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VOLUME PREFACE

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Preface

The domestic television screen is being transformed into the site of a multimedia culture integrating telecommunications, broadcasting, computing and video. Already, satellite and cable television, interactive video and electronic games, the personal computer and the Internet are central to the daily lives of children and young people. Yet little is known about the meanings, uses and impacts of these new technologies. This volume brings together researchers from twelve countries - Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland.[1] We present new findings about the diffusion and significance of new media and information technologies among children and young people.

Forty years ago, Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince's *Television and the child* (1958), together with Schramm's *Television in the lives of our children* (1961), set the scene for researchers, parents, teachers and policy makers as they came to grips with the introduction of television in the United Kingdom and America respectively. This volume was inspired by parallels between the arrival in the family home of television in the 1950s and the present-day arrival of new media. Today, similar questions are being asked and similar hopes and fears expressed. On the other hand, much has changed and is still changing. This seemed, therefore, a good moment to take stock and ask, what is the place of media in children and young people's lives today?

Some issues are familiar, being revisited as each new medium is introduced. Others are new. What are the impacts of new information and communication technologies on older mass media? What new opportunities for integrating learning, socialising and playing are being facilitated? Will some be excluded from these opportunities while others live in an increasingly information-rich environment? Will the growing importance of the media add to the variety and pleasure in young people's lives, or will this contribute to their withdrawal from traditional leisure activities and even from social and political participation? Will the media strengthen local identities with locally produced programming or will they support the emergence of transnational identities - European, Western, global, etc.?

Empirical research is needed to understand the balance between the opportunities and dangers of new media. The contributors to this book argue that such questions - intellectual, empirical and policy-related - can be productively addressed through comparative, cross-national research.[2] This allows us to ask about the similarities and differences in children and young people's media environments within and between European countries. It also allows us to relate the similarities and differences in media use to cross-national differences in family structure, education system, or civic culture, and

so forth. Comparative work is not lightly undertaken, and this volume aims to illuminate the comparative research process itself, as well as producing a complex picture of the place of media and information technologies in the lives and experiences of European children and young people at the turn of the century. To achieve this, we have interviewed and surveyed some 11,000 6-16 year olds around Europe, as well as many of their parents and teachers, as part of the project, *Children, Young People and the Changing Media Environment*. We thank them all here for their co-operation and participation.

CHILDREN AND THEIR CHANGING MEDIA ENVIRONMENT:
A EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE STUDY

CHAPTER 1

Childhood in Europe: Contexts for comparison

Sonia Livingstone, Leen d'Haenens and Uwe Hasebrink

Childhood in Europe: Contexts for comparison

Locating the Media in Children and Young People's Lives
By 4pm on a dreary English afternoon, eight-year-old Sophie has been picked up from school by her mother, driven home, and is now watching Children's BBC while eating her tea in the living room. Her four-year old sister, who will start school next year, is irritating her by chatting throughout the program, while her older brother is off in his bedroom, watching television there while doing his homework. Her compatriot in Spain, Maria, finished school several hours ago and is spending the afternoon and early evening at an after school club before returning to her family for the evening. In Finland, Pertti - also eight - walked home from school with friends a little while ago, and, delighted to find the house empty, is enjoying a quiet chance at the family computer before everyone else gets back. Danish Gitte went off to the library after school to complete her homework on the Internet there, as well as to change her books: although she only recently started school, she is already adept at combining new and old media.

In sketching these scenarios, have we just drawn on familiar, even unfortunate, national stereotypes? Or, do the commonly noted differences in daily life across Europe, including school hours, maternal working patterns, trends in urbanization, cost of living, and even the weather, make a real difference to the quality of children's daily lives and, of central interest here, to the role of media in their lives? Stereotypes tend to overstate differences, and it may be more important to recognize that young people across Europe share a common pattern in their daily lives, balancing time at school, with family, with friends, and, accompanying much of this, with media. Yet commonalities also are easily presumed, and few of us are good at identifying what, if anything, is nationally specific about our everyday lives. Ask Maria or her parents what is typically Spanish about her life, and she'll be hard put to tell you, but compare her daily routine with that of Pertti or Sophie and differences may become apparent.

Researchers also find it difficult to articulate which aspects of everyday life are specific to their country. Academic research literatures build up through national or regional publications, with 'international' publications often restricted to the English language. Without deliberate strategies for comparison, it is difficult to recognize how taken-for-granted aspects of everyday life may be distinctive while features considered nationally significant may in fact be shared with other countries (Chisholm, 1995). Comparative research aims to enhance understanding by improving an understanding of one's own country, gaining knowledge of other countries and, perhaps most valuable, examining how common, or transnational, processes operate under specific conditions in different national contexts (Øyen, 1990; Teune, 1990).

In this volume, we have compared twelve countries in order to observe both similarities and differences, attempting to interpret these within an appropriate national and/or European context. The comparative research project on which this volume is based was guided by five key aims.

- ☐ To chart current access and use for new media at home (and, in less detail, at school).
- ☐ To provide a comprehensive account of domestic leisure and media activities.
- ☐ To understand the meaning of the changing media environment for children (and, in less detail, parents).
- ☐ To map access to and uses of media in relation to social inequalities and social exclusion.
- ☐ To provide a baseline of media use against which to measure future changes.

To address these research questions, the meanings boys and girls of diverse ages and social backgrounds attach to media and media use have been related to a unique data set in which media ownership and practices have been measured and the use of space and time documented. This integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, together with the challenges of conducting such a project cross-nationally, are discussed in Chapter 2. Here we begin with some theoretical considerations.

Developing A Research Framework
In many respects, the eight-year-old children with which we began once lived in distinct universes, speaking different languages, taught within different educational systems, watching different television programs, listening to different music. Some of these differences are still present - language, for example - while others have been transformed in recent years, most obviously television and music. As some changes take place, these have unintended consequences, so that, for example, while national language remains central to national culture, English is gaining ground as a second language throughout Europe. While it may appear that cross-national differences are diminishing and, moreover, that the media contribute to this process, the media are by no means the sole or even most important influence here. In Europe, the historical and cultural trajectories which shape national cultures heavily overlap and intersect. Many macro-social structures within Europe - economy, politics, civic society, religion, family - share a common history and are shaped by common factors. While acknowledging this broader perspective, our focus in this volume is on how the media fit into this bigger picture: how do the media play their distinctive role in shaping, as well as being shaped by, children and young people's identity and culture, and their relations with family, peers, school and community?

Today, not only do political and policy developments attempt to define these children and young people as 'European citizens', but commercial and cultural trends attempt to reorient them all - to a greater or lesser extent - towards American or globalized culture (Schlesinger, 1997). The media play a key role here; popular music is ever more global, television shows them how people live in other parts of the world, and the Internet allows e-pals and chat groups among young people around the world. As Western society becomes increasingly information-based, we suggest that two trends make an academic volume on children and young people's media environments valuable at the present time. First, the media are playing an ever greater role in children's leisure - whether measured in terms of family income, use of time and space, or importance within the conduct of social relations. Second, the media are extending their influence throughout children's lives so that children's leisure can no longer be clearly separated from their education, their employment prospects, their participation in public activities, or their participation within the private realm of the family. To put the point concretely, buying children a personal computer may not only affect how much television they watch, but may also have consequences for their job prospects, family conversation, use of parks and shopping malls, confidence at school, and so on, as too may not being able to afford to buy a personal computer, or the decision to buy a games machine instead.

Child-centered versus media-centered approaches
While researching 'new media' means studying a moving target, our focus is on the domestic screen, including the video recorder, multiple television channels, the personal computer, electronic games, email and the Internet. Our priority is to understand the meanings, uses and impacts of the screen in the lives of children and young people by first, placing it in its everyday context (including non-screen media and other leisure activities) and second, by viewing the screen where possible from a child-centered perspective (rather than that of the household, family or school). These two priorities are linked, for while contexts both shape and are shaped by the actors within them, rather than passively containing them, one distinctive feature of children's lives is that they have relatively little control over the parameters of their 'lifeworld'. Thus, children may diverge from adults in their perceptions of everyday practices precisely because their actions represent tactics to resist or reinvent the adult-created contexts in which they live (Graue and Walsh, 1998).

Two starting points are readily available in framing an understanding of children and young people's media environment (Drotner, 1993). We can begin with children and young people, and ask how the media fit into their lives. Or we can begin with the media, and ask what impacts they are having on children and young people.

The *child-centered* approach directs us toward the many parameters of young people's lifeworld. It is valuable for putting the media in context, for playing down some of the hype surrounding new media by 'putting them in their place', and so for refusing to reify children in terms of media use (as addicts, nerds, fans, etc; cf. Buckingham, 1993). Within children's lifeworld, our present focus is on the *home*, this being the primary location for media use for younger children and an important location across our 6-16 age range. However, we also seek to contextualize domestic media use by asking about school, peer culture and community contexts. On occasion, this is invaluable: if one compared British and Finnish children for their access to the Internet at home, one would conclude that differences in Internet access are rather less dramatic than if one also considered the much greater access which Finnish children obtain in public locations such as schools, libraries, cafés and so forth. Trying to be less media-centered and more contextualized also has its dangers, and a focus on childhood and youth *per se* may lead to the neglect of the media altogether (a tendency apparent in the so-called 'new sociology of childhood'; cf. James, Jenks and Prout, 1998).

The *media-centered* approach takes its agenda from technological developments. It tends to be more sensitive to the medium- or content-specific characteristics of different media, tracing the chain of influence from diffusion through both commercial and public domains to access in the home, then to actual use and, eventually, to impacts on children and young people (e.g. Rogers, 1986). However, it tends to neglect those diverse factors which lead to different meanings or practices for media in different contexts of use. Moreover, a media-centered approach often focuses on just one medium (although several exceptions exist, e.g. Edelstein, 1982), tending to construct non-commensurate images of children and young people. We hear of the oppositional youth culture of the music fan, the imaginative world of the reader, the aggressive world of the video game player, the mindless world of the television viewer, and so forth, ignoring the way that, as we see later in this volume, children and young people construct diverse lifestyles from a mix of different media, rarely if ever making use of just one medium. For this reason, we stress the notion of the *media environment* throughout this volume.

Given that there are advantages both to seeing the media as figure and childhood as ground, and *vice versa*, one should attempt to keep both perspectives in mind. Ultimately, contexts of childhood and youth shape the meanings, uses and impacts of media just as these, in turn, contribute to shaping the experience of childhood and youth. Neither of these starting points, however, is easily defined, and both 'children' and 'media' are terms which are culturally variable, complicating cross-national comparisons. Certainly, the lack of a single term to cover our chosen age range, 6-16 is indicative of socially-constructed distinctions between child and youth, minor and adult, dependency and autonomy. Similarly, the shift from what were

traditionally termed 'mass media' but are now labeled 'information and communication technologies' marks a diversification in media available in the home, including ever more interactive and convergent forms of domestic media technology.

While debates about both children and media are rife with suppositions about social change, neither of these perspectives is wholly satisfactory in its account of change. The child-oriented or contextual approach tends to argue against change, seeing the media as fitting into pre-existing meaning systems and practices. The media-oriented approach tends to overstate the case for technology-driven change, construing this in terms of linear, causal effects, brought about by the insertion of media into everyday life. In this project, we have argued that despite the plausibility of claims regarding the social transformation of childhood and youth, as well as the claimed radical break between mass media and interactive media, the case for change should not be overstated. While each decade sees dramatic technological change, in many respects children's lives are as they were twenty or even forty years ago. Children grow up, watch television, ride their bikes, argue with their parents, study hard or become disaffected with school, just as they always did. The portrait of children's lives in *Television and the Child* (Himmelweit, et al, 1958) is recognizable forty years on: then, just as we find today, children prefer to play outside with their friends than use the media, mainly watching television to relieve boredom; and when they do watch television, then as now children prefer to watch prime-time programs, rather than those made specifically for children, while their parents and teachers wish they would read more books instead.

Mediated childhoods in late modernity
More subtle changes may be observed in relation to both children and media, however. These concern post-war transformations in time, space and social relations (Thompson, 1995; Ziehe, 1994). For example, in many countries children no longer walk to school or play in the streets as freely as they used to. Yet while their lives may be less locally-grounded, they are simultaneously becoming global citizens, increasingly in touch with other places and people in the world. This is particularly apparent once they reach adolescence, with transnational entertainment media now playing a key role in young people's identity formation and peer culture. In the family too, larger changes are occurring. Comparing young people's lives with the childhood and youth of their parents, the divorce rate has escalated, more women engage in paid work and the structure of families has diversified. More children are better off but more too are poorer. More young people are going into further or higher education while entry into the workplace is more difficult, with the prospect of a job for life diminishing (Lagree, 1995). Even larger changes are also at work, as globalizing economic, political and technological developments challenge the autonomy of the nation state. What are the consequences of such

changes for children, young people and their use of media? Does lack of freedom to play outside influence time spent watching television? Do global media encourage consumerist values? And how does children's new-found expertise with computers affect parental authority?

Such questions open up a third starting point for researching children and young people's changing media environment. This goes beyond the child-centered and media-centered approaches by encompassing debates about childhood and youth, as well as those concerning media and information technologies, within the broader set of concerns commonly theorized as 'late modernity' (Fornäs and Bolin, 1994; Giddens, 1991; Reimer, 1995; Thompson, 1995). Theorists of late modernity stress the convergence of historically-linked processes, operating at both the institutional and individual level, which while not necessarily constituting a break with the past, suggest a new array of opportunities and dangers across diverse spheres of social life. From the point of view of children and young people, these changes have resulted in a reconsideration during the twentieth century of their status as citizens within Western society. Most notably, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified a wide range of children's rights, although this stress on children's rights is paralleled in other spheres by a growing perception of children as a market.

Giddens (1991: 1) notes that, 'modern institutions differ from all preceding forms of social order in respect of their dynamism, the degree to which they undercut traditional habits and customs, and their global impact'. To conceptualize these complex changes, we have found three trends to be particularly pertinent in guiding our research. Each gives rise to a set of debates and dilemmas regarding its potential opportunities and dangers. Here we focus on privatization, individualization and globalization, specifically as they help us understand children and young people's position in relation to new media technologies. We would hope that insofar as our findings relate to these broader social trends, the present study of children and young people can also inform that bigger debate.

Privatization refers to the retreat from publically-accessible spaces where people are conceptualized as citizens (e.g. Meyrowitz, 1985) and to the parallel shift towards domestic spaces, where people are conceptualized as consumers or audiences (or, as Habermas puts it, to the refeudalization of the public sphere by commercial interests). For example, one observable trend for children is the growth of protectionist practices which serve to restrict their access to public spaces while enhancing the attractions of privatized forms of leisure, whether at home or in commercial leisure centers.

One may suppose, therefore, that the family would be of growing importance to children, yet while the family home remains all-important as a vital

resource for leisure as well as sustenance, the process of individualization ensures that within this home, family members are increasingly 'living together separately' (Flichy, 1995), leading Giddens (1993: 184), among others, to write of 'a democratization of the private sphere'. *Individualization* refers to the shift away from traditionally important socio-structural determinants of identity and behavior towards more diversified notions of lifestyle (Reimer, 1995; Ziehe, 1994). Individuals are seen as placing increasing stress on constructing a project of the self independent of such traditional structures of identity as socio-economic status, gender, region, or age, where these are, in any case, breaking down or becoming blurred.

Buchner notes that by the end of the twentieth century, 'every child is increasingly expected to behave in an 'individualized way'... children must somehow orient themselves to an *anticipated* life course. The more childhood in the family is eclipsed by influences and orientation patterns from outside the family ... the more independent the opportunity (and drive) to making up one's own mind, making one's own choice... described here as the *biographization* of the life course' (Buchner, 1990:77-8). Thus privatization and individualization represent different ways of conceptualizing changes in social relations, the former focusing on the private versus the public or civic sphere while the latter focuses on individual versus communal but socially-stratified culture. The position of the home is both complex and changing: although traditionally private and socially-stratified by class, gender and age, privatization makes the home of increasing importance as a site of leisure and work, while individualism means that children are ever less 'inheriting' their cultural possibilities and preferences from their parents. The position of the media is also shifting: traditionally part of the public and communal sphere in Europe especially, they are becoming commercialized, thereby potentially undermining public and communal culture by offering more opportunities for individual lifestyle choices.

Thus commercialized forms of peer culture and media culture are increasingly penetrating the family home. For many observers, this is particularly of concern in relation to children and young people insofar as children are ever more construed as a valuable market in their own right as well as a key driver of consumption in the home. The media represent not only the means whereby consumer messages reach children but are themselves increasingly indistinguishable from them, as programs promote toy tie-ins, as electronic games are co-marketed with fast food offers, and so on (cf. Kinder, 1991; Kline, 1993). What is most notable about the growth in consumerism is that it increasingly involves global brands and products. Hence, our third trend is that of *globalization*. While this refers to several processes - economic and political as well as cultural - we are here interested in the strengthening of global culture, or global identities, at the expense of national culture and identity (Tomlinson, 1999). While the globalization of culture leads to many

questions regarding national identity, linguistic boundaries or moral traditions, these are often expressed as anxieties in relation to young people. Not only are their preferences for British music, Australian soaps, Japanese cartoons or American films seen as the 'weak link' through which external 'threats' make their entry, but also, being young, children are seen as harbingers of the future for national cultures.

Adopting a comparative perspective
In comparing countries one faces opposing temptations. One invites the conclusion that children, and media, are much the same everywhere, and that observed variations are trivial. The other invites the conclusion that 'societies and cultures are fundamentally non-comparable and certainly cannot be evaluated against each other' (Chisholm, 1995: 22). The advantages and disadvantages of cross-national comparisons depend on how countries are compared, with different models striking a different balance between the search for commonalities (or 'universalism') and the identification of difference (or 'relativism'). In the history of comparative research many strategies have been found more or less useful in different circumstances (Øyen, 1990). Kohn (1989) offers a useful classification of these approaches.

First is the search for commonalities. Here the focus is on testing the generality of findings across different national contexts. An example of is research on the common gender differences to be found in different countries (e.g. Gibbons et al, 1997; see also Chapter 12, this volume). The role of the family provides another example: as a recent 14-nation European study found, 'the national reports ... all bear witness to the importance of families and kinship relations with respect to reproduction and no evidence is given for declining functions' (Dahlström, 1989: 41; although see Chapter 7 for some within-Europe differences). The second and converse strategy is of rather less interest here, for its idiographic focus leads researchers to treat each country as the primary object of study, while using the particularities of one country to contrast with or reveal the different characteristics of others.

For reasons of parsimony, the comparisons made within this volume begin with this first model, assuming in particular that gender, age and socio-economic status (SES) are likely to operate in similar ways across national contexts. When universals are expected, their confirmation is useful, but it is their contradiction which is often most interesting. For example, as social inequalities in household income are greater in some countries than others, we find not constant but greater within-country differences in domestic media ownership by SES for those countries (see Chapter 3).

Clearly, any contradiction of universalist assumptions demands explanation. One way of approaching this is to adopt what Kohn labels the *trans-national* comparative model, treating nations as components of a larger system and so

seeking more abstract or generalized accounts of observed differences. In line with the earlier theoretical discussion about the cultural shifts in society, and hence in contexts of childhood and youth, some of the chapters which follow consider the ways in which European countries are subject to the conditions of late modernity. Given the considerable similarities among the countries being compared here in their degree of modernization, this perspective is of only limited value in accounting for cross-national differences, though it offers an insightful interpretative framework. Nonetheless, the key processes of privatization, individualization, and globalization discussed above do illuminate certain findings in which different media are refracted or appropriated by different groups of children and young people in different contexts. For example, Chapter 8 seeks to account for the United Kingdom's relative 'lead' in the possession and use of personalized screen media in terms of privatization and individualization within the home and the society.

However, the model of comparative analysis to which we have devoted most attention treats countries as the *unit* of analysis, where each takes a position along key dimensions of social and cultural analysis (see Blumler et al, 1992). Also positioned between the extremes of universalism and relativism, yet taking a less abstract approach than the trans-national model above, this model investigates how social phenomena can be systematically related to the characteristics of the different countries. The selection of countries is critical to this model: we aimed to compare countries which differ moderately but not hugely and which, rather than being selected arbitrarily, are already bound together by the common regional and policy concerns of 'Europe' (a similar justification is offered by Qvortrup, 1989).

In the present chapter we identify two sub-types of this model - child-centered and media-centered - each focused on different sources of cross-national variation, in order to frame our analysis. Thus, we examine whether dimensions of cultural difference (such as variations in family structure, or national wealth, or linguistic uniformity/diversity) or dimensions of the media environment in each country are systematically related to observed differences in patterns of media use across our twelve European countries. This allows us to ask such child-centered questions as - do children who live in wealthier countries have greater access to the Internet, or, are children living in larger language communities less open to American/global media? It also allows us to ask more media-centered questions. For example, do children brought up in countries with strong public service broadcasting traditions show greater interest in national programming? Or, now that the personal computer has entered the home, is the amount of reading done by children less affected in countries which place less stress on screen entertainment?

In what follows we examine first the contexts for children's lives across Europe and second, we map media environments across Europe, focussing on

the electronic screen. In both cases, our aim is to identify key dimensions which discriminate among countries, or groups of countries, in order to facilitate the thematic cross-national comparisons which form the substantive chapters of this volume. We caution, however, that there is no easy way to place boundaries around 'context'. While our comparison involves countries that are broadly comparable in degree of modernization and global positioning, we can only provide a brief and necessarily selective overview of some of the key dimensions along which the 12 countries vary, and we include nation-by-nation tables only where cross-national differences are marked.

As there are many demographic and cultural dimensions on which European countries can be compared, we considered an attempt at broad country groupings premature for the child-centered model - rather, the cross-national comparisons in the chapters to follow will probably be best interpreted in relation to specific social indicators. However, the variables relating to the media-centered model are more strongly interrelated, allowing us to draw out a tentative grouping of countries according to their media environments and, in consequence, suggest some substantive hypotheses to be examined in chapters to follow. We approach this process with caution, noting the difficulties in constructing country groupings (Teune, 1990). Most notably, variance within countries is often greater than that between them. However, without these groupings, it would prove difficult to explore cross-national hypotheses about the diffusion and consequences of new media which abound in academic and policy domains.

Demographic and Cultural Contexts for Childhood in Europe
In conducting comparative research, facts and figures referring to the amount of time children spend with particular media need to be carefully interpreted in the context of the available media and the policies which regulate them. They also need to be interpreted in the context of a wide range of cultural factors which frame the everyday lives of young people and their families in different countries. For while European countries differ in media provision, these differences are in turn partly explained by national wealth or socio-economic indicators and partly they reflect differing structures of childhood and youth at all levels from individual domestic practices to national policy matters. Crucially, then, our stress on contextualization enables us to perceive the child as a complex human being acting in many different circles: at home, at school, with peers, at the sports club, in his/her own country, in Europe, in the world. Let us examine some of these demographic and cultural factors.

Population Stability
Population-wise (Table 1), Europe is made up of five largish countries (France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain), with Germany well ahead with some 82 million inhabitants. The rest are small countries, with only the Netherlands qualifying as a middle-sized country. Urbanization is highest

in Belgium and Israel, and lowest in Switzerland, Finland and Italy. This is modestly correlated with population density, the Netherlands being the most crowded, followed closely by Belgium (with a population density equal to that of Japan) and then by three of the big five: the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy; the least crowded countries are Sweden and Finland.

- Table 1 about here -

National Wealth
When looking at the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in purchasing power (Table 1), Spanish and Israeli families rank among the poorest, with Sweden, Finland, Italy and the United Kingdom next, showing lower than average income levels; Switzerland and Denmark are among the most highly ranked European countries.

For questions of information technology diffusion and social exclusion, it may be more important to know how hierarchical European societies are. If we consider the disparity between the income levels of the richest 20% and the poorest 20%, we see that disparities are least in Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium while they are greatest in the United Kingdom and Switzerland. It is worth noting that the United Kingdom has the lowest income levels among its poorest 20% group, while its richest 20% ranks among Europe's richest. On the other hand, while Switzerland's top 20% share group enjoys Europe's highest income levels by far, its poorest 20% are better off than the United Kingdom's. During the 1980s and 1990s, the earnings inequality increased most in the UK and least in the Nordic countries (UNDP, 1999).

Purchasing power or lack thereof is clearly linked to (un)employment, and high and persistent unemployment is undoubtedly one of Europe's major problems. Of the countries under study, Switzerland has the lowest unemployment rate, and Spain has the highest (*Europe in Figures*, 1995). Finland, France, and Italy are three more countries with an unemployment rate above 10%. Across Europe, more women than men are jobless, and youth unemployment is twice as high as the average.

Family characteristics
Regardless of how youth is defined, the percentage of young people in the population is slowly but surely falling across Europe. However, the percentage of the population under 20 years of age is comparable among the countries in our study (about one in four): Israel has a clearly younger population (35%), while both Italy's (21%) and Germany's (22%) population are relatively older. The prospects are that Europe is becoming a 'grey' continent: life expectancy rates are rising while birth rates are falling (Table 2). Italy and Spain, traditionally associated with big families, now have among Europe's lowest birth rates, while the highest birth rate is to be found in Sweden. Today, the

average European family includes no more than one or two children; Italy's single-child family figure is Europe's highest.

- Table 2 about here -

This slump in births is affected by economic, social and religious factors. Traditionally fecund countries such as Italy and Spain show similar patterns: a clear decline in the Catholic church's influence and gains in wealth since the second World War have led to the postponement of marriage and child rearing. The mean age of women giving birth across the European countries in our study is 28/29 years. While there is little cross-national variation in the marriage rate (which stands at approximately five marriages per 1000 people; *Eurostat Yearbook '97*), secularization has increased the frequency of divorce. While the average is approximately two divorces per 1000 people (in 1995 - *Europe in Figures*), it is still lowest in the Mediterranean countries (fewer than one divorce per 1000) and highest in the United Kingdom and the Nordic countries (between 2 and 3 divorces per 1000). Consequently, the number of children being raised by a single parent is also growing; highest in the United Kingdom, lowest in Spain.

The situation of women in the workforce varies widely across the countries: Swedish women are by far the most numerous in the workforce (about 9 in 10 are employed) while in Italy and Spain only 3 to 4 out of 10 women are in the job market. The other countries stand somewhere in the middle, with 5 women out of 10 (BE-vlg, DE, FR, IS, NL)[3] or even 6 to 7 in 10 in the workforce (CH, DK, GB). While in all countries under scrutiny the female component of the labor force has risen during recent decades, the cross-national differences appear relatively stable (compare with Boh, 1989). The proportion of mothers who are employed, be it part-time or full-time, follows a similar pattern (highest in Denmark and Sweden, lowest in Spain and Italy). The relatively low rates of working mothers (with a three-year-old child) in Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands may be explained in part by the relative lack of day-care facilities in those countries. Provision of day-care and after-school facilities for children varies considerably across Europe: such facilities are far more available in Nordic countries than in Mediterranean countries. While broadly speaking, men are increasingly encouraged to participate in family care, women remain the main domestic care-givers. (and continue to be persistently seen as such, which makes change extremely difficult).[4]

Cultural Diversity and Religion
In a fast-globalizing world, European societies become more and more heterogeneous owing to migration flows from North Africa and East and Central Europe. On the other hand, regionalist forces fueled by feelings of identity and alienation are stronger in some countries than others. Finland has one of Europe's most homogeneous populations (*Europe in Figures,* and

Council of Europe's *Recent demographic developments in Europe,* 1997), as does Israel with 80% of the population Jewish. Switzerland and Belgium have the largest number of foreign nationals, one reason being the high proportion of white-collar workers (often EU Member State nationals) hired by European and international institutions located in Brussels and Geneva. The European country currently attracting the most immigrants is Germany, followed by Italy, with incoming migration significantly higher than outgoing migration.

When it comes to religion (cf. *Europe in Figures*), countries can be grouped differently: some countries are very homogeneous (Italy and Spain are mainly Catholic, while Denmark and Sweden are mainly Lutheran). Others, like Germany and Switzerland, show a more diverse picture. Declining religiosity - especially strong in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands - has consequences both for society (e.g. higher divorce rates) and for specifically media-related activities (e.g. Protestants have traditionally shown more reticence towards the media, especially television, than has the relatively more permissive Catholic church).

Education
A country's willingness to invest in the future can be gauged by its support for its education system (Table 3). Of European countries involved in our study, Denmark spends the largest share of GNP on education, while Germany spends the smallest. Judging from its education budget as part of the total state expenditure, the Italian Government spends the least on education, followed by Germany, while the Swiss Government spends the most. Empowerment of women also starts with education. Therefore it is encouraging to see that in both upper secondary and post-18 higher education, females have caught up with and in some cases overtaken males, most especially in Sweden and France and least in Germany and, to a lesser extent, the Netherlands. However, undoubtedly the biggest media-related budget issue at present throughout Europe in education circles is to get more computers into primary and secondary schools (one PC per 10 to 15 pupils is generally the target). The current status of *SchoolNet* in Europe, which depends on partnerships between Governments and the private sector, has more to do with an accumulation of regional initiatives than a full-fledged network (see Chapter 10).

The age at which compulsory schooling ends ranges from 14 to 16 years. In Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands it is 18 years if part-time schooling is also taken into account. Compulsory schooling may begin before the age of 6 (Table 3). The duration of compulsory education throughout Europe ranges from 8/9 years (DK, FI, IT, SW) to 12/13 years (BE-vlg, DE, NL); France, Spain and Israel occupy an intermediate position with 10 years of compulsory education. Clearly, cross-cultural differences in the structuring of the school day may also affect the amounts of time spent with media. Across all countries children spend five days a week at school, except for Italy, where they spend

six. The average daily load of hours spent at school shows more variety: Danish and German children spend the least time in the classroom every day, while Dutch, British, French, and Belgian children spend the most time there. This pattern persists on an annual basis: Dutch children spend up to 1,000 hours a year in the classroom, while the figure for German children is a mere 712 hours.

- Table 3 about here -

Mapping Media Environments across Europe
Further to the above demographic, social, cultural and economic factors which structure everyday life for young people in Europe, the contextualization of children's media use also requires an understanding of the 'media environments' in the countries being studied. Unfortunately, there is no consensus among researchers on how to define 'media environment', and the few approaches which do systematically classify European countries (e.g. McCain 1986) can only provide some hints to guide our comparative study. Thus in order to construct a meaningful and pragmatic classification of European countries, we begin with economic, political, and technological aspects of the media environment which are likely to determine the conditions within which children and young people in Europe develop their own patterns of media use. For the most part, such statistics as are available concern the adult population; clearly it is information about children and young people which is lacking, this being the gap which the present volume seeks to fill. Thus, given our focus on the domestic screen, we first examine the television environment in our 12 European countries. Second, we analyze similarities and differences with regard to new screen-based technologies. Third, we examine everyday media use to identify orientations towards the different media.

The television environment
Before dealing with differences between European countries we should emphasize one important commonality of European broadcasting systems which contrasts with, particularly, the United States of America. As a rule, European broadcasting landscapes are organized as 'dual systems' with public service broadcasters not just being a supplement to commercial but a central (and until recently, the only) pillar of the broadcasting system. One aspect of this position of public broadcasting is the availability of advertising-free and thus less commercialized children's programming in many European countries (Blumler and Biltereyst, 1997). However, in recent years public broadcasters have been facing increasing competition by global (American) commercial children's channels like Cartoon Network, The Disney Channel, Nickelodeon and Fox Kids Network (Table 4). These channels, where they are available, have become generally successful, setting a trend towards thematic channels for children. This trend is furthered by the advent of digital television – all the

digital bouquets available so far in Europe include at least one children's channel. In order to compete with these new channels some public broadcasters have started thematic children's channels themselves (e.g. Kinderkanal in Germany and RaiSat 2 in Italy). At the same time we are seeing a reduction in air time for children's programs on the main public service channels. Nevertheless, in 1997-8 (during our empirical field work), children's television in Europe was characterized by public broadcasters providing nationally distributed non-commercial children's programs on their main channels, together with a few commercial global competitors, available in households with cable or satellite equipment.

- Table 4 about here -

Beyond these commonalities mentioned so far, media environments in Europe are shaped by characteristics of the respective media markets. We can group countries according to three criteria: the size of the language markets, technical infrastructure, and the distribution of new technologies (see Figure 1).

For media products language plays a significant role: the bigger the number of native speakers of a given language, the bigger the potential market for media products in this language. As a consequence it might be expected that media environments for bigger language communities provide more options than those for smaller communities. In addition, and for the same reasons, imported television programs in countries with bigger languages are usually dubbed, whereas in countries with smaller languages they are usually subtitled. In Figure 1 we first differentiate between 'big' and 'small' languages communities. In each of the six countries belonging to 'bigger' language communities (CH, DE, ES, FR, GB, IT) the vast majority of television channels available are broadcast in their national language. As other studies show (e.g. Eurobarometer 1994), knowledge of foreign languages is lower than in the other group of countries with 'smaller' languages (BE-vlg, DK, FI, IL, NL, SE).

- Figure 1 about here -

In the eighties and early nineties the development of television in European countries was influenced by the technical infrastructure, the main factor in that period being cable distribution. This then provides us with a second criterion for grouping the countries. Due to marked differences in cable policies, the quantity of television channels available differs considerably across Europe. For example, in Belgium and the Netherlands, being relatively small countries with the highest population density in Europe, cable technology has represented an appropriate means of broadcast distribution; almost 100 per cent of the television households in these countries are connected to cable.

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Switzerland and Germany also have high cable density. In these four countries most viewers live in a multi-channel environment with more than 23 channels available on average. The key difference between Belgium and the Netherlands on the one hand and Germany and Switzerland on the other is that in the latter 'big language' countries the majority of channels available are in their native language.[5] From the viewpoint of children, it is worth noting that more channels generally means more dedicated children's channels are available, whether national or transnational. It also means more variation, and hence possibly more inequality, across households within countries with many channels.

The Nordic countries have experienced a rapid growth of channel availability by cable and especially by satellite over the last few years, among them Denmark – despite its significantly lower number of channels available - has been grouped together with Belgium, the Netherlands, and Israel because of these countries' similarities with regard to the significance of foreign channels and foreign language offers. In this group fewer than half of the channels available are national channels. This contrasts with the situation in Sweden and Finland, where there are fewer channels available and a stronger focus on national channels.

Compared to the multi-channel environments in Germany and Switzerland, the other 'bigger language' countries provide much fewer channels. Cable and satellite reception is relatively rare here, especially in Italy and Spain. The United Kingdom and France are experiencing a rapid growth of satellite as well as cable distribution, but nevertheless the figures are far below those of the other countries in our study. Within this group of four 'bigger' countries a further differentiation may be made by separating Spain from the others because of its smaller national television market and thus smaller number of domestic channels.

Distribution of new technologies
Beyond the differences outlined for television environments, there are marked differences in media provision both between and within European states in relation to newer forms of media. In the information age the central issue is the extent to which the network society has become a reality in Europe. Politicians and policy-makers view information and communication technologies (ICT's) as a top priority: ICT's bring economic development, and scenarios in which disadvantaged groups are permanently excluded from the benefits of information technology must therefore be avoided (see e.g., Bangemann, 1994). In order to assess the preparedness of different countries for the demands of a network society, the World Economic Forum (1996) published a ranking of countries which is based on number of phone lines, mobile phones, television density, cable and satellite connections, PC penetration and the overall maturity of business use of new technologies.

Within this ranking, five of the European countries involved in this study are among the first ten (FI 2nd, DK 3rd, SE 5th, CH 7th and NL 10th). A middle group is made up by Germany (13th), the United Kingdom (14th), and Belgium (15th). According to the World Economic Forum's criteria, France (20th), Israel (22nd), Italy (23rd), and Spain (25th) seem to be less prepared for the network society.

More specifically, let us now examine Internet penetration in Europe. While always lagging far behind the US in this respect, Europe has now definitely taken to the Net. In May 1998, 23 million people were on-line in Europe according to various surveys (e.g. the NUA Internet Survey, 1998). Owing to the high growth rate of Internet adoption in Europe, any research soon becomes out of date and estimates of the numbers on-line are inevitably inexact as surveys abound and very different measures are used. The Information Society Project Office (ISPO), in cooperation with Eurobarometer, have conducted a Europe-wide public opinion survey which includes questions on familiarity with and appreciation of media in order to beyond the fragmentary picture given by national surveys in order to facilitate pan-European comparisons. Table 5 shows that Internet use differs widely between European countries: Nordic countries and the Netherlands are 'early adopters', followed by the United Kingdom (see also Chapter 3). The situation for the use of mobile phones is similar to this, with the exception that for this new tool the Netherlands do not belong to the top group.

One further factor which might explain differences in the significance of new information technologies is the English language (see also Chapter 13). For among the pioneers are exactly those European countries which are closest to the English language, either because it is their native language or because they belong to the 'smaller' language communities who have had to use English for international communication: this might make it easier to approach the new information technologies and services, many of them being in English.

- Table 5 about here -

Patterns of media orientations
As a further step we can examine the cultural aspect of media environments. Within Europe, different patterns of media orientations have developed regarding, for example, the average reach and amount of use of both 'old' and 'new' media. As Table 5 shows, several European countries focus heavily on television (ES, GB, IT). Households in these countries often have more than one television set (see row 5), and the individual amount of viewing adds up to more than three and a half hours per day (row 6). On the other hand, despite their multi-channel environment, people in German speaking Switzerland watch one and a half hour less. Radio listening times show a rather

complementary picture: people in Finland, France, Switzerland and Flanders reach the highest usage figures. Differences with regard to newspaper reading are even more significant. There are substantial differences between newspaper-oriented countries (especially CH, FI, SE) with a daily reach of around 85 per cent and other countries where newspapers reach only half of the population or even less (ES, FR, IT). These patterns of orientations are supported by indicators from other sources: as the Eurobarometer survey show, adults across Europe differ in where they seek their news (row 10).

Conclusion
As a conclusion of this overview of media-related comparative indicators we propose a pragmatic classification for relating the results of our comparative study to the media environments in Europe. Since this study on children and young people is particularly interested in new technologies, this criterion is taken as the primary one to group the countries involved.

First, there is a group with Spain, Italy and France, characterized by a focus on national television and relatively low figures in new technologies. This classification is mainly based on cable and satellite television and the availability of PCs and the Internet as the 'globalized' new technologies.[6]

The second group is less homogeneous than the first, being made up of Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, and Israel, all countries with a multi-channel environment and moderate use of new technologies, but with different preferences with regard to television and newspapers.

Third, the United Kingdom is treated as a group for its own: contrary to the pattern observed elsewhere it combines a heavy orientation towards television with rather high figures for new technologies.

Finally, the fourth group with the Nordic countries and the Netherlands includes those countries which are to be seen as the pioneers of new technologies. The new technologies are integrated to a media environment which is characterized by a focus on newspapers (and radio) and less importance of television. Together with the United Kingdom, they are also countries with a strong public service television tradition, though a link to new technologies here is unclear.

A brief note on the reporting of findings in this volume
The twelve countries included in the present volume were selected so as to ensure representation from across (Western) Europe, the point being to include countries which vary along the key dimensions of European Union policy debate (size, wealth, linguistic and ethnic diversity, geography; beyond this theoretical consideration, country selection was also, inevitably, partly serendipitous. However, the comparative analysis is organized around genuine

collaboration to address key themes, with each chapter analyzing data produced by all countries in relation to a specific intellectual and empirical theme, instead of the rather easier reporting of a series of national projects according to a common agenda, a process which leaves the drawing of comparative conclusions to the reader. In opting for direct cross-national comparisons by chapter theme, we must acknowledge the effort, generosity and commitment of all national team members to pooling data and ideas during the production of the present volume. We would also like to thank Pierangelo Peri and Mario Callegaro, from the University of Trento, Italy, for their efforts in constructing a common data base for use by all teams. All team members and their national funders are also acknowledged in Appendix 2.

Table 1: Population characteristics and national wealth

	Total population (000s)	Urban pop. as % of total	Population density (inhabitants/ sq km)	Real GDP per capita in PPP$	Real GDP per capita Poorest 20% share in PPP$, 1980-94	Real GDP per capita Richest 20% share in PPP$, 1980-94	Richest 20% to Poorest 20%, 1980-94
Belgium	1014	97	333	22,750	7,718	35,172	4.6
Denmark	5270	85	122	23,690	5,454	38,986	7.1
Finland	5154	63	15	20,150	5,141	30,682	6.0
France	58683	75	108	22,030	5,359	40,098	7.5
Germany	82133	87	230	21,260	6,594	37,963	5.8
Great Britain	58649	89	244	20,730	3,963	38,164	9.6
Italy	57369	67	191	20,290	6,174	37,228	6.0
Israel	5984	91	259	18,150	4,539	29,957	6.6
Netherlands	15678	89	379	21,110	7,109	31,992	4.5
Spain	39628	77	78	15,930	5,669	24,998	4.4
Sweden	8875	83	20	19,790	7,160	33,026	4.6
Switzerland	7299	61	172	25,240	5,907	50,666	8.6

Source Population: http://www.unicef.org (last update, 01/12/99, United Nations Population Division).

Source Urbanization: http://www.undp.org/hdro/iurban.htm (1995).

Source Population Density: *Eurostat Yearbook '97; Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Israel, 1996.*

Note: GDP = Gross domestic product; PPP$ = purchasing power parities in US$, based on comparisons among prices of consumer goods.

Source *The Human Development Report 1999*, data from 1997.

Table 2: Family characteristics: Birth rate (per 1000), Families by number of children as % of all families; Single parent-households; and Working mothers

	Birth rate (per 1000)	Families with one child	Families with 2 children	Families with 3+ children	Single parent families as % of all families	Proportion of employed mothers (%)
Belgium	11.8	32	24	11	31.6	60
Denmark	12.0	23	19	5	38.3	73
Finland	12.5	30	24	10	30.3	54
France	12.4	28	23	13	24.5	54
Germany	9.2	32	23	7	30.0	41
Great Britain	12.9	27	24	11	35.8	45
Italy	9.6	34	29	11	21.8	41
Israel	21.4	14	20	26	18.8	71
Netherlands	12.3	25	27	12	24.7	48
Spain	9.8	28	31	19	16.4	35
Sweden	13.6	21	19	8	37.7	67
Switzerland	12.3	25	24	10	23.2	n/a

Source Birth Rate: *Europe in Figures* (1995-2000); *Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Israel, 1997.*

Source Percentage of Only Children, Families with Two, Three or More Children: *Eurostat Yearbook '97* (figures based upon 1991).

Source Single Parents: *Eurostat Yearbook '97; Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Israel, 1997.*

Source Finland: http://www.stat.fi/tk/tp/tasku/vaes/oen.html

Source for Proportion of Mothers Who Are Employed (with a 3-year old child): Eurostat, UOE and Labour Force Survey in *Key Data on Education in The European Union* (1997), data from 1994/5. *Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Israel, 1997 (for Jewish population only).*

Source for single parent families: calculated from data in Eurostat '97.

Table 3: Education: Public expenditure; Organization of school time (at age 10); Gender inequalities

Country	% GNP spent on education	% Total Govt. Expenditure spent on education	Combined enrolment at 1st, 2nd, & 3rd levels of education	Duration (years) of compulsory schooling	Daily load (minutes/ day at school)	Annual load (hours/year at school)	Female participation in education (no. girls per 100 boys in upper secondary education), 1993/4	Female participation in education (no. girls per 100 boys in higher education), 1993/4
Belgium	5.7	10.2	100	9 f/t +3 p/t	280	948	97	97
Denmark	8.3	12.6	89	9	216	720	101	105
Finland	7.6	11.9	99	9	207- 225	656 - 713	125	113
France	5.9	10.8	92	10	282	846	96	120
Germany	4.7	9.4	88	9 f/t + 3 p/t	227	712	85	73
Great Britain	5.5	11.4	100	11	295	903	115	100
Italy	4.9	8.8	82	8	270	900	99	106
Israel	6.6	12.3	80	10	300	1193-1476	n/a	n/a
Netherlands	5.3	9.5	98	11 f/t + 2 p/t	300	1000	84	86
Spain	5.0	12.6	92	10	270	810	111	104
Sweden	8.0	11.0	100	9	240	760	114	120
Switzerland	5.5	15.6	79	9	165-317	529-1120	n/a	n/a

Note: f/t = full-time, p/t = part-time.
Source: Spending on Education: UNDP 1998 (based upon 1995).
Source: Combined First-, Second- and Third-Level Gross Enrolment Ratios (i.e. primary, secondary and post-18 education): UNDP 1999.
Source: Duration of Compulsory Schooling: *Youth in the European Union. From Education to Working Life. Eurostat 1997* and *Education across the European Union - Statistics and Indicators. Eurostat 1996* (based upon 1996).
Source: *Eurydice. Organisation of School Time. Brussels. Eurydice European Unit, 1997.*
Source for female participation in education: *Education across the European Union - Statistics and indicators*, Eurostat (1996) and *Youth in the European Union, From Education to working life* (Eurostat, 1997).

Table 4: Children's television channels in Europe

Channel	Shareholder	Country (Launch date)	Subscribers *
Canal J	MCM Euromusique et al.	FR (1985)	2.5
Carlton Kids	Carlton Comms.	GB (1998)	0.1
Cartoon Network	Turner Network	NL/BE. (1997), FR/BE-cf. (1998), IT/CH (1998), GB (1993), DK/SE (1997), ES (1997)	8.3
Channel 6	Noga Communications	IL (1989)	1.1
The Disney Channel	Walt Disney Co	IT (1998), ES (1998), FR (1997), GB (1995)	5.4
Fox Kids	Fox Family Worldwide	NL (1998), BE-cf. (1999), Nordic (1998), ES (1998), FR (1997), GB (1996)	14.4
Junior	Kirch Group	DE (1996)	0.1
Junior TV	Orsini Family	IT (1985)	16.7
Kinderkanal	ARD/ZDF	DE (1997)	23.0
Kindernet	n.d.	NL (1988)	6.3
K-toon	Kirch Group	DE (1996)	0.1
Manga	Groupe AB	FR (1998)	0.5
Nickelodeon	Viacom (& partners)	Nordic (1997), ES (1999), GB (1993)	6.6
Panda	TPS Multicanal	ES (1996)	0.3
RaiSat 2	RAI	IT (1997)	0.8
Super RTL	CLT-Ufa, Walt Disney Co	DE (1995)	21.5
TCC	Flextech	Nordic (n.d.)	0.6
Télétoon	TPS	FR (1997)	1.3
Trouble	Flextech	GB (1996)	n.d.

*) In millions of households; total number in the countries mentioned in the table. Source: Screen Digest, May 1999, pp. 105-107

Table 5: Use of new and old media

	BE	CH	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GB	IL	IT	NL	SE
Availability and use of new media:												
1) Individuals (15+) using PC at home (%, 1997)	25	n.a.	26	**50**	*24*	34	*19*	38	n.d.	25	**53**	**48**
2) Individuals (15+) using the Internet/WWW at home (%, 1997)	3.4	n.a.	4.4	8.9	*1.8*	**9.5**	*2.0*	5.9	n.d.	*3.1*	**10.7**	**18.5**
3) Individuals using the Internet/WWW in office (% of those employed)	7.9	n.a.	8.8	**19.8**	*3.0*	**20.5**	*4.4*	12.2	n.d.	8.0	**19.7**	**27.3**
4) Individuals (15+) using Mobile Telephone at home/for private reasons (%, 1997)	*14*	n.a.	*11*	**34**	*14*	**44**	*9*	25	n.d.	22	15	**55**
Orientations towards different old media:												
5) TV households with 2 TV sets or more (% of TV households, 1997)	*18*	*20*	*23*	42	58	46	37	**79**	n.d.	50	38	39
6) Average daily television viewing (in minutes, 1997, adults)	168	*128*	196	162	**218**	150	193	**228**	151*	**217**	157	149
7) Average daily radio listening (in minutes, 1996, adults)	187	190	174	139	*101*	**213**	192	154	140	172	179	174
8) Circulation of newspapers 1996 (copies per 1000 inhabitants)	*163*	357	318	311	*105*	**456**	*182*	330	n.d.	*105*	307	**438**
9) Daily reach of newspapers 1998 (%)	*52*	**85**	79	78	*38*	**87**	*50*	74	83	*42*	72	**84**
10) Use of news in different media (% saying 'everyday'): Newspapers	*33*	n.a.	60	61	*34*	**70**	*27*	50	69	*32*	64	**76**
Television	66	n.a.	65	70	68	**80**	56	**73**	n.d.	**82**	77	69
Radio	50	n.a.	54	**73**	42	53	38	48	n.d.	*23*	56	58

Sources:

1)-4): Information Society Project Office (ISPO): Measuring Information Society 1997. (http://www.ispo.cec.be/infosoc/promo/pubs/poll97; access October 1999).

5)–6): IP (1998): Television 98. European Key Facts. Neuilly-sur-Seine, August 1998; for Israel: OTOT, May 1999 (data for 1998).

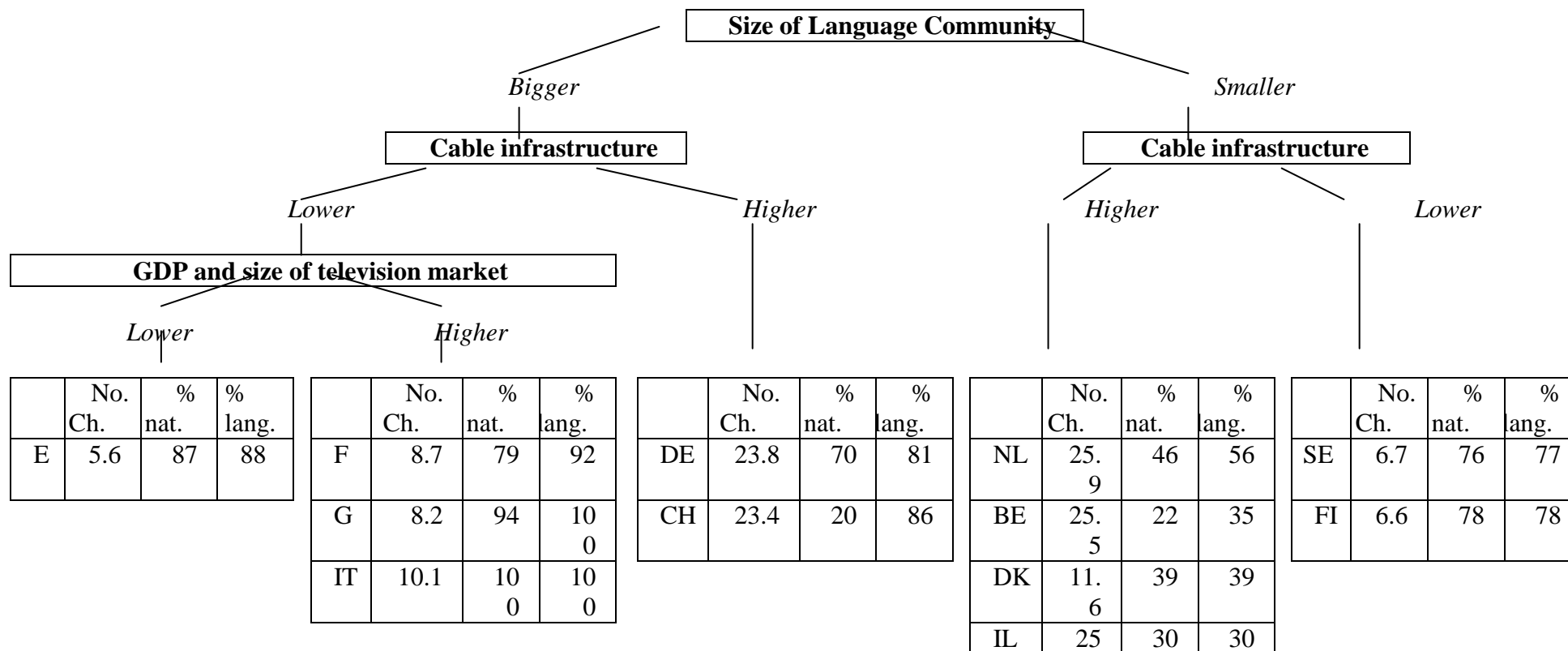7): GEAR 1997; for Israel: OTOT, May 1999 (data for 1998).

8): Gustafsson/Weibull (1997), p. 255.

9): BDZV (1998): Zeitungen 98. Bonn; Advertisers Association of Israel (1997).

10): Eurobarometer No. 46, autumn 1996; Advertisers Association of Israel (1997).

Figure 1: Grouping countries according to their television environment[1]

Tree structure:

- **Size of Language Community**
  - *Bigger* → **Cable infrastructure**
    - *Lower* → **GDP and size of television market**
      - *Lower*
      - *Higher*
    - *Higher*
  - *Smaller* → **Cable infrastructure**
    - *Higher*
    - *Lower*

	No. Ch.	% nat.	% lang.
E	5.6	87	88

	No. Ch.	% nat.	% lang.
F	8.7	79	92
G	8.2	94	100
IT	10.1	100	100

	No. Ch.	% nat.	% lang.
DE	23.8	70	81
CH	23.4	20	86

	No. Ch.	% nat.	% lang.
NL	25.9	46	56
BE	25.5	22	35
DK	11.6	39	39
IL	25	30	30

	No. Ch.	% nat.	% lang.
SE	6.7	76	77
FI	6.6	78	78

[1]These figures result from calculations which draw on information provided in IP (ed.): Television 97, European Key Facts (Neuilly-sur-Seine) (Figures for Israel were estimated on the basis of national data). Channels listed for each country are weighted according to their technical distribution across the population and summed for the following categories: a) Total number of channels available ('No. Ch.'), among these b) percentage of national channels ('% nat.'), and c) percentage of national, foreign and pan-European channels distributed in the native language ('% lang.'). The numbers of channels are to be read as 'number of channels available for the average television household'; they do *not* represent the total number of channels In order to take technical distribution into account, channels were weighted by the percentage of television households they reach. For example, a channel covering 100 per cent of the country was counted as 1.0, another channel reaching 50 per cent of the television households was counted as 0.5.

[2]Figures for the German speaking Switzerland. Figures for the French and Italian speaking parts of Switzerland are similar, except that the foreign channels are not German but French or Italian respectively.

[3] Figures for the Flemish Community of Belgium.

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Footnotes

[1] While Israel is strictly not part of Europe, its inclusion strengthens our representation of Mediterranean countries.

[2] We are here indebted to the vision of Jay Blumler who, together with Colin Shaw and his colleagues at the Broadcasting Standards Council (now, Broadcasting Standards Commission), originally proposed that this research should be conducted at a European comparative level and who obtained the initial funding to make this possible.

[3] Throughout this volume we have adopted the international convention of identifying countries by two letters, as follows: Flanders (BE-vlg), Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), France (FR), Germany (DE), Israel (IL), Italy (IT), the Netherlands (NL), Spain (ES), Sweden (SE), Switzerland (CH), United Kingdom (GB).

[4] In Europe, Finland has traveled the furthest: after a 12-month maternity leave, either parent is offered the possibility to stay at home until the child is three years old, including financial compensation and job guarantees after those three years. If the parents prefer to continue to work outside, it is the community's responsibility to arrange for child care while the parents are out working. Some Nordic countries have legislation allowing parents to reduce their daily working hours to take care of family commitments: Finland allows parents of children under age four, Sweden parents with children under age ten, to shorten each workday by two hours, to be dedicated to child care. Indeed, flexible work schedules on the one hand and expanding public day-care centers on the other allow mothers (and fathers) to more easily combine paid work with family commitments. Germany offers 'flexitime' practices, while in Sweden part-time work while children are still very young can always be turned into full-time employment whenever wanted. Employers, traditionally unsupportive of such arrangements, now allow employees to work out of their homes or to bring 'home to work,' by providing child care at the workplace (UNDP, 1995).

[5] Germany and Switzerland differ in other ways, however. Unlike Germany, Switzerland is a relatively small country whose different language communities share the same language as a bigger country. Thus we find the 'next-door-giant' problem: The many foreign channels available in their own language causes heavy competition for national broadcasters; hence only a small number of the channels available for Swiss households are national channels.

[6] Thus, this does not take into account rather specific technologies (e.g. Minitel in France) which could be interpreted as very high availability of computers.

Given the leading role today taken by France and Spain in digital television, this classification might be a surprise, but in 1997-8, when our empirical work was completed, digital television was not yet a part of children's media environment in any country.