

The future of media literacy in Europe: time to listen to the actors!

Since media literacy experts convened in Belfast, back in 2004, actors and initiatives have grown in number. In 2009, more than 350 practitioners, researchers, policymakers and media professionals from 30 countries have gathered in Bellaria to take stock of current research and practice. Their recommendations, together with a reference book, will be made public on 15 December in Brussels.

The congress that took place in Bellaria (Italy) drew the European project EuroMeduc to a close. Participants took up the main themes of media literacy in Europe at a time when this field has achieved genuine recognition. Following this congress, 350 participants have met again and worked together at shaping a combination of more than 70 recommendations and steps to be taken. The resulting book carries the title “Media literacy in Europe: controversies, challenges and perspectives” and includes feature articles pertaining to the issues addressed by this project. Its content will be commented and copies handed out on.

On 15 December at 11:00 am, partners to the EuroMeduc project will present a summary of these works to the press and to individuals and institutions whose mission is to implement media literacy in Europe. They will raise the awareness of European and national policymakers to the actions that remain to be taken in Europe with a view to deliver on the wish of the European Commission to have media literacy recognized formally in education systems and beyond.

The following speakers have accepted to honour the press conference with their effective participation: Aviva Silver, Head of the MEDIA unit, DG “Information Society and Media”-European Commission; Thierry Desmedt, Professor, Communication department, UCL (Belgium)); Patrick Verniers, Director, Média-Animation, and Coordinator, EuroMeduc.

Press release

Since two years, EuroMeduc, a media literacy project funded by the European Commission under the Lifelong Learning programme, has involved the active participation of media literacy practitioners and researchers from 30 countries. Special attention has been given to small education bodies because they have unparalleled hands-on expertise. EuroMeduc thus aimed to enhance the quality and relevance of literacy projects by way of feeding the results to existing networks and fostering more intensive, better structured exchanges. In addition, EuroMeduc aimed to identify drags, opportunities and actions to be taken. Within this remit, participants to the project have agreed more than 70 recommendations worth influencing education, science and policy.

Paris (France), Brussels (Belgium), Faro (Portugal) and Bellaria (Italy) has hosted all steps of the project.

- A cycle of three seminars managed by expert groups. Each of them addressed a strategic issue: media literacy as resulting from media production by the youth at school and outside (Paris - 2008); lifelong media literacy: innovative practices beyond school (Brussels - 2008); media literacy and internet appropriation by the youth (Faro - 2009).

- A European congress on media literacy (Bellaria - 2009) which gathered practitioners, researchers, professionals in media literacy and education, policymakers and representatives from EU institutions and the media industry.
- Publications relative to the three seminars and to the congress, to be found at www.euromeduc.eu. On 15 December, the EuroMeduc consortium will present to the press the finishing touch just brought to this project in the form of a book: "*Media literacy in Europe: controversies, challenges, and perspectives*". This compilation features a summary of contributions on the various topics addressed in the course of the three preparatory seminars, articles on leading issues discussed in Bellaria as well as the set of 70 recommendations agreed by all participants at the end of the congress.

The above three steps of the EuroMeduc project were intended by the four partners Média Animation, Clemi, Zaffiria and University of Algarve, to support together with all participants to the project, the effective and integrated development of media literacy and to see it being spread and implemented more widely throughout Europe.

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