

News definitions and motivations: young people and adults in Portugal and in Estonia

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Abstract

How do young people and adults define news? What motivates them to consume news? These questions guide this research, based on interviews with Portuguese and Estonian young people and adults. The motivations for news consumption can be related to normative pressures to fulfil particular social roles and personal needs related to one's life-world. The diversity of the definitions of news seems to be broader in Portugal, whereas in Estonia, news definitions are based on professional concepts of news and are regarded as synonymous with educational

content. The results indicate stronger age differences in news definitions in Portugal than in Estonia. However, considering the massive changes in Europe over the past three decades, including varied integration processes and the advent of the Internet, we contend that digital media are continually producing more similarities in news consumption by audiences in different countries. This influence is relevant to understanding the media options in other European countries.

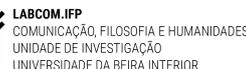
Keywords: news motivations; news definitions; young people; adults; daily life.

INTRODUCTION: COUNTRY CONTEXTS

MEDIA systems research has shown that media consumption patterns vary across Europe (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Peruško, Vozab, & Čuvalo, 2013; Terzis, 2007). In this research, we focus on two countries, Portugal and Estonia, to discuss how audiences view news and what motivates or de-motivates them in the consumption of news. Taking into account the different histories and relationships between the news media and societies in various countries, the findings of other studies (e.g. Aalberg, Blekesaune, & Elvestad, 2013) show the importance of not only psychological factors but also systemic factors, such as media system types and national context, in determining news consumption patterns. We propose that the changing media context, in which digital platforms make more content available globally and the development of

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digital media spurs new culture consumption trends, can result in more similar media consumption patterns, especially among younger audiences. This trend is occurring not only in Estonia and Portugal but all across Europe. Thus, in this research, Estonia and Portugal serve as examples of more general trends in the changing relationships of audiences to news, reinforcing the idea that digital environments may constitute convergence factors for news consumers' portraits of news (Kõuts-Klemm & Brites, 2017). In this context, we also argue for the need to consider research in countries outside of the Anglo-Saxon world that provides data on other relevant and contrasting geographies of the globalised world.

Comparative research should be contextualised in terms of the countries that are studied, in relation to the research questions and the participants' answers and positions (Livingstone, 2003, 2012). In Portugal, television is the hegemonic media (Cardoso, Paisana, Neves, & Quintanilha, 2015). Even though in news consumption Portugal has particularly high rates of television consumption, there is an increasing tendency to use online news sources. Regarding news media consumption, seven of ten individuals 15 years or older use the Internet to read print news on Facebook, and less than a quarter watch television or listen to radio shows online (Cardoso et al., 2015). However, the frequency of news consumption is higher for offline sources than online sources in Portugal (Cardoso et al., 2015). Estonia has had a strong reading culture for centuries, but currently news consumption is highly fragmented across the population, and much of it has moved online. Younger groups generally prefer online news (the most popular online news portals for them are Delfi.ee and Postimees.ee), and some in this group are characterised by news avoidance (Velsker & Kõuts, 2015). Adult groups combine different channels in their media repertoires: they follow news online, read newspapers and watch evening news on television (Vihalemm & Kõuts-Klemm, 2017). Media consumption is thus fragmented in both Portugal and Estonia (Kõuts-Klemm & Brites, 2017). The learning conditions for media literacy and news promotion are very different in the contexts of these two countries. We should stress that Portugal has no formal learning context in which the public interacts with the news and learns about journalists' work, their peculiarities and the process through which the final news product is created. The Salazar and Caetano dictatorships (1933-1974) neglected civic culture, the media and the alphabetisation of the people (Brites, 2015; Villaverde Cabral, 2000). After the 25 April 1974 Carnation Revolution, the Portuguese high school humanities curriculum included journalism courses, but these were limited to students who wanted to be journalists or other communications professionals. In contrast, Estonia introduced the academic education of journalists in 1954 and supported the development of a strong journalistic culture. In 2002, as part of the formal education of wider audiences, the Estonian national curriculum explicitly included media literacy for school levels III-IV (grades VII-XII). Media literacy is conceptualised as a cross-curricular theme, encompassing various study subjects and levels. The emphasis is mostly on creating media texts following varied genre conventions and on using media as an information source (Ugur, 2011).

Based on these very different country contexts, we presume that news spaces and consumption habits differ significantly. Nevertheless, we expect some convergence as national news spaces become globalised due to digital online and social media. New digital media consumption beyond national media and traditional news channels has gained importance and, we argue, has influenced what is considered to be news and how it is consumed.

After conducting another cross-country based research on news repertoires in the context of a large international project (Adoni, Peruško, Nossek, & Schröder, 2017; Kõuts-Klemm & Brites, 2017), our goal in this cross-comparative research is to more closely examine motivations and definitions of news among different age groups. In this paper, we focus on notions of what news is and on the motivations for consuming news among young people (17–20 years old) and adults (38–49 years old) in Portugal and Estonia. Following Craft, Maksl and Ashley's (2016) and Kõuts-Klemm and Brites's (2017) previous research, we ask: how do young people and adults define news? What motivates them to consume news?

DEFINITIONS AND MOTIVATIONS

Consuming news is a significant social experience, even among young people (Cushion, 2006; Meijer, 2006; Brites, 2015; Brites et al., 2017). Today, news is everywhere; one can encounter news on Facebook or other social media or through short messaging services or email, almost without having to actively search for it (Swart, Peters, & Broersma, 2016). Social media and online news consumption follows a very different paradigm than traditional news consumption. Opinions regarding whether traditional or non-traditional news sources better facilitate news consumption differ widely (Pentina & Tarafdar, 2014).

Social media have become highly relevant news sources today. Craft, Maksl and Ashley (2016) note that people commonly encounter news through social networking, which raises an important question: when people define news, do they consider online and social media news to be news? Today, it is difficult to define what news is (Madden, Lenhart, & Fontaine, 2017; Swart et al., 2016). Some authors use dictionary or traditional definitions that may have little relevance to news today (Swart et al., 2016). Yadamsuren & Erdelez (2011, n/a) identify various criteria to distinguish news from other types of information, including:

“old vs. new definitions of news; content (topic areas, balanced, enhancing knowledge, not sensational, not slanted, objective, interesting, true, fact based); knowledge gap (something they do not know or do not have); impact; importance; proximity (local, world, professional community); currency of information; utility (work-related needs, hobbies, interests, useful, applicable); and emotions (feel-good stories).”

Nowadays, the context is different, but there is still a relationship between citizenship and news consumption. Sveningsson (2015) concludes that “the consumption of news was strongly related to the idea of being a ‘good’ citizen. However, since the participants did not regard social media news as ‘real news’, their image of themselves as citizens suffered” (p. 1). This is a relevant concern as television news accounts for a shrinking percentage of overall news consumption. Yadamsuren and Erdelez (2011), though, find that some people do not consider information not produced by professional media or journalists (e.g. Internet content) to be news.

To better understand consumption, it is also relevant to consider news avoidance. Why do some people tend to avoid news? Swart et al. (2016) believe that this can happen when consumers view the news as having little relevance to their lives. The same authors find that some people not very interested in news nevertheless frequently encountered “news on Facebook in their timelines,

because their friends shared news stories. Reading the headlines of these stories and occasionally clicking one or two was sufficient to keep up to date about big news events happening, without having to actively search for news” (Swart et al., 2016, p. 9).

Lee (2013) proposes several categories of motivations for news consumption: information-, entertainment-, opinion- and social-motivated news consumption. This author’s research, in terms of this discussion (Brites, 2015; Dahlgren, 2009), shows that certain knowledge is needed to consume more news and to be willing to participate in social life. Lee’s study (2013) also suggests that the motivation to seek out news is proportional to the effective consumption of news and that the more people want to consume news, the greater variety of news they consume. Ohlsson, Lindell and Arkhede (2017, p. 117) go even further and relate news consumption to cultural values in society: “in an increasingly choice-oriented news media landscape, [...] cultural capital may not only explain *whether*—or the extent to which—people seek out news but also *which* news providers they develop tastes and distastes for”.

Nevertheless, Lee (2013) found that age was the most relevant factor in diverse types of news motivations. While older adults were more likely “to be motivated to consume news for information and opinion purposes, younger adults were more likely to be motivated to consume news for entertainment and social reasons” and “were most driven to consume news for information purposes, and least driven to consume news for opinions” (Lee, 2012, pp. 311-312). Recent research conducted by the Knight Foundation (Madden, Lenhart, & Fontaine, 2017) also points to an enlarged definition of news.

Craft et al. (2016, p. 1) found that young people participating in focus groups displayed a basic sense of news literacy, and the authors concluded that those who had even a very small amount of “knowledge about news industries, content, and effects c[an] better direct their own exposure, understanding, and subsequent civic engagement”. A point worth investigating is the notion that general news and political news are for adults and that young people will pay attention to them as they get older (Brites, 2015; Brites et al., 2017; Buckingham, 2000; Craft et al., 2016).

METHODOLOGY

Although data was collected separately in Portugal and Estonia, the researchers in both countries had similar aims in conducting data collection and setting the scope of the data collected. The researchers held several meetings to prepare the article, concepts, country contexts and data cohorts to ensure the coherence and rigour of the research methods and analysis. We were especially careful to limit the risk of subjectivity, which is intrinsic to the qualitative research process (Ratner, 2002). Following Mathieu and Brites (2015), we intended to include contexts to overcome subjectivity and better interpret the data. Therefore, it was important to understand the country contexts and their associated news habits and cultural dimensions. We also considered the need to practice reflexivity, which is highly relevant in qualitative research (Caretta, 2015; Hill, Lee, & Jennaway, 2010; Mathieu & Brites, 2015) to critically study context, set the research design and interpret the results. Regarding the validation of the research, Schröder (1999) points precisely to the need for constant reflection during the research process. Categories of analysis were created, and their meanings were determined through close cooperation and fruitful discussions, as men-

tioned above. This was an excellent exercise, allowing both researchers to broaden interpretations by together asking precise questions about the data. We noticed that when analysing interview data from a familiar context, we as researchers sometimes took some meanings for granted and interpreted the data in familiar ways. Our collaborative effort created a new context of explanations and led to interesting interpretations.

The Portuguese sample, recruited in 2015–2016, consisted of eleven 17-19-year-old interviewees (six men and five women) and eleven 36-49-year-old interviewees (three men and eight women). The Estonian sample, recruited in 2015, consisted of six 19-20-year-old respondents (three men and three women) and nine 38-44-year-old respondents (four men and five women). As we will see, both in Portugal and in Estonia the interviews were conducted in relaxed and comfortable environments. Both researches were determined to maintain informal environments in order to take full advantage of the interview experience in the research, so that participants would feel relaxed yet still focussed on the subject matter of the interview.

The Portuguese sample was a cohort from the larger participatory action research (PAR) project *Young People and Families, News, Citizenship and Literacies*¹. For this project, we conducted semi-structured interviews in one secondary school in a middle-class area and one youth centre in a low-income area. In both cases, for all of the young interviewees and for some of the older adults, the researcher already knew them in the context of other research activities in PAR. We used a set of questions on news consumption, particularly the role of news media, daily patterns of news consumption, communication rights and sources of knowledge about journalism and journalistic cultures. Based on our previous experience conducting research on young people, news and participation, the first part of the interviews utilised pictures to prompt discussion of news consumption. Throughout the interview process, we also used quotations and Mafalda comic strips (by Quino) to spur conversation.

A mixed methodology was implemented in the study in Estonia². The respondents filled out short diaries on media usage on particular days (they noted down what channels they had used and news stories they had read), which were used to discuss their news consumption (what they had noticed and remembered from the news) during the interviews that took place the next day. At the beginning of every interview, an interviewer asked additional questions based on the diaries (Was the news consumption of the last day normal? Was the interviewee usually interested in particular topics and events? etc.). With this approach, the researchers actively tried to create a relaxed environment. During the interview, four written news texts were presented to the respondents to motivate discussions on the definition of news. The four texts had different contents and forms: 1) a short, hard news text, 2) a fake news story about plans for massive implantation of microchips in humans, 3) commercial content in the form of news but not labelled as paid content, and 4) a labelled press release.

The interviews were conducted in the interviewees' native languages. To ensure anonymity, the names of the interviewees were not mentioned and the original transcriptions were only accessible to the researchers responsible for translation into English.

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2. Funding by the institutional research fund IUT20-38 from the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research.

In both samples, textual analysis of the interviews was performed to determine how the interviewees from Portugal and Estonia understood what news was, what motivated them to consume news and how they imagined that news was produced. We present the results for the participants by country and age, highlighting the differences and similarities found.

Considering the authors' previous research and the needs of research that were identified (Kõuts-Klemm & Brites, 2017 and Craft et al., 2016), we will reflect on these questions: how do young people and adults define news? What motivates them to consume news?

RESULTS: WHAT IS NEWS?

The Portuguese young interviewees' answers and news definitions mentioned the issues of credibility, daily news/current events, entertainment, personal interests, journalists' role in creating news and the dominance of television and the Internet. The statements from the youngsters revealed that their views of journalism often had no real correspondence to the professional definition of journalism. Even so, they associated news with credibility, particularly the daily evening news, online newspapers and conversations with adults they knew (i.e. parents, teachers and social workers) and same-age peers whom they considered to have good knowledge of politics, history and the Internet (Brites et al., 2017).

The young participants also connected journalism to documentaries (especially on nature and history) and talk shows or programmes with interviews. Besides strict news definitions, occasionally among the interviewees' answers was the idea that journalism and news were related to entertainment morning television shows mixed with news programmes: "News programmes ... nightly news and those programmes that every Portuguese channel has, like *Você na TV* [*You on TV*]!" (PT-21M17, 12th year³). The participants who articulated this definition of news often conflated news and entertainment.

The interviewees expressed ambivalent views on the roles of facts and opinion in journalism. For some interviewees, news was about factual issues and to others it also included points of view. They believed that not only did audiences have personal preferences but also that it was difficult for professional journalists to have no opinions on topics: "I think that a good journalist has to say what he thinks and not what others might want to hear" (PT-21M17, 12th year). "A journalist has to communicate, to observe and make accessible news that the public can understand" (PT-22F17, 12th year).

The connection between the Internet and news was strong as the participants were easily able to go online, find information and news items and avoid those news items they were not interested in. They could better control the day's news in terms of what they wanted to see and search out: "When I don't understand some news, and I want to understand, I go online to get more details" (PT-25F17, 12th year).

Facebook was not widely used to track news from news channels, but the participants who used it in that way were those most interested in news. Facebook was mostly a space to share and talk about news with friends and people the users knew, not a forum for traditional news: "Yes, I

3. Country code (PT: Portugal, EST: Estonia), number of respondents, gender (M: male, F: female), age and education level.

follow news on Facebook. (...) Facebook knows what our preferences are. Our feed shows what we want. This keeps people connected. (...) No, I don't have any friends who like news media. Mostly, I relate to people who share news about art and culture" (PT-22F17, 12th year). This interviewee's lack of knowledge about how the Facebook algorithm works led her to believe that the feed showed a selection of what a consumer wanted without considering associated problems.

In Portugal, age differences emerged among the interviewees. Compared to the young people, the adults had more traditional definitions of news, associating it with credibility, legacy media and opportunities to participate in informed debate as only well-informed people had the capacity to engage in knowledgeable conversation (Brites et al., 2017). The Internet was the second most popular source of trusted information for the young people. The adults found traditional news to be more trustworthy and based their online news judgements on the number of times a piece of news appeared. The more it appeared, the more trustworthy it was considered to be: "If I don't get it [news] on television, I will search online, but I have to improve the search. ... The most credible [news] is the most common ... at least it seems [so]" (PT-3M45, 12th year).

We must also stress that a small group of the adults, the most educated, went online to search for the most reliable primary sources: "When I need to search [for] something very credible, I will opt for the primary sources—the origin" (PT-13M48, PhD). The participants described self-learning processes in which they found out about news mostly from friends, work, family and school (in this case, especially among the younger group). School lessons involved visits to newspapers and basic learning processes (mostly in Portuguese and history lessons) but not critical learning.

As mentioned, the Portuguese interviewees exhibited high levels of interest in traditional news, especially television, compared to online sources, and nightly news programmes were strongly associated with news processes. In contrast to the young people, radio news also had a place in the adults' lives. Especially highly educated adults consumed news online and through Facebook, including Facebook news pages (mostly newspapers). In contrast to the adults' news consumption on Facebook, the young people mostly used Facebook to follow news from news media, even if there was also a certain intersection with entertainment: "*Público* [reference newspaper]. I follow the *Público* page on Facebook" (PT-10F44, Degree).

Both age groups in the Portugal sample saw daily news as related to current events. This is the primary identification of news formats they established, although the topics varied due to agenda setting or personal interests. The adults made specific connections of news with work and sometimes sought news related to specific work-related needs (e.g. a specific task, something they needed to improve and the acquisition of knowledge to be more informed, do a better job and talk with colleagues).

One of the most negative results regarding disconnection from the news in Portugal was that what both the young people and adults knew about the news media industry was the result of a self-learning process that often provided no real structure to critically navigate information: "I think that this interview is helping me to reflect! I know [about] these issues through self-learning. I've never had support at school or at other levels" (PT-11aM19, first-year student). Unlike in Portugal, the young people and adults in the Estonian sample had similar news definitions: "News is something I didn't know [about] before, and it is something interesting" (EST-5F19, studying

in a secondary school). “News is about actual things—something that just happened, is happening or will happen” (EST-8M36, higher education). “News is something I didn’t know about earlier” (EST-7F43, secondary education).

It seems that one of the most important factors that makes it possible to understand how users saw news was the media brand. The participants defined news as content they could read on websites that were commonly defined as news websites. This definition is tautological and gives responsibility for the definition of news to the news producers, to the media themselves: “For me, news is if I go to a real news portal. I, for example, do not read gossip sites like Elu24. That can be treated as yellow press. News is what I read in Postimees.ee or in Delfi.ee” (EST-2M19, studying in a vocational school). News consumption is based on taken-for-granted knowledge about the value and trustworthiness of news brands. Studies on digital news by Reuters also indicate that for news followers, the media brand is an important marker distinguishing between valuable and junk online content (Kantar Media, 2016; Newman & Levy, 2013, 2014).

For the Estonian interviewees, news was defined by media outlets. News stories followed a particular form and structure well known to audiences: “News has to be explained very briefly” (EST-14M36, university degree). “News on the Internet, for me, is something that I do not sort into spam, which I can understand based on the key words that the news is real ... something that is serious, that influences my world view” (EST-1M19, studying at a vocational school). When the Estonian respondents tried to explain what news was, they often based their explanations on what news was not: “News is not something you can sometimes see in Estonian media: some old article from the Western media translated and described as something new” (EST-8M36, higher education). In opposition to news, the interviewees cited websites that presented popular or specifically targeted information. The interviewees labelled gossip and curiosities as entertainment, not news, unlike the Portuguese youngsters: “News is something that is based on scientific facts. For example, Elu24.ee and Naine24.ee are not news. They only do entertaining stories. ... Real news seems to be more serious” (EST-3F19, studying in secondary school).

The Estonian young people were not really passionate about news produced by journalists. Some young people were strongly oriented to recommendations from others: “News stories have to be interesting. ... I avoid all kinds of stuff related to politics. It is not interesting to me” (EST-1M19, studying in a vocational school). The Internet was identified as the main news source, especially among the young people but also among some adults. The Internet enabled participants to select only content relevant to their life-worlds. The deciding factor that directed the choice of channels was the opportunity to have control over private-time usage and activities: “The Internet has no limits. Radio and television are more limited. There, you can only get one piece of news after another, and I have no control over the sequence news stories are presented in” (EST-11M39, university degree).

The Estonian sample showed few differences between young people and adults in the understanding of news and motivations for news consumption. Other studies in media consumption have shown that the age dividing line in media consumption preferences is around 45 years old in Estonia (Vihalemm & Kõuts-Klemm, 2017): thus the adults’ group was not old enough to reveal significant differences.

WHAT MOTIVATES NEWS CONSUMPTION?

Among Portuguese young people, duty was one of the most cited motives for consuming news: “As a citizen, I should be informed about my country and the rest of the world. Nowadays, we have this opportunity, and we should take advantage of it” (PT-21M17, 12th year). This duty was considered social and made it possible, for instance, to have a minimum knowledge for discussions at school and to formulate views on what is going on at the local level and in the world: “News is good. Everybody needs the news. We know about things on the other side of the world that a few years ago we didn’t know about. At least, it was not so easy” (PT-21M17, 12th year). News was also considered important for preparing for the future and developing views on daily life matters, mostly related to economic issues (which are mostly influenced by the recent Portuguese economic crisis) and security: “I think news is useful. For instance, for my parents it is important that they know if fuel prices will increase or decrease” (PT-25F17, 12th year).

A few interviewees specifically said that they liked news and several also related this to liking the benefits of news for themselves, keeping them informed and giving them perspectives on the transition to adulthood and searching for jobs: “If I don’t follow the news, I won’t know what is going on. It is important for getting a job, and without news I wouldn’t know anything” (PT-19M17, 9th year).

Another aspect relevant to news that emerged in the Portugal sample was demotivation factors (Brites, 2015). Too much coverage of cultural issues and not enough about political news and bias in television news were identified as demotivating factors: “On television, they select the news too much. It can be biased. It is important, but we need to look at other information” (PT-13F17, 12th year).

In the Estonian sample, the younger interviewees’ strongest motivation for news consumption was the need for information that was important to them personally. Many said that news had to be personally interesting and educational. The words *interesting* and *educational* were sometimes even used synonymously: “News has to be interesting, educational for me” (EST-2M19, studying at a vocational school). In the Estonian language, the translation of the noun *news* is not exclusively related to pieces produced by journalists, so it was possible for the respondents to expand the definition to various content providing new knowledge.

Like the Portuguese respondents, the Estonian interviewees saw news as an information source preparing them for their future roles and occupations: “I search for different facts related to the education field. I mainly need news related to my occupational specialisation” (EST-4M19, studying in a vocational school). However, the young people displayed open-mindedness in their news consumption. News was important for them to keep up-to-date about events taking place in different areas and communities: “For me, a news story contains some useful information that broadens my mind. I read local news to be informed about what is happening in my home region. I like to be aware of life there” (EST-3F19, studying at a secondary school). “I like to be aware of things in the world, such as domestic and world politics” (EST-4M19, studying at a vocational school).

The Estonian young people were oriented towards opinions shared by significant people in their lives, not the general or anonymous public. When looking at the consumption of news

content by older interviewees, we can see that the last point was the main difference between the young people and adults. This is also in line with the findings on Portuguese young people.

Portuguese adults were motivated by duty and other role-related social aspects. Especially the women respondents said that their news consumption increased when they became mothers. Their children also consumed more news than they had at the same age, and the need to support their children motivated them to consume more news: “We listen to news about emigration. I like to know especially about young people. One of these days, my daughters might go abroad. It is a regular thing that happens these days. I need to give them roots, so they can easily fly. I have to know what is going on so that I can help them to make decisions one of these days” (PT-12F46, Degree).

Age and life cycle also emerged as motivations, especially for adults: “In the old days, when I was young, news did not have any meaning to me. Now, I must know more” (PT-9F36, 12th year). News was also highly connected both to relevant daily life issues and to youngsters’ individual interests (e.g. culinary tastes, taxes and work) and the common need to have more knowledge, security and a daily agenda. In addition, in some cases the Portuguese adult interviewees, like the young people, referred to news consumption as a duty. News was seen as an aid in the management of daily life issues and activities: “A[s a] citizen [with] duties and rights, I must be informed about what is happening that is good and not good for me” (PT-7F49, degree). The adults’ development of opinions, as among the young people, also benefited from news: “I like to form my own opinions. To do that, I have to be informed” (PT-10F44, degree). In this case, the Internet, especially among highly educated parents, provided extra motivation for news consumption and in-depth investigation of various issues.

De-motivations included inaccurate, biased news and the desire to avoid negative news (especially among mothers) and news about catastrophes (especially among fathers). We should always carefully examine claims of being demotivated. A mother who says that she is demotivated and does not watch television news but always buys the weekly reference newspaper, listens to the radio and searches online is probably cynically saying that she does not perceive news to be credible. Some interviewees were demotivated because all news seemed the same to them.

The Estonian adults described more news consumption motivations than the young group. The adults explained their need to consume news related to their occupations, daily routines and life experiences: “I have to follow the news that is related to my work. I have to make money for my clients, and I follow business news every day” (EST-15M38, secondary education). Even if the interviewees did not know or could not explain why they consumed news, they related it to their habits and usual daily routines: “I suppose that I am used to following the news. It is comfortable for me, customary and habitual. I am so ... used to news in my everyday life” (EST-15M38, secondary education). Interviewees from this group had heterogeneous interests and life-worlds that directed their news consumption. As one male entrepreneur stated, “I am a person with very broad interests” (EST-11M39, higher education).

Monitoring the social environment by checking news seemed to be more important for adults than for young people: “From the news that they give me, I need an opportunity to compare what other people are talking about, what people from other neighbourhoods know and generally talk about, in addition to those things that have been proven scientifically” (EST-9F40, higher

education). Some interviewees even reported feeling the need to know more about the content on alternative media sites (e.g. Telegram.ee in Estonia) to compare and contribute their opinions to the general or public opinion.

It appears that the Estonian adults did not view news consumption as a normative act, following news to fulfil a social role (e.g. that of a good citizen). Instead, personal motivations dominated these interviews: to have broader knowledge, to grow as a person, and to know more about the general opinion climate. Factors related to personal self-fulfilment were more important than normative factors among Estonian interviewees.

Table 1. Comparison of results, by country

Portugal	Estonia
News definitions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Young people: – Online information considered a very good form to choose information they want – Credibility related to daily TV news and talking to adults or peers with “knowledge” – Lack of sole identifications with professional journalism as news, for instance relation to entertainment – Ambivalent view of journalism facts and opinion as roles of journalism – Facebook as talking and sharing place of news among friends; hardly follow traditional media – Daily news related to current events and personal interests – They learned about news processes and how to deal with news by themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Young people and adults: – Internet is a widely used source for news, namely in news sites – News as something new. – Reading of news that is labelled as news, even if it is a website; related to professional brand – They opt for trustworthy news brands – News is concise – They define news in terms of what news is not (for instance, websites focussing on human interest or entertainment) – Younger interviewees are not as passionate about traditional news and prefer online outlets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Adults: – Most educated adults say they go online to search for primary sources; they look for trustworthy information – Credibility related to professional journalism; credible information is needed to participate in informed debates – Traditional definition of news; more related to professional media; Internet is secondary – Radio news is still relevant – On Facebook they follow traditional media – Daily news related to current events and personal interests 	

– They learned about news processes and how to deal with news by themselves

Motivations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Young people: – To prepare for the future – To know local reality and what is going on in the world – To have better skills for discussions at school – To have knowledge about economic issues and security – To better distinguish between what is and what is not news – They will become motivated when they get older – Demotivated by political and biased news – Duty – 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Young people: – To prepare for the future – To know local reality and what is going on in the world – To get personally important information – Has to be personally interesting and educational – They are motivated by “significant others” and not by the general or anonymous public – Reinforcing of self-opinions – Demotivated by biased news; avoid negative news and catastrophes –
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Adults: – Duty – Age life cycle – Daily-life relevant issues (for instance, work issues) – Motivation found in different aspects – Increase in news consumption after becoming parents (especially women) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Adults: – Duty – Age life cycle – Daily-life relevant issues (for instance, work purposes) – Motivation found in different aspects – To have broader knowledge, to grow as a person, and to know more about the general climate of opinions

Legend: Bold indicates what is common in both countries; underlined indicates what is common among different age groups in the same country.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The data collection on news definitions and motivations in Portugal and Estonia was conducted in separate research projects, as previously explained. In this study, there was no intention of establishing cause-effect relationships. The objective was to ensure, as previously explained, rigorous collaboration in defining the common elements that could be used to better explain and compare both countries’ realities. The European scientific sphere, in fact, creates fruitful networks for collaboration, and the researchers in the two countries observed many similarities in the aims and scopes of their projects and took on the challenge of analysing collected data in cooperation. The research questions, analysis schemes and categories grew throughout our discussions and exchange of questions. Although the methodologies used in the studies of Estonian and Portuguese news consumers were slightly different, there were similarities among the interviewees. The impact of digital media in creating more similarities in news consumption among audiences in

different countries could likely be found in other European countries as well. Facebook and other online sources increasingly provide motivation for news consumption, with common references to online environments. We found that the consuming of news mainly via the Internet posed many challenges to audiences: it required even higher media literacy levels to be able to distinguish between news and other content.

For the interviewees from both countries, it was important to have control over their news consumption: to decide for themselves what content they consumed and to avoid boring topics. The interviewees were aware that the Internet was most likely to provide them with this ability, and they paid more attention to particular content than to consuming news through traditional channels, such as television and radio.

Related to the Internet, the opinion-formation motivation for news consumption was clearly visible. The interviewees, especially younger people, mentioned that it was good to read and discuss others' opinions while forming their own and checking the accuracy of their images of the world. News as a topic of conversations, though, was not restricted to the Internet; every piece of news can be questioned and discussed. Considering Internet possibilities and country contexts, while Estonia has a better developed literacy system regarding media and news education, it is important to note that the better educated Portuguese, especially the adults, also preferred online news consumption. The Internet gave them better tools to decide and choose.

Recalling Lee's (2013) proposals, we can see in the samples from both countries the need to be informed about the outside world and about daily life needs. These result in social- and opinion-motivated news consumption, characteristics that go somewhat beyond classic information-motivated news consumption.

In defining what news is, the media themselves are very important: what media professionals present as news as a result of information manipulation is also understood by audience members as news. Whereas professional definitions were the main source for understanding what news is among the Estonian interviewees, there were more creative explanations and a broader range of news definitions among the Portuguese interviewees. We should keep in mind that Portuguese citizens have few interactions with journalism and media education in the formal school curricula, but the Estonian interviewees had studied what news is in media education. Our conclusions about the important role of the media in creating perceptions of what news is can also be seen in the Reuters digital news studies: media brands still lend credibility to news (Newman & Levy, 2013). Especially on the Internet, news consumers need the indicator of a news brand to be able to evaluate the credibility of content. This was a common result that pointed to the relevance of traditional news platforms even in purely online environments. In both countries, audiences had rather high expectations of journalists' work. News consumers expect that journalists will follow the professional standards of the Anglo-Saxon tradition, will mostly present objective, balanced news stories based on strong facts, and will separate opinions from fact. These expectations are supported by the school curriculum in Estonia and by debates on Portuguese media, primarily television, stressing that journalists should separate facts from opinions under professional requirements.

The countries' audiences, even so, show important differences in their motivations to consume news, and we need to further examine whether news consumption motivations are universal or culture specific. In a very broad sense, we can distinguish between motivations for news consumption

related to social roles (normative) and personal interests (individual life-world). Of the normative motivations, the clearest are to be good citizens (Sveningsson, 2015) (among both young people and adults) and to be good parents (among adults). These motivations were not often mentioned by the Estonian interviewees but were by the Portuguese. Motivations related to personal interests were evident in both countries: simple personal interest in what was happening (“I am interested in news”; “I like news”) and the motivation (or even need) to be informed about processes in professional matters, education or hobbies.

Although this was not the main research focus, we found there is a need for future research on the differences in media literacy learning skills in these two countries. It was clear that the interviewees in both age groups in Portugal had negative views of the self-learning process about news and its implications. In contrast, the Estonian interviewees saw educational value in news consumption.

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