

Net media are increasingly strong

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University of Gothenburg, Sweden, conducts a yearly survey of Swedes' media use called Mediebarometern, which started in 1979. The results for the 2009 survey are now complete and show that Net media are increasingly strong, but interest in 'traditional' news is decreasing.

More people are using the Net to access various [media](#) - from 85 percent of youth to 34 percent of pensioners in 2009. Those of middle age and older primarily seek out traditional media's websites, whereas youth begin with social media, e.g., Facebook. On a typical day, nearly 65 percent of 15- to 24-year-olds engage in 'social networking' on the [Internet](#). Over 50 percent of young Net users visit YouTube daily, and 37 percent have visited a blog. Significantly fewer, about 10 percent, are active bloggers themselves. 44 percent of children (9-14 years) play computer and video games.

Pensioners are becoming increasingly habitual Net users (34 percent); on a typical day, 20 percent of older Net users read a daily paper over the Net. However, [TV viewing](#) still dominates in all groups, with one exception - in 2009, more 15- to 24-year-olds engaged in [Internet use](#) than in TV viewing. When they watch TV, they are more likely than other groups to first choose programmes on niche channels on Viasat and SBS. We can furthermore establish that young people who are highly active Net media users are also regular users of traditional media. This is how Ulla Carlsson, Professor at Nordicom, University of Gothenburg - summarizes the results of Mediebarometern 2009.

One consequence of this more differentiated media use is that fewer and

fewer access news via traditional mass media, and this is particularly true of youth. The decline is clearest with regard to TV news viewing.

Various Internet news services are certainly used, which to some extent explains this decline, but this is another type of use: short news texts on traditional media's Net-based news services and more opinion expressed in services providing commentary, e.g., blogs. This more fragmentary appropriation of [news](#), where source evaluation is often left to the individual user, poses important questions from the perspective of democracy regarding the role of journalism in the general public.

This year's Media Barometer is the 30th in succession. When the survey began in 1979, we could hardly dream of the Internet, mobile phones and social media of today. At present, almost everyone has a mobile phone, and nearly 90 percent of the population in Sweden has Internet access at home. There are innumerable media apparatuses available, and the supply of different media has multiplied. An interactive and mobile communications society has developed alongside the traditional media. Nevertheless, in a 30-year perspective, somewhat more people today watch TV and read books, while about the same proportion listen to the radio and read a daily paper.

What about the amount of time we spend on media? In total, it has increased by about 40 minutes on a typical day - at present amounting to about 6 hours daily. Densification of the media supply has entailed a redistribution across the various media - from traditional media to the new media forms on the Net. People are not spending as much time on traditional media, e.g. listening to the radio, watching TV and reading [traditional media](#), as they did before. People with low education levels spend considerably more time listening to the radio and watching TV than using the Internet in the home, while the opposite applies to the highly educated. These social differences run across all age groups.

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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