

Conference theme: Social Change in Science and Technology
Session 11: ICT Use, Energy Consumption and the Changing Practices

“I know about the environmental and climate challenges, but you’ll never get my smart-phone!” Engaging adolescents to change their use of ICT considering climate mitigation

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Technology is becoming increasingly important in the lives of adolescents. They are heavy users of new electronic communication forms (instant messaging, e-mail, and text messaging), as well as communication-oriented Internet site such as blogs, Facebook, twitter etc., and other sites for sharing photos and videos. They are also spending much money and time on ICT equipment. However, this use has environmental and climate impacts, which often are not thought about. What happens when adolescents are confronted with such issues? STS has been concerned with public engagement regarding science and technology. How may we manage the issue of disengagement?

In this paper, we analyse 7 focus group interviews and four workshops organised to elicit responses from adolescents regarding potentially important behavioural changes such as energy efficient ICT use, transformed ICT use, the effects of information campaigns and demands made in relation to new energy technologies. What are the main concerns of the youth with respect to reduce their ICT use and thus their use of energy in order to contribute to climate mitigation? Is it at all possible to consider disengagement with some forms of ICT?