Plymouth City College	14/12/2011, 14:00	16-18 years old	6 participants
Ipswich			
CSV Media Clubhouse	17/4/2012, 13:40	15-18 years old	14 participants
CSV Media Clubhouse	17/4/2012, 15:30	19-26 years old	6 participants
Mechelen			
Youth Centre Metteko	18/4/2012, 16:00	12-15 years old	9 participants
Youth Centre Metteko	18/4/2012, 19:30	21-25 years old	10 participants
Bruges			
Villabota	23/5/2012, 19:15	19-26 years old	7 participants

During the focus group sessions we discussed with the young people the function and the importance of media in their personal life and the related opportunities and hazards, and we

addressed their specific expectations concerning local and international embodiments of Villa Crossmedia. In the chapters that follow, we will provide a thematic overview of the principal findings.

4.2. Media usage and media wisdom

At the focus group sessions the young people were asked what the word 'media' conjured up in their minds: what is the first thing they think of when they hear the word 'media'?

The most frequently given answers are shown in the graph below. Computer/Internet and newspapers were mentioned in 7 of the 8 focus groups. Radio and television came second, in both instances being mentioned in 6 of the 8 focus groups in the association exercise. In third place came music and magazines/publications, which were mentioned in 5 of the 8 focus groups. Mobile phone/smartphone was mentioned only by the youngest respondents.

This means that young people associate media principally with computer/Internet and with the 'classical' channels of radio, television, newspapers and magazines. They also mentioned media carriers. The only regularly mentioned content was music.

Other matters that came up but only once were CDs, video recorders, study subject, books, plays, cartoons, poems, games, consoles, journalism, photography, blogs, entertainment, marketing, research, information, having a say/giving an opinion, showbiz and TV news.
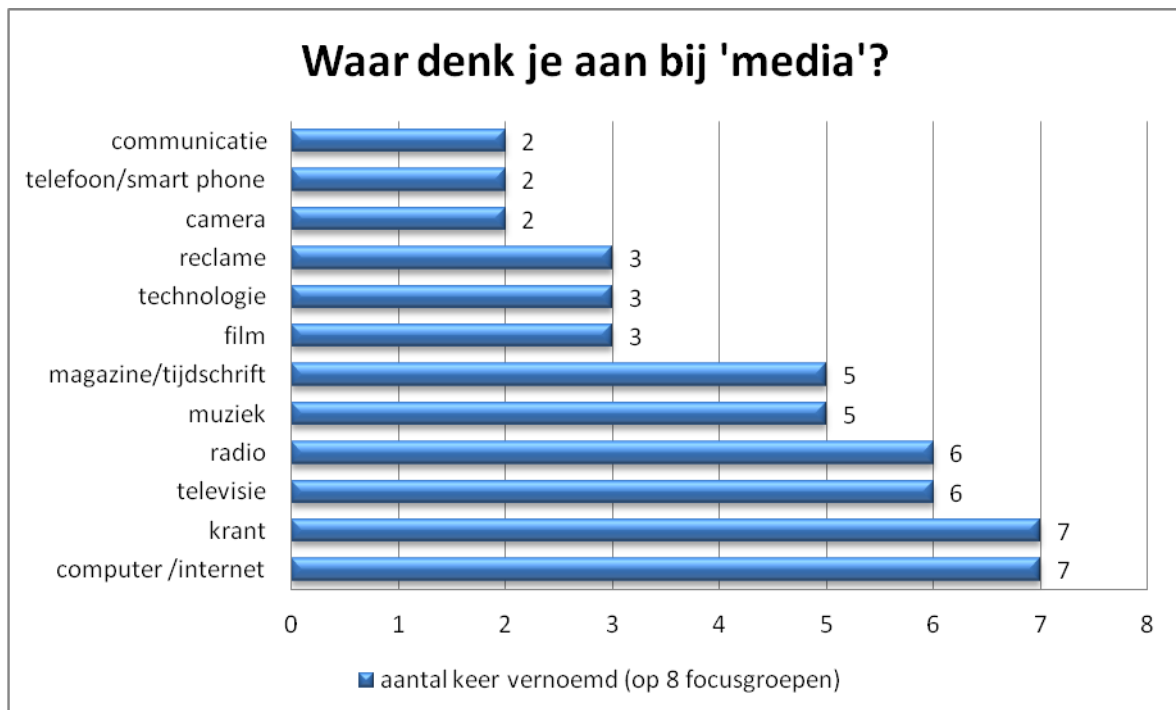

Figure 15: 'What do you think of when you hear the word media? Most frequently given answers. Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups.

If we examine which answers were top of mind, we get a slightly different picture. The graph below shows how frequently a term was mentioned among the first three answers, and thus reveals what the first associations are that young people make when they hear the word 'media'.

'Newspaper' and 'television' are the two associations most frequently made instantly; in 5 of the 8 focus groups they occurred among the first three 3 answers. 'Music' was also often immediately associated with media (4x among the first three answers). Computer/Internet, the most frequently made association, occurred among the first three answers only in 2 of the 8 focus groups.
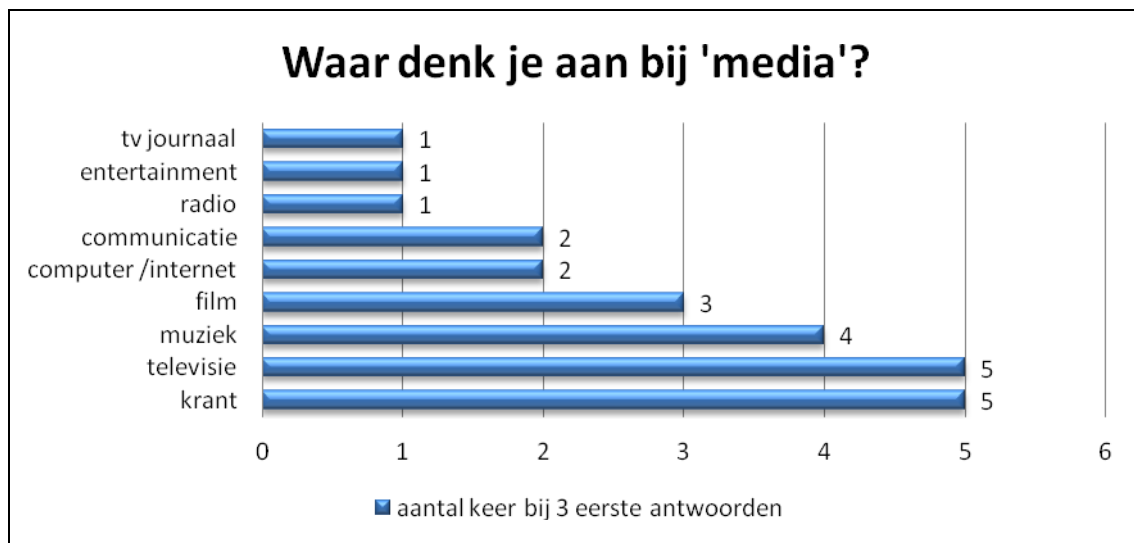
Figure 16: 'What do you think of when you hear the word media? Number of times mentioned in first three answers'. Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups

It is abundantly clear that computer/Internet is the most important medium for the surveyed young people. Based on their own list of associations, we asked them which medium they would choose if they were able to keep only one. The vast majority chose computer/Internet. They said this choice was mainly due to the multifunctional nature of the computer, which has the potential to replace all other media/media carriers.
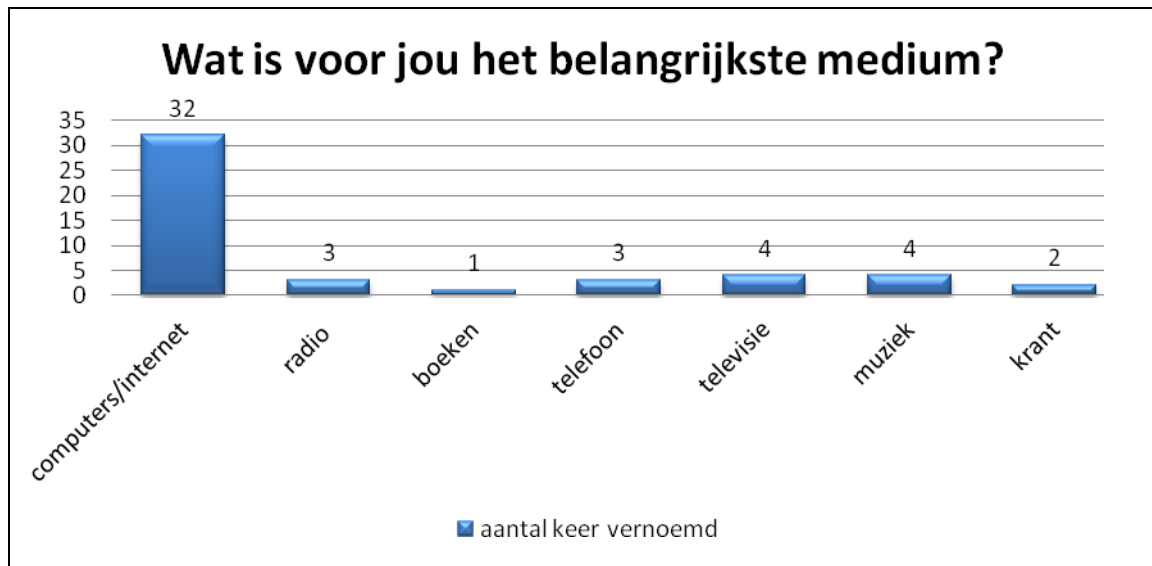
Figure 17: 'What is the most important medium to you' Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups

The choice was less pronounced when the question was reversed. Asked which 'media' on their list they could do without, they mentioned mainly 'newspapers', 'magazines' and 'television'. A number of respondents also mentioned Facebook.

If Facebook didn't exist I wouldn't miss it. You can't do without it now because it's there, but I don't think I would mind had it not been there. (21-25 years old).
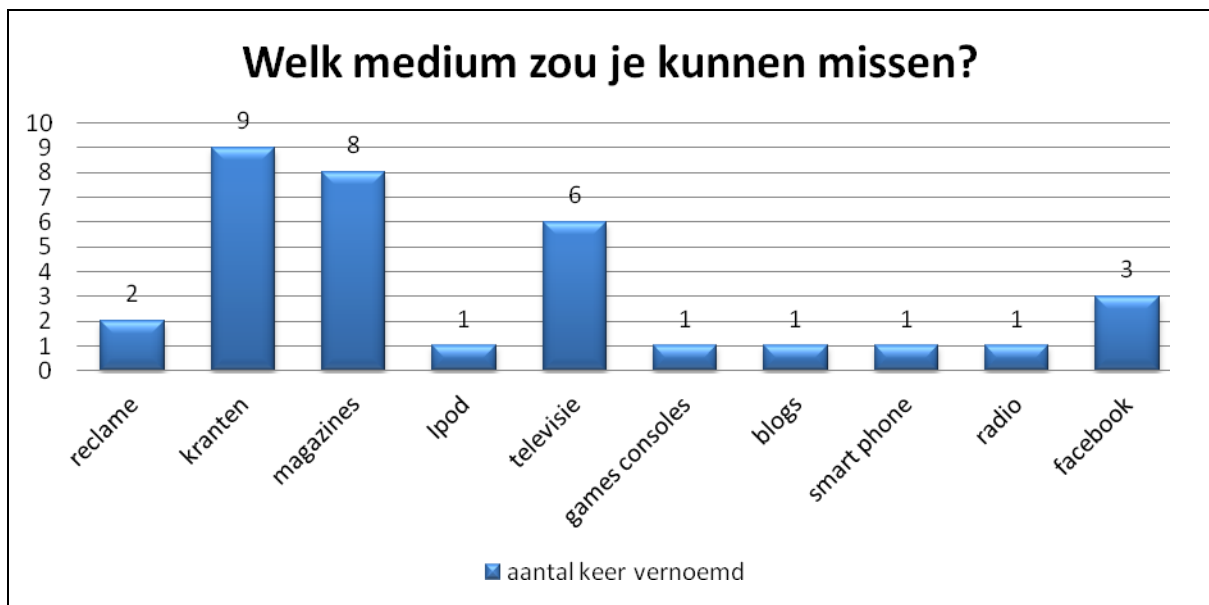
Figure 18: 'Which medium could you do without?' Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups

The medium that young people link most to 'pleasure' is the computer. Game consoles and television are also associated with pleasure.

X-box or TV are the most fun. They are made to entertain. (16-18y)
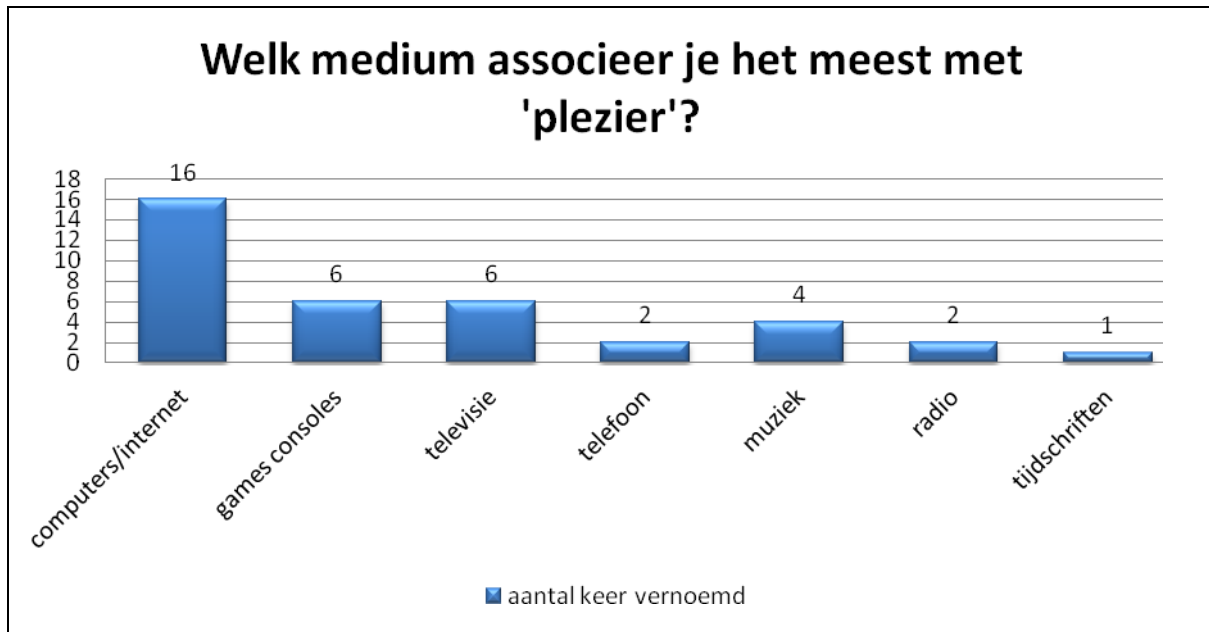
Figure 19: 'Which medium do you associate most with 'pleasure'? Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups

We also asked the young people which medium they linked most to the term 'boring'. The main answer was the newspaper. They refer to newspapers as being 'for adults' and as an outdated medium, because the Internet keeps you informed of the news much faster.

> *I immediately think of newspapers. Personally I don't find newspapers boring to read, but the general impression is that newspapers are boring. Newspapers quickly become outdated. Half an hour after you read the paper there is already new news. And you want to be kept informed of the latest news. (19-26 years old).*
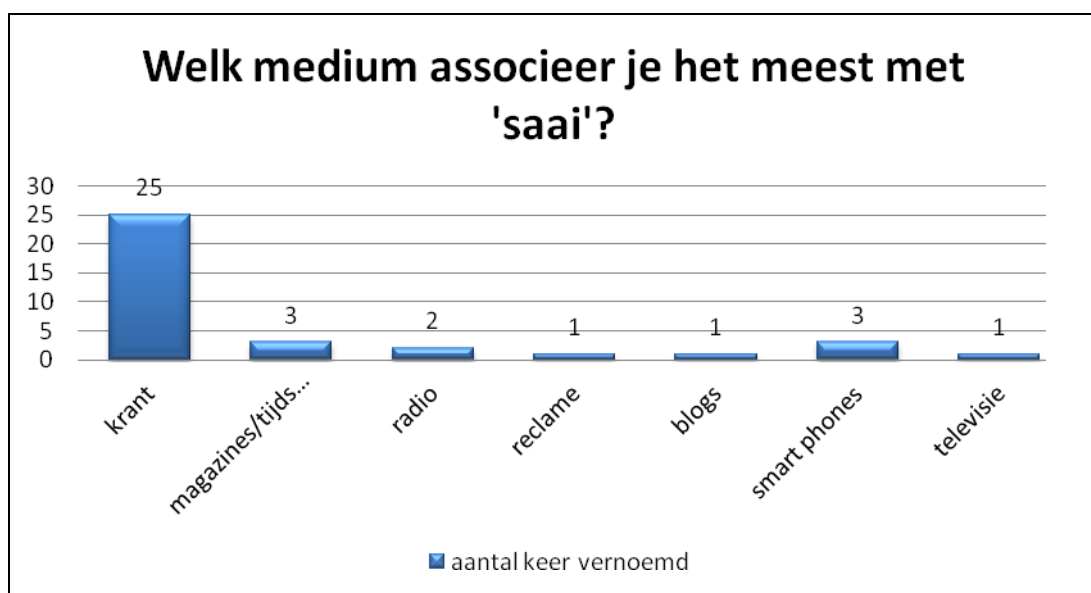
Figure 20: Which medium do you associate most with 'boring'? Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups

Although newspapers might be boring in the view of young people, they are regarded as a 'safe' medium. They explain this opinion by the editorial checks, the fact that no interaction is possible and because as a reader you cannot be confronted by unsuitable content.
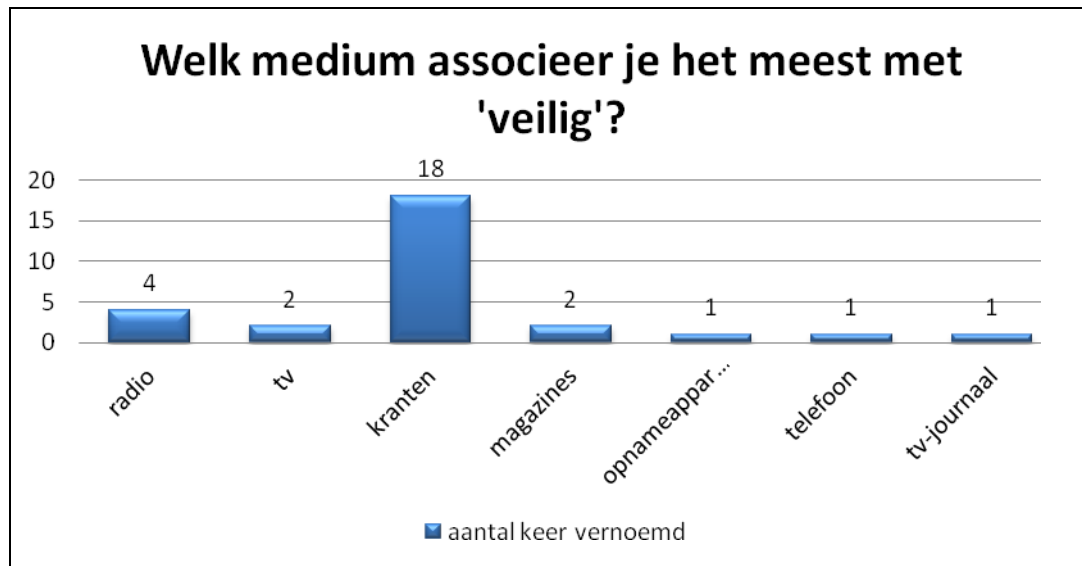
Figure 21: Which medium do you associate most with 'safe'? Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups

The medium associated with the least safety is the Internet. This is because there are no guarantees about the accuracy of information, because false identities can be assumed on the Internet, because of viruses and hackers, and because of the presence of offensive and unsuitable websites and content.

> *On the Internet you never know who's there, everybody can make out that they are somebody else. (12-15 years old).*

> *Anybody can put anything on to the Internet. If somebody says on the Internet that King Albert has died, there will be enough people who believe it and the story will immediately start to circulate (19-26 years old).*

> *In my opinion nothing is completely safe, because you could hack anything fairly easily. (11-14 years old)*

Welk medium associeer je het minst met 'veilig'?
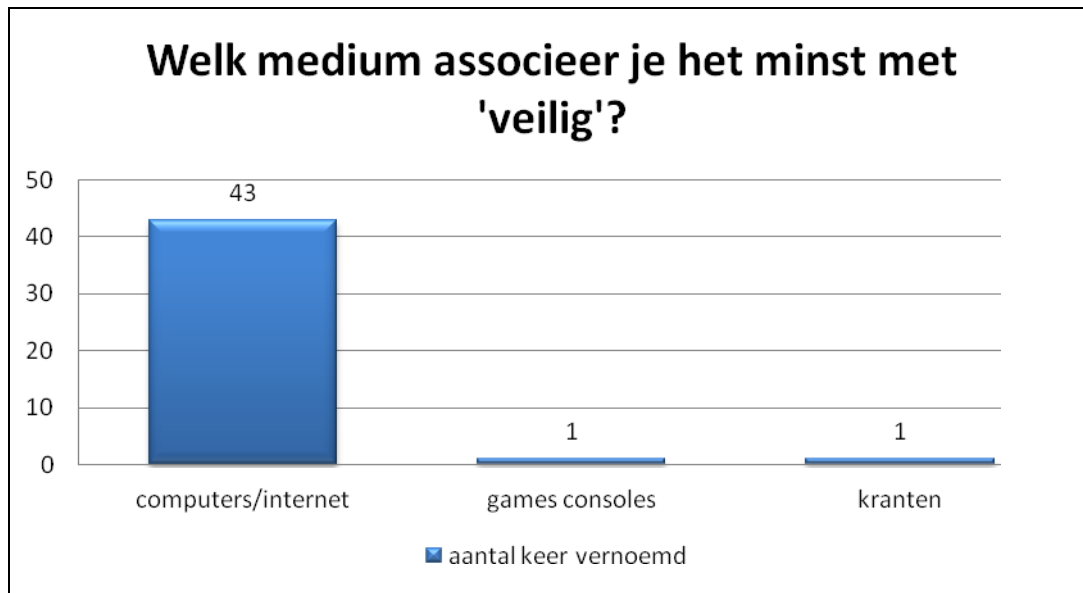
Figure 22: Which medium do you associate least with 'safe'? Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups

Finally, we asked, also with a view to the self-creation of media in the project, which medium the young people associated most with creativity.

There was no pronounced 'winner', but the largest consensus concerned 'computers', 'game consoles', 'radio' and 'television'.

> I would say game consoles are the most creative, because in games you can create anything you want, you can be as creative as you want. You can create anything you like. (11-14 years old)

> Computer/ internet is the most creative: you can watch and listen to stuff, but you can also create. (15-18 years old)

> I think radio is the most creative. You can't hide behind anything, because there is just your voice and the microphone, that's all you have. That requires the most creativity; radio lets you be the most creative with the fewest means at your disposal. (19-26 years old).
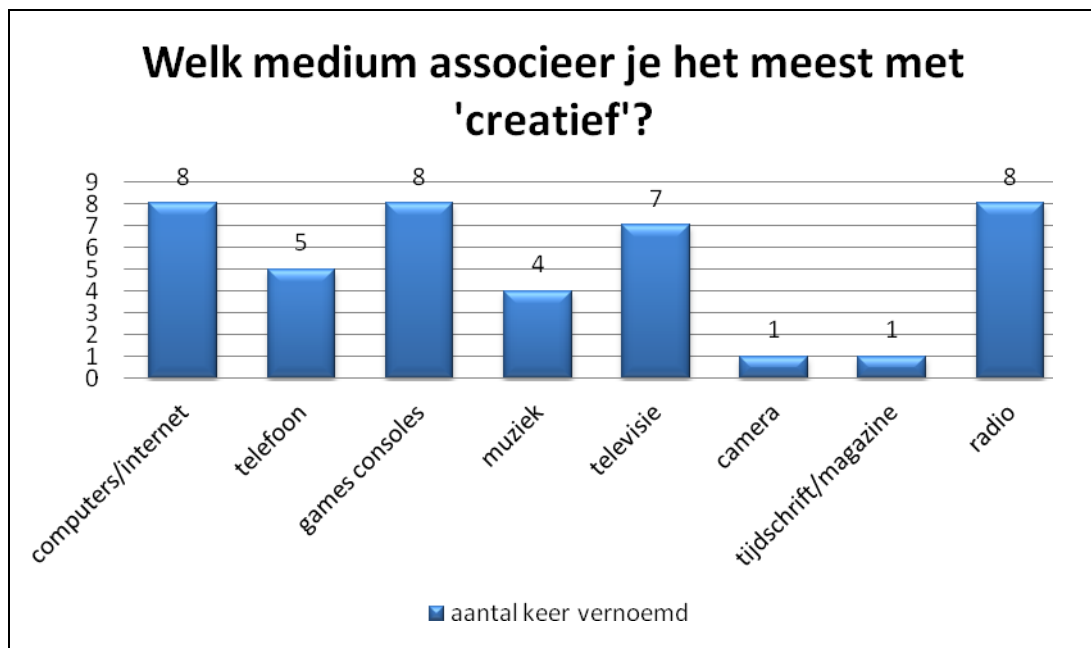
Figure 23: Which medium do you associate most with 'creative'? Source: Villa Crossmedia focus groups

Media wisdom was another subject discussed extensively by the focus groups. It is clear that because of their upbringing, school or personal experience young people are highly aware of matters requiring attention and the hazards involved in media usage.

Primarily it is about the risks attached to the Internet. We saw earlier that young people regard the computer/Internet as the least safe medium. They mention Internet fraud, false identities, privacy

and similar matters. There are very frequent references to the dangers of the Internet for vulnerable target groups like children, young girls and older people. Most respondents regarded the Internet as potentially dangerous for everybody except themselves and their peers. The surveyed young people were fairly certain that they personally possessed sufficient insight and skills to arm themselves against those dangers.

> *Older people are often frauded on the internet and younger people are groomed on the internet, so there's always some specific danger, some ways that bad people can get to you. But it is often made into a bigger subject then it actually is. (15-17j)*

In the context of safe/unsafe Internet there are also frequent references to the role of parents: media (including social media) are an integral part of the life of young people, and parents need to learn how to deal with this situation.

> *Parents must trust their children. If you bring up your children properly they won't have any problems on the Internet. You just have to bring up your children properly and teach them good values. If you have to check up on your children, it means that something is not right. (12-15 years old).*

> *There is information about safety on the internet, and I suppose parents check with their kids whether they have a password and don't befriend 'strange men', but I don't know if they really check what's going on. I think parents should be educated better and deeper about what's going on on the internet. (19-26 years old)*

Another frequently addressed subject was social pressure. This concerns not only pressure to possess the latest devices and gadgets, but also pressure to have an interesting profile on social media. Particularly the oldest respondents (21+) have a love-hate relationship with Facebook: while they have a profile on it, they grapple with matters like privacy, commercial aspects, the pressure to accept or reject friend requests and so on

> *Young people sacrifice their safety to be liked, to be in with the crowd. (19-26 years old)*

> *Facebook is too crammed up. There is too much information, there is too much going on. Everything people are thinking is there. And other people start commenting on it. (15-18 years old)*

Other frequently mentioned subjects included the reliability/unreliability of information and the power and influence of media. Among the questions that young people have to resolve are: which sources are reliable, what should I believe/not believe, are people trying to manipulate me, and so on.

> *But people do tend to believe what's in the media. Like me, I'm pretty clueless on politics, so when I hear or read something about politics I will most likely believe*

that, because I don't know anything of it. But like the celebrities, I know that magazines make that up, so I won't believe everything I read there. (16-18 years old)

Media is also about control. It's about people who control the media control the people who watch the media. You've got trends, advertising, … If you look at the I-phone, how many different companies are endorsing the I-Phone (like Tesco, Vodaphone, …). And everybody thinks 'this is the next big thing', and nobody wants to be left behind. So it's about mind-control, you control what people want and what they want to do next. (19-26 years old)

In the chapters that follow, we will look in greater depth at the matters requiring attention based on our competence framework.

4.3. Technology/usage

It emerged at the focus group sessions that young people have a fairly large amount of self-confidence when it comes to media. They have a high estimation of their own ability, especially in comparison with other people and their own peer group. During the interviews there were frequent references to the dangers of media for persons who were younger, older or more vulnerable than the interviewees.

It's important that young kids get safeguarding training. Because they have the technical skills to use these things, but they haven't got the maturity to make the decisions or to be aware of the risks. Because the whole thing about the internet is that it is supposed to be safe, but it is not. (19-26 years old)

Some people might not understand the reality shows, and think they are completely real and not manipulated. The problem is that they present the behaviour on those shows as normal, and people are starting to believe that it is ok to act like that. (15-18 years old)

(about Facebook friends who you don't really know) *I think it's more younger people who do it like that, because they are more trusting. Like my cousin, he's 14 and he has over a thousand friends on Facebook. (16-18 years old)*

Some people who are very superficial would accept everyone who looks fit. (15-17j)

In other words, many young people familiarise themselves thoroughly with the dangers and problems, but regard themselves as 'immune'. To a large extent this self-confidence stems from the technical skills possessed by young people. They say that they grew up with new media, and that consequently they have it 'in their fingers' more than previous generations. These technical skills often result in an overestimation of a person's own 'media wisdom'.

We know about media because we've been told so many times, and we can Google everything. We've seen programs about editing and green screens and stuff. (11-14 years old)

You hear a lot of stories, but you never think that you yourself will get hurt on the internet. You take care, but you never know like who's talking to you, do you? (15-17 years old)

This phenomenon is due in part to many young people being more technically minded than their parents or teachers. They quickly get the feeling that there's not much else that they can learn and drop out. This makes it important for trainers to have the right attributes to be accepted as a trainer.

I was in safeguarding training, and this trainer didn't even know how to manage his Facebook page. He couldn't remove a tag or a photo. And this was supposed to be his job … (19-26 years old)

My dad has an IPhone for his business but I had to show him everything, like how to download apps, because he was clueless. (16-18 years old)

Parents are often uncertain on the internet. (15-17 years old)

Young people are also aware of some risks and matters requiring attention, but in practice do little about it. Anything related to such matters as settings and passwords is quickly regarded as tiresome, complicated and cumbersome. Generally speaking, young people are unwilling to make all that much effort to protect their privacy. To tackle these aspects of media wisdom, it is advisable to focus on convenience of use and to look for quick wins.

(about privacy settings) *We don't think about those kinds of things. You're just on Facebook, it shouldn't become too complicated.* (15-18 years old)

Nevertheless, most of the young people we interviewed are interested in learning more about media and making media, and are certainly receptive to a project like Villa Crossmedia. But they do consider it important to avoid organising 'school-like' courses and instead to have an opportunity to learn by doing. They want to be assisted, but not patronised. The supervisors must not be media professionals, but they do need to know what they are talking about, and must really be able to teach the young people something they don't know.

(a good trainer is …) *Someone who lets us do most of it, but an adult who is in charge and can give you tips and makes sure you do everything the right way. (11-14 years old)*

(about the trainers) *They need the skills. You have to be able to learn from them and to respect them. (15-18 years old)*

Personally I would prefer to have some lessons, but it tends to be more difficult than you think. And then you will give that hardware, you can work with it, and you will discover the things you can't do well. (12 -15 years old).

It is important that you get feedback on what you are doing, or have someone you

could ask questions. (16-18j)

Besides the importance of having good and enthusiastic trainers and supervisors, the focus is an important consideration. Media wisdom is a subject that may be discussed, but first and foremost training sessions must address the 'fun' aspect of media. A negative approach (i.e. pointing time and again to the hazards and risks) is out of keeping with the personal experiences and interests of young people. It is important for the offering to be based on and in line with the world in which young people live and the position occupied by media occupy in that world.

> *I remember doing IT-lessons, and they blocked Facebook. That way you don't learn to deal with it. We kept finding ways around it, but the school didn't teach us how to deal with it (19-25 years old)*

> *VXM needs to support individuality, not dictating but facilitating. If VXM sets up a project for young people to come and learn music, there has to be a structure and a lesson plan, but be prepared to alter that to meet with the needs of the individuals. It has to be the opposite of formal learning. (19-25 years old)*

4.4. Creation/communication

A clear trend in the focus groups was that young people obviously regard themselves as active media users. They referred not only to the consuming of media, but also to having the feeling that they contribute actively to them. This touches on personally making and disseminating content and also sharing and commenting on other people's material, regardless of whether they are professional makers. A large proportion of the young people think in terms of 'I "create/share/like", so I exist'. By means of what you make, show or share, you let others see who you are and what you stand for.

> *If I summed up media in one word, it is about control. If you distance yourself from it, you are not a part of it. I'm talking about new, interactive media. (19-26 years old)*

> *Facebook also becomes like a memory thing. You have all these photos and statuses from years and years, and it's like an album. (15-17 years old)*

> *Young people spend the least time at home, and they still want to keep up with what's happening. And they all got Facebook on their phone. Constantly people are uploading things: pictures, music, sounds, writing, … (19-26 years old)*

> *I think a lot of people would be interested in learning how to make media. Because everybody uses the internet. (15-17 years old)*

> *Music is creative. Some swingers write about their problems, for example, and that's really creative. It's a way of talking about things, to express your feelings. (12-15 years old)*

> *When young people see something strange in the streets, they will automatically use the camera in their phone, so they will be filming rather than looking. Because*

they want to share it more than document it. (19-26 years old)

Facebook is in fact a social RSS feed. It's also important because it integrates everything. You can chat, e-mail and there's a notice board. If you got rid of Facebook, you would lose the MSN function and only e-mail would be left. This would greatly reduce the possibilities for matters like making appointments and maintaining contact. And let's face it, you won't send an e-mail if you want to share something or get somebody to go to a website. You simply post it on Facebook so that everyone can see it and you know for sure that people will click it. (19-26 years old).

Very many young people have a clear picture of the message they want to get across. They don't want to make just some nice audio or video, but want to use the media to make and disseminate a message.

> *I want to touch upon issues that media do cover, but in a different way. Like weight issues, and teenage pregnancy. The media always focus on the bad things, there is never anything good. And that is what we want to touch upon. And educate young women, and give them self respect.* (19-26 years old)

> *We have to give people self respect. We shouldn't tell them what to do, but support them doing it themselves. That will give them experience, and improve their self esteem. It will boost their confidence.* (19-26 years old)

> *Before the internet media companies had full control of what people were hearing. Now, the people's voice is present, you can express your own opinion through social media. (19-26 years old)*

We do see a big difference in the perception of 'active' and 'passive' media. Active media (particularly social media) are characterised by speed and interaction, and are an essential part of the daily life of young people. Passive media (particularly traditional media) are more akin to leisure and regarded as an 'extra'. Different quality standards are also observable: carelessness and mistakes are tolerated in active media, but far less in passive media. The same goes for self-made productions: people want to learn how to work in a sufficiently professional manner to deliver quality when it is necessary. Making your own film clips with a mobile phone and sharing them via social media is okay, but somebody who takes a video-making course or workshop raises the bar, and wants to learn how to make content that is a cut above the rest. But this does not necessarily mean that the dividing line between active and passive media is always clear: after all, people like to share a lot of content of 'passive' media via social media.

> *TV is set programming, you have to watch what's on, and with the internet you can choose for yourself, you can do whatever you want. (15-17 years old)*

> *I don't think radio is very creative, because you just listen and you can't do anything yourself. (15-17 years old)*

> *If you're proud of what you've made, it would be nice to share. (15-17 years old)*

> *I think it could be a lot of fun to learn how to make media, if good people are behind it and it is approach attractively. It has to be quality, otherwise you might just as well do it at home. (21-25 years old).*

> *If you make something, you also want to share. But it also depends on whether I'm personally satisfied with it. It's not the same as making photos at a party and sharing them. (21-25 years old).*

Everything that is personal is creative. (15-17j)

4.5. Analysis/critical understanding/reflection

The intention is to use the Villa Crossmedia media centres to give young people media training to impart to them how media work, and to get them to reflect on the roles and responsibilities associated with making and using media.

Generally speaking, young people have a fairly good idea of the 'matters requiring attention' and the risks attached to media. During the focus group sessions there were frequent references to the manipulated version of reality in reality programmes, the unrealistic image that magazines portray of women, unreliable reporting, cyber bullying, identity theft on the Internet and so on. But there is still work to do. We noticed that an awful lot of 'sensational' examples and stories were put forward, but they always concerned other people. The awareness exists, but people do not always associate it with themselves. This makes it important to build a bridge between a person's own use of media and the knowledge that the person has of media wisdom. Basically, it's about linking theory to practice.

Young people understand that making media (and being trained in making media) is a step towards a better understanding of media and the associated mechanisms.

> *Creation is like invention, and when you create you understand everything better (11-14 years old)*

> *When you give young people a video training they will understand better how it works. They see how you work with footage, and how people you interviewed sometimes don't make sense and that you have to take words out of a totally different part of the interview. People learn a lot from a training like that. They learn that a lot of it is polish. (19-25 years old)*

> *If you view everything critically yourself, you will find the right information, particularly if you use the Internet, because you have thousands of sources. (21-25 years old).*

As media occupy such a prominent place in their daily life, young people need to possess sufficient insight into their relationship with media, and the roles and responsibilities that go with it.

> *I think I could do without media, but then you're no longer part of society. The rest of society can't do it. To be able to function nowadays you need to have media. (21-25 years old).*

> *The responsibility that comes with creating media, young people should be aware of that responsibility.*(11-14 years old)

> *I think it would also be important to be true and honest when you make a film, and be against like photoshopping and things (11-14 years old)*

After the focus group sessions we can conclude that scope definitely exists for working on media wisdom in the media centres of the Villa Crossmedia partners. Most young people are interested in media and in making (and learning how to make) media, and respond enthusiastically to the possibility to learn something new at training sessions and workshops. However, it will be necessary to address a number of matters that require attention:

- Media wisdom as a subject is relevant and even attractive to young people, but it must be imparted implicitly. Media training sessions and workshops may (indeed must) deal with media wisdom subjects, but no young person will attend a media wisdom course in his own time. Young people want to learn by doing and by gaining experience.
- Recognisability is another very important matter. An overly negative approach to media (and the risks thereof) and media wisdom is out of keeping with the everyday world of young people (media and fun) and will create a situation where they know the message but do not relate it to themselves.
- It is important to work as far as possible in a tailor-made way at the pace of the young people. We have to make allowance for many different target groups, wishes, expectations, backgrounds, existing knowledge, etc.

5. A framework for media wisdom training

5.1 Youth work as a basis for working on media wisdom

Within Villa Crossmedia we will work at youth media centres as part of youth work/social work, as a way of eliminating inequality in terms of the opportunities, experience, knowledge and skills that young people need as 21st-century media users. We want to make young people aware of the ways in which media influence opinions, and prepare them for their role as an active media user.

We will explicitly couple working on media wisdom to the work on producing media. By making their own media, young people will learn a number of mechanisms and techniques and experience the impact that media can have. Thanks to the guidelines that they receive and use, they will get an insight into issues like privacy, protection of minors and vulnerable target groups and deontology. Using this in practice means these matters will not remain theoretical concepts.

The media centres will work according to a number of basic principles:

- practice, not theory
- learning by doing
- fun, not pedantic
- not patronising, but supervising participants and making them enthusiastic
- informal and experimental

This will allow us to focus on the process rather than on the end-result. Young people will get an opportunity to take steps at their own pace, with each step posing a new challenge. Engagement will increase with every new challenge.

5.2 Target group's expectations

If we are to develop or build up media centres that are attractive to young people in our target group, it will be of paramount importance to make allowance for their expectations, as gleaned from the focus group interviews and our joint experience with media centres and workshops.

To start with we must recognise that our target group - people aged 12-25 - is definitely not one homogenous group. Within the target group there are obvious differences in terms of age, gender, education, background and culture; moreover, not all young people have the same interests, prior knowledge and motivation. This makes it important to work in phases, and to offer the young people different times to come on board and different possibilities. Cooperation between the different age categories presents a challenge, but certainly not an impossible one. One idea might be to offer

beginners courses for the youngest target groups. Working with these different age categories will also create opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, with young people who help, coach and supervise each other.

Authority and credibility are crucial when setting up a media programme. Young people are active media users, and anybody who wants to teach them something must be proficient beyond the basic level. Young people are already fairly familiar with media creation, particularly online, making film clips with a mobile phone, editing, placing edited or unedited film clips on YouTube. A trainer in a media programme needs to know more and to be able to do more than they can, and must convince them through his knowledge and experience. It is particularly important to be honest and open with young people. If no supervisors with the required expertise are available, no media training should be offered, but there can be talks about 'experimenting together with media'.

Finally, scope needs to be created within the project for publication of the created content. Nobody wants to make media that will not be read, heard or seen. Publication must always occur in consultation with the young people. They set the bar high for themselves and for others and consider it important for material to be published only if they are personally satisfied with it.

5.3 Approach

Based on these elements, we have devised a framework for media wisdom training sessions tailored to fit the participants and that, after evaluation, can be made available more widely. The framework is based on a 'three-track approach' to media wisdom. It means that will we be working at three levels, each with its own objective, form and approach.

We will work at different levels because not everybody has the same interest, background and degree of prior knowledge and engagement. By adopting a three-track approach, we will ensure that everybody has access to what is on offer, adapted to his or her own level and interests.

5.3.1. Level 1: broadly based entry

The objective of the first broadly-based level is to create access enabling a wide group of young people to try out media making. At this level everybody will have an opportunity to take part: no prior knowledge will be required and little if any engagement will be requested.

At this level we want to offer a stage for the creativity of young people, stimulate that creativity and urge them to share their own creativity and to see that of others.

To do this we will set up a virtual platform that allows young people to share photographs, videos, audio, stories and other creative expressions. Other ways of displaying and stimulating creativity include organising competitions (photos, stories, drawings, etc.) and exhibitions (virtual or physical)

At this level we will work in various ways on media wisdom:

– Technology/usage:

o through the publication of low-threshold and readily-accessible manuals and tutorials (how-to-pedia) on the virtual platform for young people who wish to make media.

– Creation/communication:

o by providing a stage and stimulating and supporting an audience, we want to promote the existing creativity of young people.

o we will urge young people to share their self-made content.

– Analysis/critical understanding/reflection

o by means of attractively laid out concrete guidelines and competition rules, we will raise issues such as privacy, copyright and the impact of media.

A fine example of such guidelines/rules can be found in a BBC project called 'Britain in a Day'. This was a documentary film that use crowd sourcing. It was compiled entirely from material recorded by the public in the UK on 12 November 2011. The call to submit material for the film was accompanied by a clear and attractively designed manual with requirements and tips, in marked contrast with most other rules and manuals.

5.3.2. Level 2: widening knowledge and capability

Secondly, we will strive to widen knowledge and capability. For an interested audience, we will offer an opportunity, based on registration, to learn how to make media in workshops, masterclasses and courses, etc. This will give young people an opportunity to get to know different roles and to try them out in training sessions at different levels, for different media and different target groups. The focus will be on the process, on learning and experimenting, rather than on the output.

At this level a certain degree of engagement will be expected from the young people. They will have to register or come forward as candidates, and also actually take and complete the training that they choose.

At this level, too, we will work on media wisdom within the defined competences:

– Technology/usage

o   At this level the focus will be on learning technical skills for making media.

o   The imparting of knowledge of how to make media will devote attention to matters like copyright (use of existing film and other materials, use of music, photographing, filming of certain pieces of art), ownership of material, features and conditions of different websites for sharing creative material.

– Creativity/communication

o   We will teach and stimulate different creative techniques, and young people will learn in this way how to tell their story and express themselves via media.

o   Young people will be able to try out various media, and thus find the medium best suited to their own interests and expectations.

– Analysis/critical understanding/reflection

o   By giving them an introduction to the production process, young people will be able to familiarise themselves with the 'mechanisms' of media and obtain greater insight into how they work. They will become more media-critical and media-wise through familiarisation with cutting techniques, image and audio editing and the selection of material (what to show and what not to show).

o   The production process will include attention to matters such as privacy (why get permission to film/photograph?), protection of minors, respect, source criticism, etc.

o   By involving them in the working of media, young people will learn skills like collaboration and

fulfilment of agreed arrangements, which are values not always self evident to every young person.

5.3.3. Level 3: deepening knowledge and capability

At the third level we will work with real production teams. At this stage, we will require firm engagement and expect motivation from the participating young people. We will work on producing specific content, with the young people getting a fixed role or job in the production process.

The focus at this level will be firmly on the output, because specific media content will be created. Young people will cooperate in running a radio station, website, video presentations, newspaper, magazine, photograph editing, etc.

At this level, too, there will be explicit and implicit attention to media wisdom:

– Technology/usage

o   Young people will gain experience by performing a concrete role or task and thus be able to deepen their technological and substantive knowledge.

– Creativity/communication

o   Young people will work on a concrete media product and will receive supervision and feedback.

– Analysis/critical understanding/reflection

o   By working as a member of an editorial team or production team, young people will learn how to make editorial choices and see the consequences of them.

o   They will experience the role and impact of media in real life: they will be confronted by positive and negative criticism and opinions.

o   Through the use of social media for communication and promotion, young people will gain a better insight into their role and work.

5.3.4. Substantive emphases

Substantive emphases will explicitly be injected into the Villa Crossmedia project. Diversity will be the key consideration. We want to get young people in the project to think about diversity in age, gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or persuasion, disability and sexual preference, with respect for their freedom of speech. In particular, we want to encourage young people to refrain from stereotyping so as to build bridges between cultures and groups. For this purpose our project partner

CSV Media Clubhouse will develop training packages centred around working with and on culture and diversity.

In the production of media, we will encourage young people to tell their own story and to exchange it with other people. This will confront them with diversity and enable us to stimulate discussion or provide food for thought. By exchanging stories (locally, nationally and internationally), we will confront young people with the world outside their own peer group, and widen their view of the world.

6. Next steps

Through Villa Crossmedia, we are working on hands-on media education. Based on the research results and within the defined framework, we will create for each level some medium-specific manuals and modules for integrating media wisdom in media training and media production.

The manuals and modules will be prepared, tested and evaluated in consultation with trainers and supervisors drawn from the field. Their quality and effectiveness will be evaluated critically by the project consortium. The evaluation will form the basis for a follow-up research report, with practical recommendations for those working in the field.

After developing and evaluating manuals and modules for media wisdom training, we will organise train-the-trainer sessions to enable the detailed material to be integrated in the working practices of the project partners.

This process will be entirely documented and all material will be made available via the project website www.villacrossmedia.eu. The acquired knowledge and insights will be shared with the maximum possible number of organisations and institutions that work with and for young people in the arena of media and media wisdom.

With a view to disseminating the acquired knowledge and experience, a media wisdom conference will be organised in Mechelen in spring 2014.

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