[NL] Dutch Media Authority Publishes Special Edition of Mediamonitor on Dutch Media

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On 1 March 2011, the Dutch Media Authority published a special edition of its annual Mediamonitor on trends and developments in Dutch media markets and companies. The English report is meant for an international audience and has a different structure from the regular annual Monitor. By informing other Member States about the national media system, the Dutch Media Authority wants to foster the safeguarding of important values, such as media diversity and the distribution of opinion power. Moreover, the overview of the facts and actual media concentration is intended to contribute to the development of media policy. Furthermore, the Dutch media management is placed in a European context by addressing the situation in eight other European countries also. The selected countries are Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and Sweden.

Central topics include the Dutch media landscape, media concentration, continuing trends and incidental issues related to media pluralism. This edition begins with a brief introduction to the geography, social-demographics and make-up of the Netherlands to provide foreign readers with the relevant context. Next comes an explanation of the regulations on media concentration, followed by discussions on the newspaper, television, radio and internet markets. These are considered the most important for public opinion formation. Each of these chapters starts with a comparison of the Netherlands with the selected European countries in order to place the Dutch media landscape in context. Below, each market will be described briefly.

As to the principle of media diversity, the report points out that this concept contains several dimensions. Furthermore, a great variety of rules and regulations exists at national level. A common trend that is noticed in the countries studied is a wave of deregulation in ownership rules. Instead, the focus is shifted to the users' perspective and exposure to diversity, which makes the monitoring of media use more urgent. There is no supranational legislation on media ownership; at the European level general competition law must be relied on.

The newspaper market is the first to be examined. The report focuses on daily papers only. In the Netherlands, the number of titles decreased between 1987 and 2003, but it can still be regarded as a popular medium. This is not the case in

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all of the other countries studied. Another development in this market is the increased importance of free newspapers.

By contrast, the television market has grown considerably in the Netherlands in the past thirty years. However, the amount of providers keeps fluctuating. The television medium is considered the most important medium for the forming of public opinion and, in general, public broadcasters have the largest market share in the countries studied.

The third market, namely radio, has grown in the Netherlands since 1988 when commercial radio stations were allowed into the system. People spend even more time listening to the radio than watching television.

According to the Mediamonitor, the internet is an important medium for public opinion formation as well. The Dutch top 100 most visited websites contains ten news sites, which is a relatively large number compared to other countries.

The last chapter introduces the idea of a news market which covers all media types. A new model for monitoring opinion power focuses on content markets instead of distribution techniques and suppliers, since technological developments have led to convergence between all sorts of media.

Mediamonitor 'The Dutch Media in 2010'

http://www.mediamonitor.nl/dsresource?objectid=11689&type=org

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