

Newspapers resist arguments for ID cards

'The national newspapers' coverage of the ID Scheme presents the Government's plans for building a National Identity Register and for issuing ID cards as illiberal'.

'The Scheme is portrayed as not secure and lacking accountability, and its introduction is seen as proceeding by stealth'.

These are some of the findings released today in a report entitled 'ID cards: A snapshot of the debate in the UK press'.

The study was conducted by Elisa Pieri at the University of Manchester and followed the debate in the UK national printed media on broadsheet and tabloid newspapers.

The news coverage was collected for a period of four months coinciding with the launch on 6th March 2008 of the revised Government strategy for implementation of the ID Scheme by Home Secretary Jacqui Smith.

The study looked at the extent to which prevailing arguments promoted in policy discourse featured in the printed media over that period.

The report identifies the arguments prevailing in the newspaper coverage and analyses the strategies used to promote them, including the use of humour and sarcasm. It argues that the key arguments promoted in policy discourse are generally resisted in the media coverage analysed.

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Notes:

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Further information on the ID study on http://www.ncess.ac.uk/research/hub_research/idcards/
Full Report and Executive Summary also available there.

This study was conducted as part of larger project, funded by JISC, which looked at frame analysis - the methodology used to recover and study the arguments mobilised in the media coverage – and looked at whether it can be assisted through text mining techniques. Further information on the larger project on <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/einfrastructure/assistentmfa>