Study
Assessment Criteria
for Media Literacy Levels

A comprehensive view of the concept of media literacy and an understanding of how media literacy levels in Europe should be assessed

Media Literacy Conference
Structure of this Presentation

- The Challenge;
- Preliminary Findings;
- The Framework;
- Rankings, Graphs; Recommendations;
The EAVI Consortium for EC dg INFSOC

EAVI – European Association Viewers Interest – (Europe);
UAB – Universitat Autonoma Barcelona – (Spain);
UCL – Université Catholique de Louvain – (Belgium);
CLEMI – Ministère de l'Education nationale – (France);
UTA – University of Tampere – (Finland).

In addition to the Respective Partners’ Teams, Tens of Experts and Organisations have provided their contributions across Europe.
Background and Core Objectives

1. Provide a Comprehensive View of the Concept of Media Literacy;

2. Provide an Understanding of how media literacy levels in Europe should be Assessed;

3. Provide the Commission with a Tool to carry out its obligation to report on media literacy levels in the 27 Member States, under the Audiovisual Media Service Directive;

4. Provide Recommendations indicating the priorities needed in order to implement concrete policies at EU level.
The Challenge: Provide an Understanding on how media literacy levels should be measured in Europe

An Ambitious Objective
To appreciate its scale requires identifying a practical context because media literacy is a complex construction expressing many different ideas, streams of thought and research, taking - terms - dyn

Many Stakeholders
(each with its perspective)

- Media Industry (each with different legitimate interests: Television, Internet, Cinema, Radio, Press, etc.);
- International Organizations;
- Academicians;
- Researchers;
- Civil Society Bodies;
- European Institutions;
- National Ministries;
- 27 EU Member States;
- 20 Languages.

A few months
Technological and media change
So what to do next?
To Measure (or to Evaluate?)

• The various definitions and approaches of ML were integrated into a Conceptual Map as it was requested by the EC;
• The Constitutive Components and Key Properties of the definitions have been identified;
• Measure (when possible) these component through Indicators;
  (Data were not existing/available – not homogenous at European level)
• A pure mathematical model has illusory value (because it lacks of the context, some components are more difficult to measure and ML needs to be approached as a dynamic phenomenon);
• Therefore an Interpretative (not dominant) element was introduced.
Chronology of work

1. **Field Research**
   Gathering information, research studies, questionnaires, advices, collating and analysing information.

2. **Conceptual Framework and Criteria**
   Identifying constitutive elements, operational concepts and drafting the framework.

3. **Indicators**
   The identification and selection of existing indicators.

4. **Assessment Tool**
   A statistical Tool using weighted indicators to provide a country’s level of media literacy was created.

5. **Pilot studies**
   Application of the criteria and indicators in 5 pilot countries.

6. **Revision of the Tool**
   Indicators and weights were revised.

7. **European Countries**
   The criteria were sent to national experts to review and apply.

8. **General assessment**
   The criteria and indicators were then applied across the EU27.

9. **Conclusions and recommendations for future assessment**
   Suggestions for improvement of the tool, criteria and data collection were made.

10. **Policy Recommendations**
    The collation, analysis and selection of policy actions and conclusions by dozens of experts.
Framework

- Communication
- Critical understanding
- Use
- Media availability
- Media Literacy context
The two Dimensions of media literacy were identified as Individual Competences and Environmental Factors, on the basis that the symptoms of media literacy are manifested in the capabilities of the individual, and the Environmental Factors which may encourage or hamper them.

**Individual Competences**: Personal, individual capacities related to exercising certain skills (access, analysis, communication).

These competences are found within a broader set of capacities that increase the level of awareness, critical analysis and the creative capacity to solve problems; and

**Environmental Factors**: A set of contextual factors that affect individuals and relate to media education and citizens' rights.

Paolo Celot, EAVI Study on Assessment Criteria for Media Literacy Levels, MLC Conference, London, 18th November 2010
Preliminary results

Media Literacy Conference
London, 18th November 2010
EAVI
Media Literacy Assessment in Europe

This table illustrates the preliminary media literacy assessment per EU country of this Study. It shows the level of Individual Competences and Environmental Factors.

Some data (relating to critical understanding and EF) is not yet existing or collected, hence the results are partly incomplete.

### Value guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value guide</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>above 130</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 130</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 70</td>
<td>Basic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preliminary Results of the application of the Tool Assessment Results by Criteria

This graph shows the results of each of the criteria by different coloured lines.

In spite of divergences, there is a stable tendency: the Media Literacy Policy generally coincides in its upward or downward trend if compared to other indicators.
Preliminary ranking obtained from applying the tool in the EU27.
Preliminary Conclusions

- Northern Europe ranked most highly in media literacy levels overall.

- Central Europe and some Southern European countries (e.g., Portugal, Spain, Italy) tend to achieve a medium level.

- Low scoring countries are generally small or medium sized countries, recent entries to the EU, Eastern European. Therefore, there may be cultural differences that can account for a less enthusiastic embrace of the media by the general public.

- Many of the best performing countries are highly developed in terms of democracy, infrastructure, and social and economic welfare.

- There is a discernible correlation between media literacy levels in individuals and media policies and measures implemented by institutions.

- There is a positive correlation between media literacy levels and public expenditure on education.

- Positive correlation between an individual’s skills and Environmental Factors
No uniform level of media literacy across Europe.

Scandinavian and Northern countries, with high social and educational levels and relatively small populations, rank highly.

Central and some Southern European countries, with the bulk of the EU population, show a medium level.

Generally, countries in Eastern Europe, who have recently joined the EU, are found in the Basic level.
Geographical Patterns II

EU Media Literacy Assessment in 4 levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>(&gt;130)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>(70 - 100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>(&lt;70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No EF data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Media literacy assessment by criterion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Individual competences</th>
<th>Environmental Factors</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use Skills</td>
<td>Communicative Abilities</td>
<td>Critical Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-27</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>124.12</td>
<td>111.14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>96.22</td>
<td>62.89</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>72.86</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>69.77</td>
<td>48.63</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Rep.</td>
<td>101.36</td>
<td>90.31</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>148.69</td>
<td>131.07</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>130.24</td>
<td>80.64</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>136.14</td>
<td>142.89</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>110.94</td>
<td>88.28</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>108.55</td>
<td>105.46</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>55.76</td>
<td>58.05</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>84.84</td>
<td>92.44</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>123.84</td>
<td>79.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>57.36</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>102.96</td>
<td>54.84</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>91.29</td>
<td>45.61</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>148.14</td>
<td>113.46</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>81.84</td>
<td>78.31</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>141.51</td>
<td>138.51</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>78.52</td>
<td>94.52</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>69.91</td>
<td>97.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>28.16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>84.25</td>
<td>71.86</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>102.82</td>
<td>82.37</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>85.91</td>
<td>63.12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>140.12</td>
<td>123.93</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>130.83</td>
<td>115.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preliminary assessment per EU country showing the ranking of individual components.
Country examples – advanced level

Variations within the same level range
Country examples – medium level

Variations within the same level range
Country examples – basic level

Variations within the same level range
Refinement

This uniquely **pragmatic approach** to the history (and future) of media literacy fostered a concentrated approach in which necessity mothered invention. Although there are clearly limitations to the Study’s methodology, critics will struggle either to reject the adopted method in its entirety or identify an **alternative approach better suited** to the material.

In any case, generating a perfect modality of use, although reinforced by its immediate communicability, would be unable to offer the necessary global and organic perspective. Indeed, considered individually the indicators can highlight no more than the sum of their data, but **when considered holistically, the results generate an aggregate measure** that invites the drawing of expansive and workable conclusions. Although the **data is incomplete, because much of it remains unavailable**, the properties identified have been processed and interpreted at the national and European level so as to generate results sufficient for the drawing of preliminary conclusions. While a definitive model remains some way off (if it is attainable at all), the approach taken by the Consortium, and the **method adopted, has generated a tool that invites (and is likely to reward) further development by the European Commission.**
Recommendations (1)

1. To identify Critical Understanding as the key factor in the development of policies for promoting media literacy;
2. To promote citizen engagement as an essential component of full and active European citizenship;
3. To encourage national governments and media regulatory authorities to include in their remits the monitoring and enhancement of media literacy; to promote intra and international exchanges of good practice;
4. To facilitate and extend access to ICT, with specific focus on the Internet;
5. To promote public debate and awareness of media literacy;
6. To encourage the integration of media education in educational curricula both as specific goals and cross-curricular subjects;
7. To sustain the role of civil society organizations and related media literacy initiatives to foster a democratic culture and shared values;
8. To encourage active involvement by the media industry – especially audiovisual media.
A. Media Availability and Content Use

- Authorities should foster the availability of communication networks and digital services for everyone;
- The supply of, and access to, a plurality of sources of information at all levels should be pursued actively;
- Public authorities should promote policies that ensure media diversity and plurality, with particular emphasis on the preservation of media content with a public benefit;
- Authorities should promote policies to enable participation in global communication networks, and to foster local cultural diversity in form and content;
- Public authorities should protect intellectual property rights while at the same time respecting the need for reasonable and fair educational applications.
Recommendations (2.2)

B. Platforms for Cooperation Should be Created and Exchanges Favoured

- European institutions should cooperate with international organisations, such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO, to disseminate activities and so define better strategies for promoting media literacy.
- The following bodies should be established at the EU level:
  - The European Federation of Agents in Media Literacy – a formal institutional advisory body to coordinate and facilitate communication between stakeholders and Member States in the implementation of policies and initiatives supporting the growth of media literacy;
  - The European Observatory of Media Literacy – a monitoring centre for the production of reports on practice, media literacy levels, regulations, and other issues flowing from international debate;
  - These, and every other relevant and engaged authority, should promote public (offline and online) spaces so that the values, benefits and risks of media can be debated,
C. European Institutions Should Collaborate with Stakeholders (Including the Media Industry and Civil Society) in the Establishment of Common Actions and Cooperative Strategies;

- Authorities should subsidise and encourage the production and distribution of content and programmes to further the development, and promote the impact, of media literacy. Public service media in particular should promote citizen engagement and empowerment;
D. Media Education

- Authorities should introduce dedicated curricula to develop media literacy competences. As a consequence, education authorities should implement student assessments of media competence;
- Authorities should dedicate resources to the training of educators in media literacy; and also the promotion of the evaluation of educators’ media competence;
- General evaluation measures and a new system of accreditation in media literacy competence are needed at all levels;
- Vocational and occupational training should include media-training and media education.
E. Research

• Authorities should develop more systematic (and freely available) research on media literacy;
• Authorities should stimulate the development of studies and research on national educational systems and their effectiveness;
• The implementation of new technologies must be accompanied by research into media literacy. The quality of innovation will depend upon it.
F. The General Public

- Where children, young people and their families are concerned, media literacy policy should focus on fostering awareness of the safe and appropriate use of media and ICT, and the opportunities offered. In this sense, media literacy strategies should be tailored specifically for each segment of the public to better serve its particular needs;
- Concerning the remainder of the adult population, media literacy policies should encourage a diverse use of media, promoting socialisation (especially among the vulnerable and the elderly) and civic participation;
- Authorities and the media industry should promote together media literacy to encourage the creation of quality media services and content. This is especially important in relation to the young and adolescent;
- A special effort should be made when addressing the barriers and obstacles creating inequality and exclusion. Specific action should be taken to ensure that vulnerable sections of the population are not excluded by inequality of demographics, resources, age, gender, sexuality or geography.
Thank you.

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