

Social Media Experiences of the Netherlands Twin Register

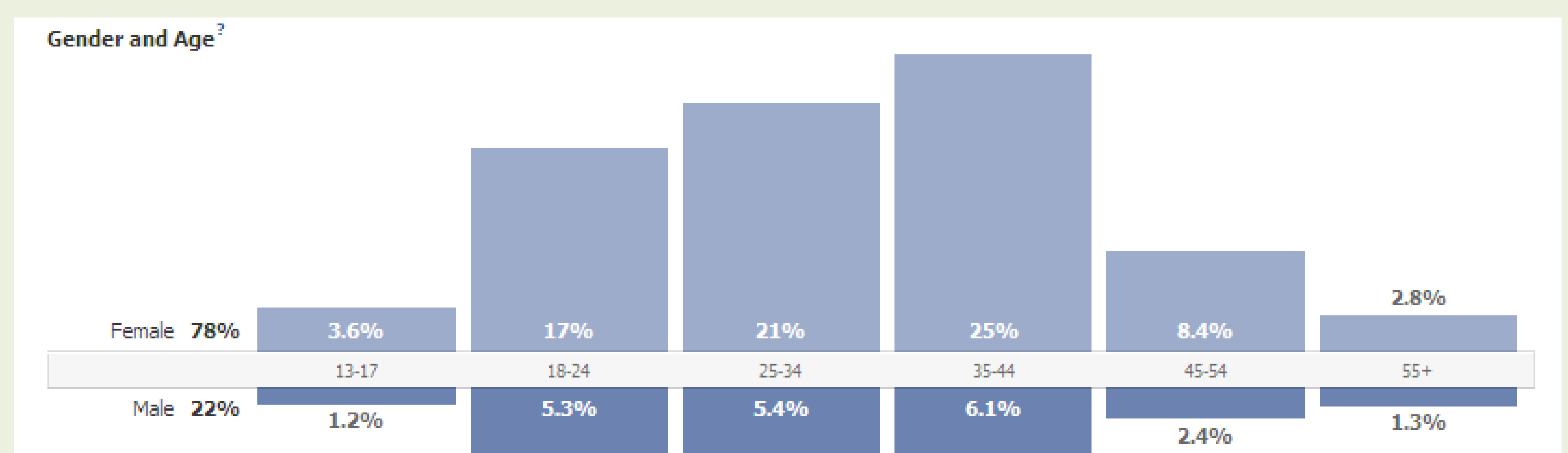
N. Stroo, M.H.M. de Moor, L. Ligthart, C. Brouwer, G. Willemsen, D.I. Boomsma, J.M. Vink
Netherlands Twin Register, Dept. Biological Psychology, VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Introduction

Most research institutes have a website with the aim of informing their participants about ongoing research studies and results. However, information on these sites is generally static and not set up for active participant contact. The present day development of social media provides an opportunity for a more active interaction with participants. Recently, the Netherlands Twin Register (NTR) became an active player in social media. This includes Facebook, Twitter and Hyves. The most important goal is to decrease the distance between the research institute (NTR) and the participants.

Statistics

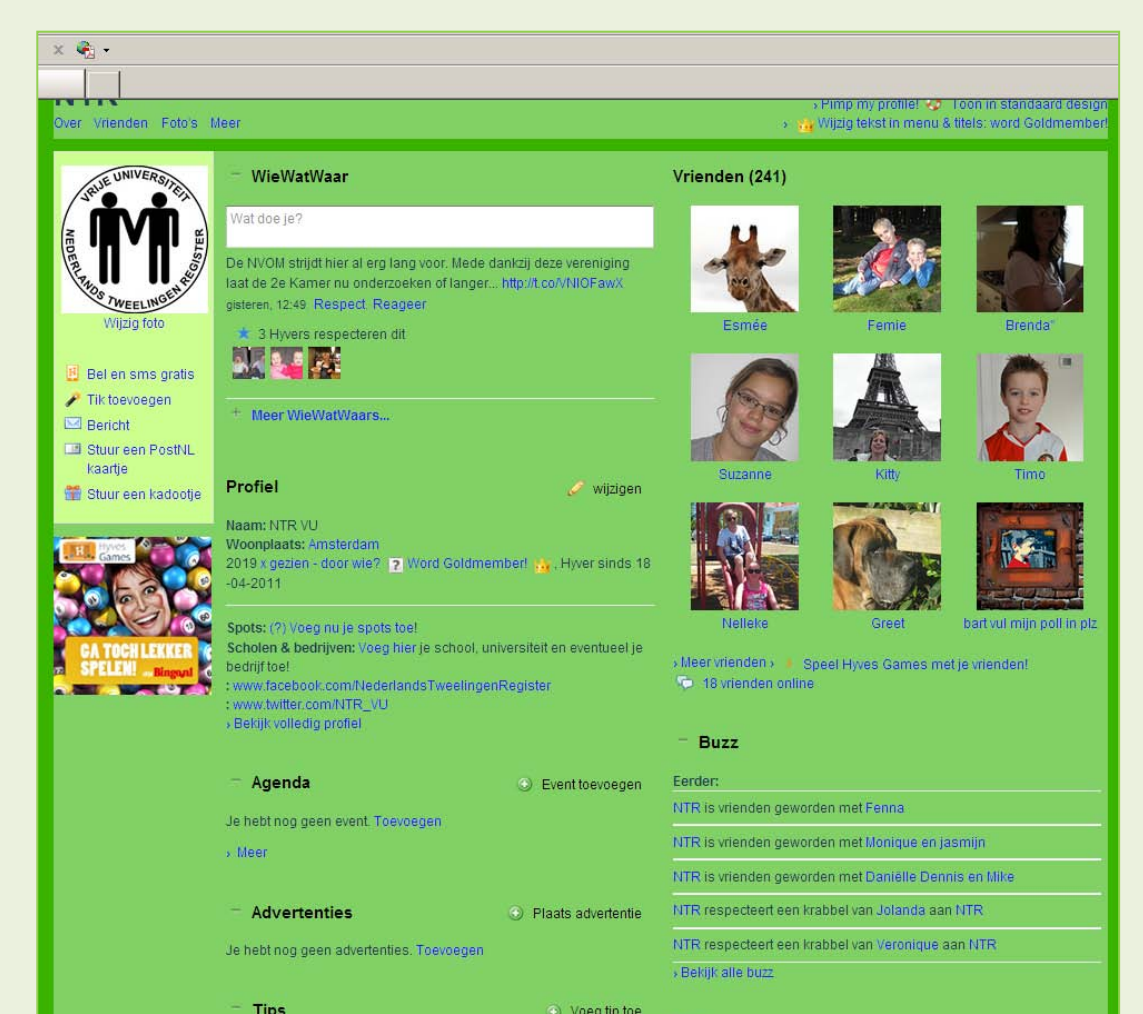
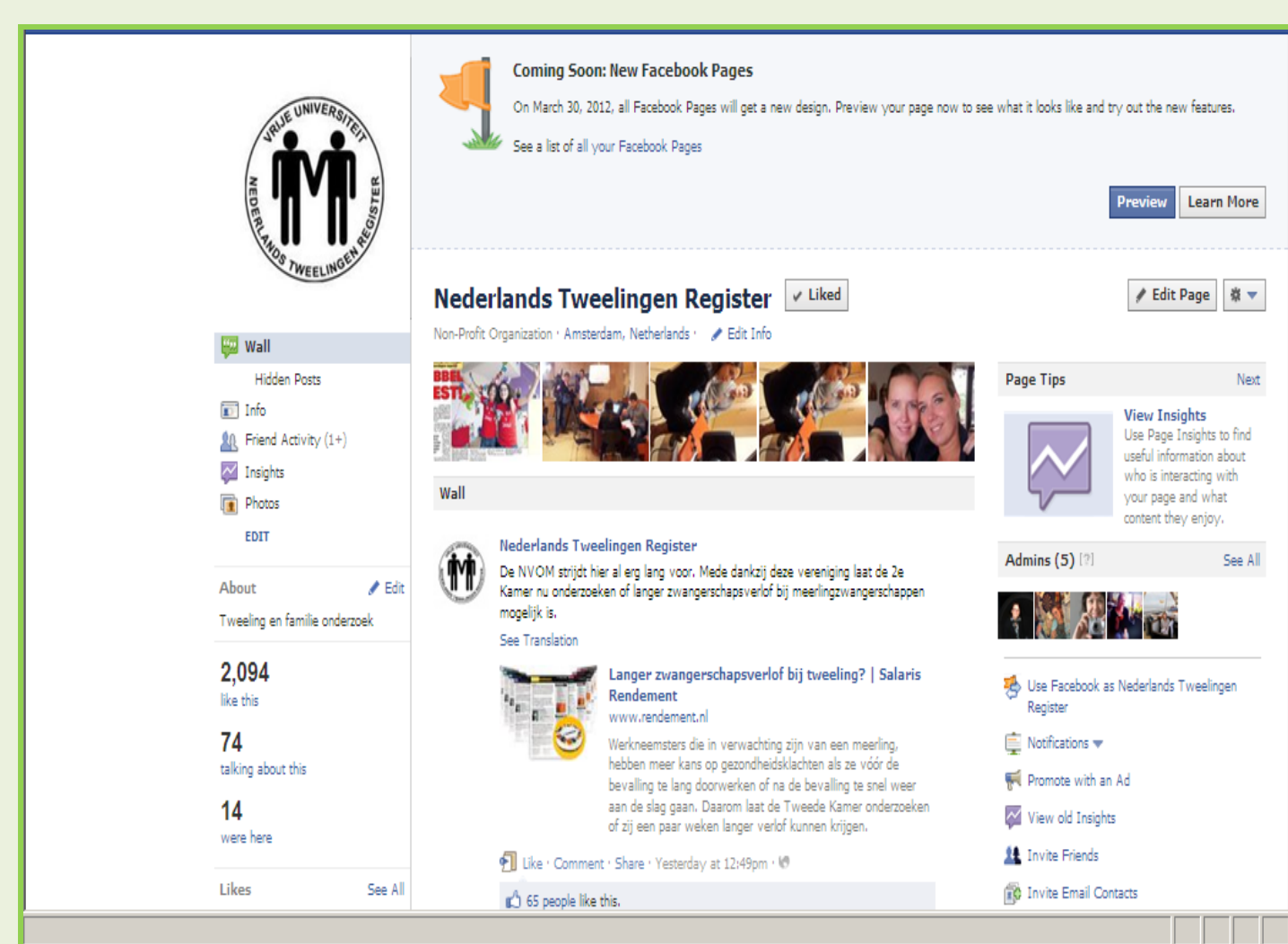
	Followers (ref.date 27-03-2012)
	2.110
	598
	240



Methods & Results

The NTR frequently posts messages related to twins and twin research. The topics can be very different. Messages will be posted at the same time on the 3 different pages. Only the NTR administrators are authorized to post. Of course participants can respond to these messages or ask questions to the NTR. The most viewed and therefore most important page is the Facebook page. This page has weekly more than 3000 hits (unique visitors).

Examples of posted topics (in order of most liked): 1. human interest topics (like the birth of a twin polar bear or the anniversary of a 100 years old twin pair), 2. calls for pictures of twins, 3. announcements of twin related TV programs, 4. calls for participation in research, 5. research results



Conclusion

Social media give the NTR the chance to reach participants on a more informal level. Participants feel more connected to the NTR, while they receive messages on a regular basis and are informed more often about what is happening with their data. For researchers it is the perfect medium to quickly get in touch with participants. The NTR has just started to use social media. However our experience of the last year indicates that social media, especially Facebook, can help twin registers and other research institutes connect to their participants.

Contact: n.stroo@vu.nl



<https://www.facebook.com/NederlandsTweelingenRegister>

https://twitter.com/NTR_VU

<http://ntr-vu.hyves.nl/>

What is YOUR opinion?

Please visit our FB page and answer the poll.