EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION for VIEWERS INTERESTS

Study on 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

EAVI Consortium
for the European Commission
Directorate General Information Society and Media
Media Literacy Unit

Final Report

Project coordinator and editor: Paolo Celot
Scientific coodinator: José Manuel Pérez Tornero

Brussels, January 2010

Acknowledgements

The report was produced for the European Commission, DG Information Society and Media, Media Literacy Unit. We wish to thank Aviva Silver and Matteo Zacchetti of the Media Literacy Unit for their support and encouragement throughout the process of writing the Study.

All rights are reserved, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned including the right of translation, re-use of illustration, recitation, broadcasting or reproduction. For any kind of use permission of the copyright owner must be obtained.

Further information

EAVI – European Association for Viewers' Interests

The European Association for Viewers Interests (EAVI) is an independent, not-for-profit international association registered in Brussels. Its primary objective is to promote and enhance the interests of citizens and media users across Europe. EAVI has been created to facilitate the unifying process of all those who support citizens' and consumers' interests. Its activities are designed to meet the objective of engaging the interest of European institutions in the development and promotion of media literacy, social responsibility and active citizenship; to defend public interest objectives, to promote best practices in media accountability, focusing on instruments ensuring citizens' participation in media governance, and to promote best practices in media programming, with a particular attention to information and knowledge-based programmes.

Contact details:
EAVI - European Association for Viewers' Interests
Rond Point Schuman 9/16
1040 Brussels

This final report together with the respective annexes are available on EAVI-www.eavi.eu and on the European Commission's website.

For further information, please contact: celot@eavi.eu

Introduction

There is a painfully ironic dichotomy between the wealth of media available and the informed use that it is made by the citizens. While Europe's populace may be said to exist within a Media Society (rather than an Information Society), it also appears that the principles of democracy are under threat – not from violent attack, but from apathy and passive disengagement. Because the media is so omnipresent in modern society, it is no longer simply an advantage to be media literate, but a debilitating disadvantage not to be.

The more media literate a society becomes, the less likely it is that individuals and groups will be seduced by treachery and mediocrity. In the global skills race it remains, as ever was, that knowledge – not simply information – is the source of power and full citizenship.

Citizens thus must be equipped with the skills to utilize and benefit from media, and to do this Europeans need to acquire new competences beyond that of traditional literacy. The ultimate focus of media literacy therefore is the development of critical thinking and citizen participation to public life through the media. To be unambiguous, media literacy needs to be considered distinct from the nearly exclusive emphasis previously given to technology.

In recognition of this need and with the audiovisual media services Directive in mind, the European Commission is making steps towards enhancing the media literacy of its citizens and contracted EAVI and its partners to provide a criteria by which levels of media literacy may be measured in Europe.

EAVI, the not-for-profit European Association of Viewers' Interests, is now delighted to announce the publication of the Study 'Assessment Criteria of Media Literacy Levels in Europe'. The Study was produced by EAVI in partnership with the Ministère de l'Education Nationale Française, the Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, the Université Catholique de Louvain and the University of Tampere for the European Commission, DG Information Society and media and it covers 27 EU Member States.

The core objectives of the Study were to:
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 policies at EU level.

By reason of the abstract nature of media literacy, this Study is groundbreaking in its ambition and scope. The EC was pleased with the results and will act on them in order to enhance media literacy levels in Europe to the benefit of all citizens.

On a personal note, I wish to thank all those who have contributed to the Study and José Manuel and his team in particular.

Paolo Celot
Brussels, 12th January 2010

Prepared for the European Commission

Information Society and Media Directorate-General

Media and Media Literacy Unit

SMART 2008/0005

by:

EAVI - European Association for Viewers' Interests

Clemi - Ministère de l'Education nationale française

UAB - Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona

UCL - Université Catholique de Louvain

UTA - University of Tampere

Project Coordinator and Editor:	Paolo Celot (EAVI)
Scientific Coordinator:	José Manuel Pérez Tornero (UAB)
Sub Editors:	Lucía González López, Naomi Thompson (EAVI)
Scientific Assistants:	Santiago Giraldo Luque, Oralia Paredes (UAB)

Table of Contents

Executive Summary **4**
Context 4
An Ambitious Objective 4
Preliminary Findings 7
The Framework 7
Critical Understanding and Citizen Participation *9*
Preliminary Results of the Application of the Tool 11
Recommendations 13

1 Context, Objectives, Approach and Methodology **17**
1.1 The Technological Context 17
1.2 The European Commission Legislative Context 18
1.3 Objectives of the Study 20
1.4 Media Literacy: Definitions and approaches 21
1.5 Methodology 23
1.6 Team and Management 27

2 Framework and Indicators **31**
2.1 Introduction 31
2.2 Individual Competences 34
Components of Individual Competences 34
2.3 Environmental Factors 45
2.3.1 Media Availability 47
2.3.2 Media literacy context 48
2.4 Justification of Media Literacy Indicators 51
2.4.1 The character of the indicators 51
2.4.2 Function and objectives of the indicators 51
2.4.3 The Role of Media Education 52

3 The Tool **56**
3.1 How the Tool Works: Construction and Interpretation (Individual Competences) 57
3.2 How the Tool Works: Construction and Interpretation (Environmental Factors) 61
3.3 Findings and Assessments 68
3.4 Some preliminary Considerations on the Assessment 78

4 The Recommendations **80**
4.1 Recommendations, Overview 80
4.2 Specific Recommendations 83
4.2.1 Media Availability and Content use 83
4.2.2 Platforms for cooperation 84
4.2.3 The Collaboration of European Institutions and Stakeholders 85
4.2.4 Media Education 85
4.2.5 Research 86
4.2.6 The General Public 86
4.3 Socio-Economic Report 88

5 List of Annexes **92**

Executive Summary

Context

It is inevitable that Europe should be at the forefront of the discipline of media literacy. Historically, Europe has served as a cradle of (media) civilization, as well as a focus for the coordination of debate, criticism, and unchecked invention. Europe has been at the centre of the philosophical, literary and technical evolution of media, grounded as it is in a tradition of communication and interaction with its roots in public engagement and civic participation. It is therefore natural that Europe should take the lead in addressing the development of media literacy as a social and scientific imperative.

The Audiovisual Media Services Directive[1] sets out a reporting obligation for the European Commission to measure levels of media literacy in European Union Member States. It establishes new rules corresponding to media development in Europe, and anticipates a report on the assessment on media literacy levels by 2011.

The evaluation of media literacy in its many and varied forms has necessitated the development of tools and indicators capable of providing an insight into the condition, status and ubiquity of Europe's media literacy. This Study ("Study") aims to clarify and elucidate the conceptual nexus of media literacy whilst formulating a tool for its measurement throughout Europe.

The Study was conducted for the European Commission, the Directorate General Information Society, Media and Media Literacy Unit. It was completed by the European Association for Viewers' Interests EAVI, together with CLEMI, Ministère de l'Education nationale française, Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona UAB, Université Catholique de Louvain UCL and the University of Tampere UTA[2]. In addition, the Study has sought the advice and counsel of national and international organisations, including the European Newspaper Publishers' Association and numerous European Media Desks, consulting with dozens of experts across Europe.

An Ambitious Objective

Media literacy may be defined broadly as an individual's capacity to interpret autonomously and critically the flow, substance, value and consequence of media in all its many forms. Measuring this capacity individually and collectively across Europe is an ambitious undertaking. To appreciate its scale requires an identifiable and practical context because media literacy is a complex construction, expressing intrinsically many different ideas and streams of thought and research.

[1] Directive 2007/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007

[2] Identified collectively, and throughout this Study, as the "Consortium".

As a function of geography alone, it invites within Europe numerous different denotations, whether by reference to country, region or language. Different concepts are understood by equivalent terms, depending *inter alia* on the cultural substrates typifying every nation individually and each group of people collectively. Moreover, concepts and contexts can change (and force adaptation) depending on the different applications of those contexts within (and across) each country.

The Consortium was required initially to identify and agree upon a definitive and reliable framework for the Study. This involved analysing the full panoply of concepts and definitions of media literacy, and also their evaluation and comparison so as to arrive at a universally applicable and practical model of media literacy. To achieve this, the Consortium undertook a detailed analysis of definitions and concepts so as to contextualise (and interpret) media literacy's defining features. However, and unsurprisingly perhaps, considering the multiplicity of approaches, a conclusive universal definition proved unworkable – as it has done for more than twenty years.

As a result, the Consortium sought instead to measure separately the individual properties informing media literacy, thereby better addressing the discipline not only at its broadest, but through the plurality and detail of its component parts. It was decided early on that the Study should examine the connections between these properties so as to translate them into indicators – defined for the purposes of the Study as a unit of measurement (drawn from, and informed by, research materials) for the evaluation of data and the subsequent conceptualisation of media literacy from a holistic perspective. These indicators proved also to accommodate and coincide with the European Commission's broad definition of media literacy.

It was agreed within the Consortium that because some properties appeared to lend themselves better than others to measurement and statistical modelling, any resulting mathematical model would be unsuitable for the reliable analysis of media literacy. This is because media literacy is (and needs to be approached as) a dynamic phenomenon, as a process of communicative interaction between different agents in a rapidly developing environment driven by user experience and technological ambition.

It was decided that a subjective and qualitative element should be introduced, requiring national experts to measure levels of media literacy nationally. It is (and will be) through their critical assessment in the application of the tool that this expert knowledge and insight in each territory is (and will be) able to measure appropriately media literacy levels. Although it is important to note that, despite the (necessarily) subjective nature of the tool, this was at no point allowed to become a dominant criterion. The model proposed by the Study is not immune to legitimate criticism, since it takes its lead (and point of departure) from definitions and concepts that are in a constant state of flux. As such, and by way of illustration, recent technological advances have rendered any practical definition of "television", "Internet", and "viewer" temporary, at best. Contextually, therefore, the measurement of media literacy against static (as opposed to evolving) indicators would have produced conclusions of limited, and probably illusory, value.

Because each of the properties contributing to the Study's conceptualisation of media literacy is itself highly complex, the Consortium found itself consumed by the same debate that has inhibited research into media literacy for years. Time constraints, and the determination to move beyond these epistemological debates, compelled not only a concise and pragmatic approach, but conspired to prevent 'paralysis by analysis'. Moreover, the Study's approach had necessarily to take into account the European Commission's specific request for a practical tool for the measurement of levels of media literacy.

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.

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. 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.

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.
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.

The Consortium believes that such refinement of the tool should not be left to the competence of researchers alone. Although an academic contribution is invaluable, scrutiny and specialisation risk distorting or exaggerating singular details. It is for this reason that the Study has called on civil society organisations, regulators and the media industry at large to assist in the research process, thereby ensuring that the Consortium's practical analysis generates equally practical results.

It is important to emphasise that media literacy is not (and does not benefit from its reduction as) an academic or technical matter. Rather, it has more to offer as a tool for analysis within socio-politics, to which end it is vital that the tool is rendered resistant to political manipulation. To guard against this, the indicators have been identified and weighted according to a consensus of advice from national and international experts, thereby avoiding individual, organisational or national bias.

Preliminary Findings

The Framework

Subsequent to the Consortium's initial construction of media literacy, a conceptual map was created within which two fundamental fields, and their constituent properties, were identified. The framework presented here organises the properties of media literacy into independent elements with differing degrees of complexity and interconnection. This generated an overview (or map) sufficient for the referencing of any activity or development in media literacy – without risking the dilution (or loss) of particular indicators.

The identification of indicators was based in part on pre-existing data, most of which was relatively easy to obtain. This data was uncomplicated and allowed for diverse applications, permitting generative comparisons on the one hand, and longitudinal analysis on the other. All the collected data tolerated standardization and homogenization, and allowed for analysis irrespective of social context, or national and regional variation. On this basis, the Study identified two dimensions within media literacy: one flowing from an individual's ability to utilise the media, the other informed by repeating contextual and Environmental Factors. These are identified in the Study as Individual Competences and Environmental Factors. The differences between them are outlined below:

- **Individual Competences ("IC")**: IC may be defined as an individual capacity to exercise certain skills (including *inter alia* cognitive processing, analysis, communication, etc.). These competences draw on a broad range of capabilities, and embrace increasing levels of awareness, the capacity for critical thought and an ability to produce and communicate a message.

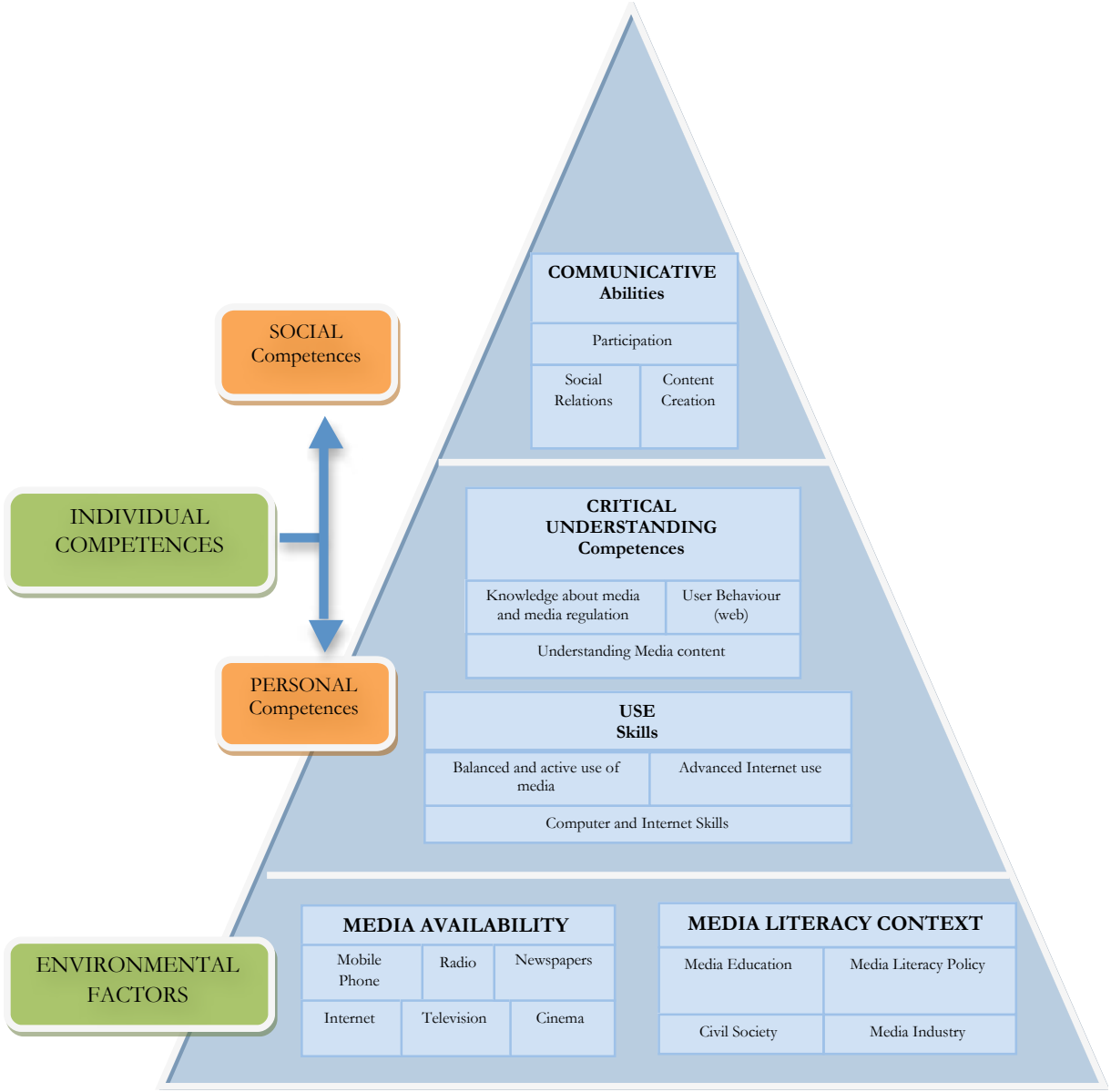
- **Environmental Factors ("EF")**: EF may be defined as a set of contextual factors (affecting Individual Competences) that impact the broad span of media literacy, including informational availability, media policy, education and the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the media community.

These two categories may be distinguished further, with IC dividing into a further two dimensions: (1) Personal and (2) Social Competences. These are separable also as (a) Use (*i.e.*, the individual's technical skill of utilisation); (b) Critical Understanding (*i.e.*, the individual's fluency of comprehension and interpretation); and (c) Communicative (*i.e.*, the individual's capacity to establish social relations through the media).

EF is represented by five principal areas – (1) Media Education; (2) Media Literacy Policy; (3) the Media Industry; and (4) Civil Society. In addition, EF account for the core principles of communication rights, with (5) the Availability of media and information; freedom of expression (*i.e.*, through the printed (offline) press, broadcasting and the Internet); and the degree of pluralism affecting levels of media literacy.[3]

[3] Data, when available, could take into account the recent study on pluralism conducted for the European Commission - Study Indicators for Media Pluralism in the Member States, 2009.

Graph 1: Structure of Media Literacy Assessment Criteria



The graphic shows the fields within which the indicators have been chosen. The base of the pyramid illustrates the necessary pre-conditions for media literacy development and the factors which facilitate or hinder it. The second level illustrates the personal competences to facilitate technical skill and cognitive process, which in turn facilitates communicative ability, at the apex of the pyramid, which permits full engagement with the media society.

Critical Understanding and Citizen Participation

The ultimate focus (and ambition) of media literacy is the development of individual Critical Understanding and citizen participation (*i.e.*, the empowerment and interaction of people in public life through the media, and by reason of the development of individual capacities for Critical Understanding of media literacy in the socio-political sphere.

If it is true that technology enriches the lives of citizens across Europe (and Member States should explore this informed presumption for the public interest, permitting access, understanding and citizens' participation), then media literacy (as a function of Critical Understanding) needs to be considered central and distinct from the nearly exclusive emphasis previously given to technology in both national and European bodies and laws.

Critical Understanding

As an example, the importance of Critical Understanding was demonstrated by the justifiable concern of many EU institutions about the low voter turnout at the recent European elections[4]. There is a painfully ironic dichotomy between the wealth of media available and the informed use that is made by the citizens.

So that while Europe's populace may be said to exist within a media (rather than an information) society, the power of the media has been largely underestimated in the past and it constitutes an increasing concern for many national and international institutions. As such, it is clear that the principles of democracy that informed the creation of the European Union are under threat – not from violent attack, but from apathy and passive disengagement.

This worrying development can be explained in part by the inability of media users (or, in the alternative, "everybody") to utilise the information flow to their (and their society's) benefit. Media literacy can counter-balance these dangerous effects through inclusiveness – but it is well to remember that "civil" society is often inaudible contextually, and Europe's citizens need to be better equipped to understand the media flow and to reveal why a message has been deliberately transmitted in a false or misleading way.

The media is the primary (if not the only) vehicle for the diffusion of political and economic self-interest, and the more media literate a society becomes, the less likely it is that individuals and groups will subscribe to (or be seduced by) the specious and the fallacious.

It has been demonstrated[5] further that the meaning of a symbol is often attached to an image or a sound, rather than a rational explanation. Finding meaning within a sea of semiotics is often related to emotional

[4] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/008-43313-336-12-49-901-20081201STO43289-2008-01-12-2008/default_en.htm

[5] Leege and Wald - Meaning, cultural symbols and campaign strategies 2007

processes which are problematical to measure and well beyond the remit of this Study. Consequently, when it came to analysing critical capacity, it grew apparent early on that the only way the Study might achieve any consensus was to approach individual viewers, listeners and readers directly, so as to discern at first hand collective levels of comprehension. Although national statistics offered some support, reliable data at the European level simply doesn't yet exist.

These limitations mean that reliable measurements could not have been conducted. It is for this reason that this Study has identified certain indicators as a suggestion for data that should be gathered at a European level.

Citizen Participation

It is now widely acknowledged that media play a vital role in promoting democratic values throughout Europe, particularly through the encouragement of social cohesion, cultural diversity and pluralist accessibility[6]. International institutions – such as the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, etc. – strongly encourage opportunities for citizen participation in the decision-making processes that do so much to dictate the nature and quality of daily public life.

The common ambition is to make these opportunities available to everyone, and to assist individuals in learning how to translate pure information into qualified knowledge. It is a discipline that benefits not only individuals, but the wider population, and in the global "skills race" it remains, as ever it was, that knowledge – not information – is the source of all power. The control of knowledge will define for the 21st Century the balance of global power, as it will the ongoing dissemination of intellectual and social freedom.

As such, it may be said that it is no longer an advantage to be media literate; rather it is a debilitating disadvantage not to be.

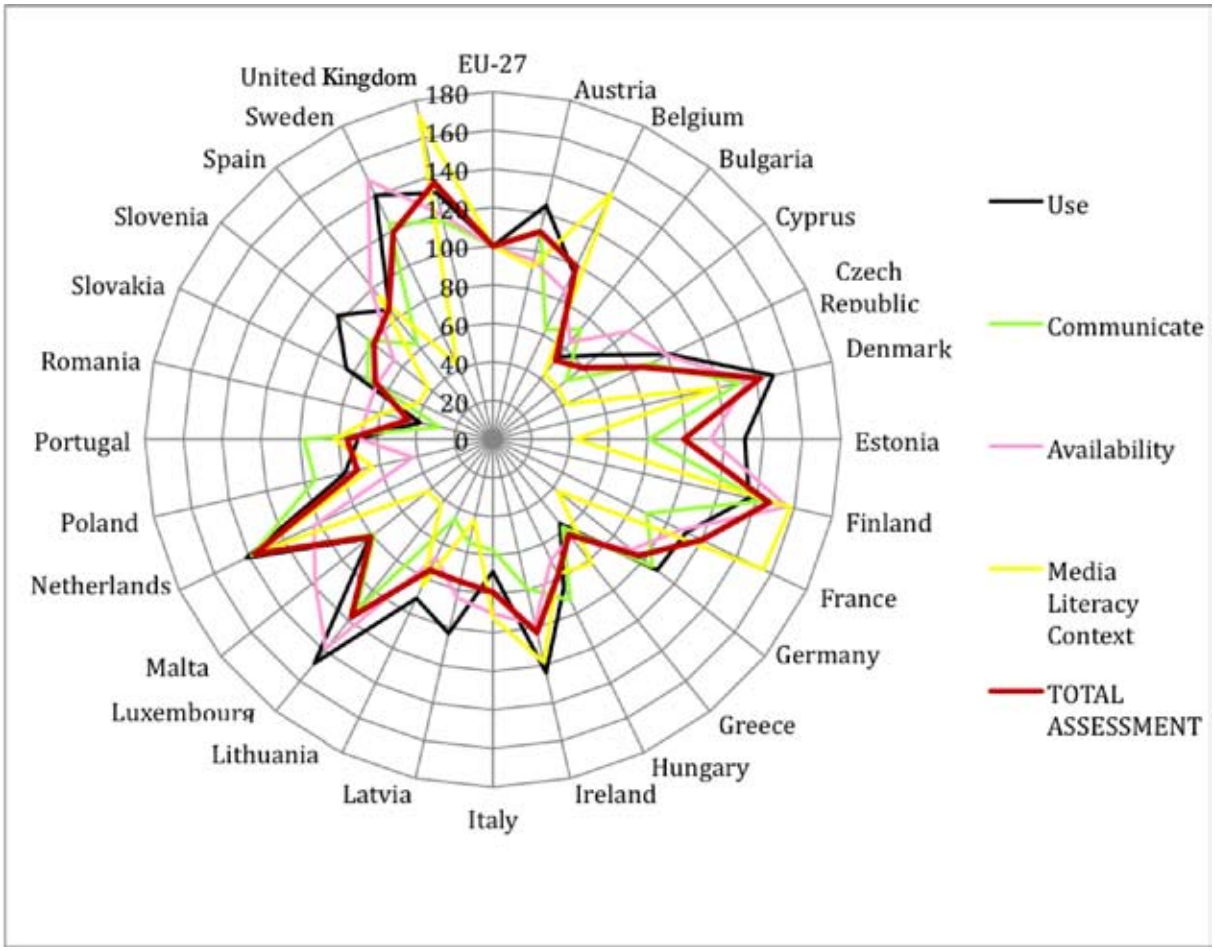
[6] Recommendation CM/Rec (2007) 3 – Ministers of the Council of Europe January 2007 *et al.*

Preliminary Results of the Application of the Tool

The primary objective of this Study was to offer an understanding of the way in which media literacy in the EU could be measured. It was only after development of the tool that the Consortium was able to apply it to pilot EU Member States. This tested its validity and enabled the gathering of results for preliminary comparison. Despite long-standing efforts to generate models and practices across regions and countries, and despite some common ground across the general media background, media literacy and media culture are complex and diverse disciplines. This diversity is an advantage rather than a weakness, but resulted in (and necessitated) the collation of hugely heterogeneous data.

Quantitative processing requires conceptualisation, not only for the defining of levels and thresholds, but also for the assigning of importance to individual factors when classifying global parameters. It follows that an overall ranking, even if it is relevant food for thought, is valuable only as a consequence of its critical assessment. The following graphic offers an overall picture of Member States' results, which allow a preliminary analysis.

Graph 2: Media Literacy Criteria and Countries Assessment Results



The Study's preliminary conclusions suggest that there are no homogenous media literacy levels across Europe. Nordic countries, especially Scandinavia, have high social and educational levels and relatively small populations, and so manifest heightened levels of media competence. Central European countries, including the bulk of the EU population, fall within a median level of competence, while countries in Southern and Eastern Europe manifest a limited and quite basic degree of media literacy.

If the Study were to be extended beyond Europe, and the same criteria were applied to other continents, it may be reasonably concluded that Europe would rank high in the analytical spectrum. Having demonstrated that many of the best performing countries are also the most advanced in terms of their democratic function, infrastructure, and social and economic welfare, it may be uncontroversially assumed that Europe, with its high levels of social and economic development, would manifest more elevated levels of media literacy than other, less overtly privileged parts of the world.

The Study also demonstrated a clear correlation between media literacy levels in individuals and media literacy policy implemented institutionally. More generally, there is a broad correlation between individual media literacy competence and Environmental Factors. However, the Study suggests that individual competence is a significant determining factor only when a certain threshold of environmental support has been met. If there is no formal strategy for the fostering of a media literate population, then that population is unlikely to be media literate. The Study demonstrates that media literacy policy in countries with correspondingly high levels of media literacy can provide a powerful model for less advanced populations.

Policy alone does not increase media literacy, of course, and many initiatives promoting media literacy are the result of grassroots efforts. The promotion of media literacy has been identified by this Study to occupy national experts, schools and civil society initiatives – despite the absence of strong regulatory and legislative foundations.

While many individuals continue to respond well to the challenges posed by an increasingly ubiquitous media, it is clear that some legislative bodies consider media literacy a muted priority; indeed, it is one of the conclusions of this Study that a public policy drive towards the improvement of media literacy levels across the population will impact inevitably on those individuals who need it most.

Having measured media literacy levels in general across Europe, country-wide responses were evaluated and conclusions drawn, requiring an analytical approach to the formulation of recommendations. These recommendations are the result of consultations with media literacy experts throughout Europe.

By incorporating these recommendations into policy documents, the Commission will be equipped with the necessary tools to promote the development of media literacy, including the dissemination of good practice. While this coordinated approach does not allow for a great range of cultural difference, it is sufficiently broad and objective for the policies and initiatives recommended in this chapter to be applicable across all Member States.

Recommendations

As a Commission priority, and because it is essential to the continuing development not only of media and media literacy, but of Europe's social, political and economic future, new competences must be acquired generically and across the EU. The Commission must reinforce initiatives and policies allowing for common, coordinated action in Member States also considering the subsidiarity principle. In order to do so, and by reference to the evidence generated by this Study, the Consortium proposes:

1. **To identify Critical Understanding as the key factor in the development of policies for promoting media literacy**: including policies aimed at increasing competences for the understanding of media content and function; increasing knowledge about media context, and enabling sound judgment when adopting appropriate user behaviour;

2. **To promote citizen engagement as an essential component of full and active European citizenship**: including supporting citizen communication and social engagement; citizen participation in civic life and individual content creation;

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**: including self-regulation and auto-regulation, in addition to statutory regulation – entailing legislation, rules and sanctions;

4. **To facilitate and extend access to ICT, with specific focus on the Internet**: policy in this field must as a priority encourage social inclusion and combat the digital divide; media literacy concerns all forms of media and it should be targeted at all citizens, regardless of gender or age. Particular attention should be given to empowering children and minors to use media appropriately and safely, with an emphasis on videogames;

5. **To promote public debate and awareness of media literacy**: including European, national and local information campaigns. Politicians and decision makers at large should be provided with the necessary relevant information. Media literacy should be introduced in the family environment, as well as in other informal contexts;

6. **To encourage the integration of media education in educational curricula both as specific goals and cross-curricular subjects**: Special attention should be given to teachers-training, long-life-learning activities involving mature and elderly members of society, the production of educational instruments, and the development of pedagogical methods;

7. **To sustain the role of civil society organizations and related media literacy initiatives to foster a democratic culture and shared values**: facilitating a more effective participation in the public sphere, and allowing for activities by representative citizens' institutions;

8. **To encourage active involvement by the media industry – especially audiovisual media**: including literacy enhancing initiatives, as those already noted in the press. Attention should be given to mass media – including traditional and digital, public and private platforms, content and processes. The training of media professionals should also considered a priority.

To translate these recommendations into specific action, so as to promote media literacy across Europe, the Study makes a number of policy recommendations. It is urged that European Institutions and national governments promote media literacy through the application of a balanced use of coercive and self-regulatory instruments; specifically:

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 (local, regional, national, European and international) 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.

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.

Paolo Celot and José Manuel Pérez Tornero

Brussels, January 2010

1 Context, Objectives, Approach and Methodology

1.1 The Technological Context

Recent advances in communication technology have radically affected the ways in which business and society operate in Europe. The media environment is constantly shifting. As technology has developed, so too has its use, with individuals listening to the radio on their mobile telephone, using games consoles as DVD players and burners, and computers as telephones. Not only are skills required for the operation of these devices for their defined purpose, but a more advanced facility is necessary for the exploitation of their full potential. Information may now be accessed in a multiplicity of forms by individuals almost regardless of their location, time, demographic status or education.

Whether this is a consequence of the supposed knowledge economy, or whether it has helped foster it, the outcome is the same. The means and media platforms by which information is transmitted and received are central to the future of European society.

The Internet as a means of communication remains pivotal to its function. The vast majority of online activity is now user-generated. Of the 427 years' of footage on YouTube, for example, 97% is user generated, having been posted by individuals seeking to communicate something to someone else, potentially on the other side of the planet. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and Bebo are phenomena previously imagined only by science-fiction writers, eradicating the significance of national borders, language and cultural divides. To this extent, globalisation may be now considered in terms of its past tense. Individuals now have the opportunity to exist remotely, to enjoy relationships, hobbies and civic lives that exist only when a computer and a mobile telephone are switched on.

Although the effect of information technologies on the European economy is difficult to overstate, traditional (mass) media, in the form of television, remains the primary source of information for citizens when informing and forming their opinions. The average European citizen spends ten years of their life watching television[7], and while the Internet plays a central role for young people aged 16 to 24, on the whole it does not threaten television audiences.

[7] European Audiovisual Observatory Yearbook 2008, p. 146 – Trends in European Television (at an average viewing of 3h30 minutes per day)

1.2 The European Commission Legislative Context

The regulatory framework for media literacy has accelerated in recent years, with numerous policies falling within the scope of a wide spectrum of activity, including:

- Recommendation of the European Commission on Media Literacy in the Digital Environment for a more Competitive Audiovisual and Content Industry and an Inclusive Knowledge Society (2009)[8];
- Media Literacy in a digital world European Parliament Resolution. The 'Prets' Report (2009)[9];
- Communication on Media Literacy from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee (2008)[10];
- The Audiovisual Media Services Directive, art. 26 (2007)[11];
- Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of minors in relation to the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and on-line information services industry (2006)[12];
- Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (2006)[13].

In 2007, the European Commission study on "Current trends and approaches to media literacy in Europe", recommended the provision of "incentives for the formulation and fixation of qualitative and quantitative empirical indicators that would facilitate the evaluation of progress of media literacy and to describe the factors that contribute to its development"[14]. Without evaluative tools there can be no way of measuring the development, outcomes and effectiveness of media literacy initiatives.

[8] 20 Aug 2009, European Commission Recommendation on media literacy in a digital environment for a more competitive audio-visual and content industry and an inclusive knowledge society (Brussels 20-08-2009 C 2009/6464 final). http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/docs/recom/c_2009_6464_en.pdf

[9] 16 Dec 2008, European Parliament resolution of 16 December 2008 on media literacy in a digital world (2008/2129(INI)). http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A6-2008-0461&language=EN&mode=XML#top

[10] Brussels, 20.12.2007, COM(2007) 833 final, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment

[11] Directive 2007/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007 amending Council Directive 89/552/EEC

[12] Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on the protection of minors and human dignity and on the right of reply in relation to the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and on-line information services industry (2006/952/EC)

[13] Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning. (2006/962/EC)

[14] http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/studies/index_en.htm

The tender specifications[15] for this Study state that, "In December 2007, the Commission adopted a Communication on 'A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment'. […] The aim of media literacy is to increase awareness of the many forms of media messages encountered in everyday life. It should help citizens to recognise how the media filter their perceptions and beliefs, shape popular culture and influence personal choices. It should empower them with the critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills to make the judicious consumers and producers of content. […] On the basis of media's crucial role in today's society, the Communication insists on the importance of a high or higher degree of media literacy."

A Recommendation from the European commission followed in August 2009 reiterating the importance of media literacy in order that citizens are able to practice active citizenship. It goes on to note that there are varying degrees of media literacy throughout Europe, and the barriers that hinder a pan-European approach to improving levels of media literacy, include a lack of shared vision and an uncoordinated approach.

The Lisbon Agenda in 2000 asserted that, for Europe to remain competitive economically on a global level, its citizens had to embrace the competencies required to be able to participate in the knowledge economy and an increasingly globalised information society. Further to which, the Audiovisual Media Services Directive ("AVMS Directive")[16] gives a reporting obligation for the Commission to measure levels of media literacy in all Member States. It established new rules corresponding to media development in Europe, and anticipated a full assessment of media literacy levels by 2011. It is necessary therefore to develop tools or indicators for the evaluation of media literacy.

In response to the challenge of the relationship between media and citizens, and in accordance with EC specifications, the Consortium has provided a thorough overview of the status of media literacy, and an assessment of media literacy levels in the Member States ("EU27"). Building on what has come before, and with a thorough understanding of the history of the complex relationship between citizens and media, this Study provides policy recommendations for the European Commission to assist national governments and citizens through this crucial phase in social development.

[15] Study on Assessment Criteria for Media Literacy Levels SMART 2008/2009

[16] Directive 2007/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The broad objectives of the EU media literacy initiatives are to promote critical thought, problem-solving capacity, analytical skills and citizen awareness, with the more general objective of promoting freedom of speech, the right to information, democratic sustainability and civic participation to increase active citizenship, intercultural dialogue and the critical awareness of media users.

This Study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of media literacy and a recommendation for how levels of media literacy should be assessed in Europe. It will provide the Commission with a Tool[17] to meet its obligation to report on media literacy levels in EU Member States, under the AVMS Directive[18].

The core objectives of the study are to:

1. **Provide the Commission with a set of criteria to measure media literacy levels.**
   This includes the conceptualisation of media literacy, the proposal of measurable criteria, the development of a Tool for the application of these criteria, and an evaluation of the impact of the current levels of media literacy on Member States.
2. **Provide an assessment of the media literacy levels in the EU27.**
   This includes an application of the assessment criteria, and an analysis and evaluation of different policy measures and choices related to media literacy, taking into account existing policies and practices in Member States.
3. **Evaluate the social and economic impact of the different media literacy levels and policies, on the Member States and at European level.**
   This includes an impact assessment of possible scenarios of media literacy policies.
4. **Propose possible policy measures at the European level to support Member State actions.**
   This includes an analysis of the necessity at the Community level for action in the field of media literacy with regard to the subsidiary principle, the scope of appropriate community level action and an analysis of which community values would link to media literacy.

The related activities for this study have been carried out by the Consortium over ten months, from October 2008 to July 2009.

[17] An instrument which collates and quantifies media literacy levels according to specific criteria.

[18] Art 26: "Not later than 19 December 2011, and every three years thereafter, the Commission shall submit to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee a report on the application of this Directive and, if necessary, make further proposals to adapt it to developments in the field of audiovisual media services, in particular in the light of recent technological developments, the competitiveness of the sector and levels of media literacy in all Member States. This report shall also assess the issue of television advertising accompanying or included in children's programmes, and in particular whether the quantitative and qualitative rules contained in this Directive have afforded the level of protection required".

1.4 Media Literacy: Definitions and approaches

In order to respond to the European Commission's request for a conceptualisation of media literacy (with the objective of identifying measurable criteria), the Consortium opted to systematically integrate different concepts of media literacy and to expressly identify the individual and Member State competences that should be acquired and measured.

Consequently, the Study employs a conceptual map which enabled the further definition of media literacy criteria and the Environmental Factors hampering or facilitating the establishment of media literacy in the EU.

Although there are many authoritative definitions of media literacy by international organisations and scientific and academic institutions, this Study references the EC definitions. Specifically, media literacy is the competence to cope, autonomously and critically, with the communication and media environment established within and as a consequence of the 'information society'. The European Commission proposes a definition in which two fundamental dimensions can be clearly distinguished: (a) Individual Competences (defined as technical use, Critical Understanding and social skills); and (b) Environmental Factors (defined as Media Availability, media education, policies and regulation and other stakeholder roles, *i.e.*, media industry and civil society). For a complete understanding of media literacy, it is necessary to understand the context in which it developed.

The term *literacy* refers to a practical command of the alphabet, of the signs and symbols of reading and writing and how to perform simple numeracy tasks. However, over time, the meaning of literacy has broadened to include knowledge and a set of skills that grant literate individuals the ability to understand and relate to their surroundings. It is clear that this ability depends on the critical comprehension of messages or media texts, and an unconscious relationship with the semantics and semiotics of psycholinguistics.

Though informed by models of classic and basic literacy, 'media literacy' is much broader in scope and ambition. It includes the consideration of all media, traditional (analogue), novel (digital) and their convergence. Therefore, it is not possible to effectively understand or exist within contemporary life without some measure of media competence.

The study of media literacy employs a variety of similar terms and concepts, including 'digital literacy', 'computer literacy', 'cultural literacy', 'information literacy', 'audio-visual literacy', and 'media education'. Such a wealth of terms and definitions can result in confusion. While the term 'media literacy' offers the most inclusive interpretation, it is still advisable to clarify the meaning of, and relationship between, these terms.

References to computer (or digital) literacy emphasise the binary character of the signals being transmitted; such references relate to computing and computer usage. References to 'audio-visual literacy' highlight the importance of language employed in combination employed in sound and image, and do not, therefore relate to the written or printed word. References to 'information literacy' identify the ability of the individual to obtain, to absorb and contextualise the multiplicity of information, regardless of its source.

Media literacy is the capacity of individuals to interpret, analyse, process and contextualise media messages in general (again, without specific regard for source or form). It is self-evident that any convergence of multiple platforms and technologies in which a variety of languages and media streams co-exist and merge, the concept of media literacy affords a more inclusive and practicable point of reference than do the one-dimensional paradigms identified above.

In this regard, media literacy implies a broadening, but also reinforcement, of the elemental function by which all literacy is defined. It does not attach itself to a simple technical skill, (*e.g.*, the use of media platforms) but rather to a Critical Understanding and analytical reading of numerous simultaneous sources of information, reasoning, social injunction, symbolic and cultural codes and conventions.

The concept of media literacy can also be contextualized within two UNESCO advocacies: the human rights-based approach to programming, and the creation of knowledge societies. In this sense, the concept of media literacy can be attached to the idea of *Education for Sustainable Development* included in the United Nations' Principles, of which UNESCO is the lead agency. The aim is to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning – including, necessarily, media literacy.

Further to the political and international approaches, more definitions are produced within academia, including *Access, Understand and Create; the 3Cs – Cultural, Critical and Creative; the 5Cs – adding Comprehension and Citizenship; the 3Ps – Protection, Promotion and Participation; Read and Write the Media;* and so on.

The European Commission, as part of its mandate to address media literacy as an issue relevant to European citizens, commissioned the precursor for this Study, "Current Trends and Approaches to Media Literacy in Europe"[19]. This document acted as the foundation for this Study, not only to provide knowledge and understanding, but also, in the absence of a consensus, an approach to defining media literacy systematically.

[19] Current trends and approaches to media literacy in Europe carried out for the Commission by the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona in the second half of 2007

From an analysis of these papers, recommendations and academic studies, the justification for the development of this study is clear. It has drawn heavily on the definitions and concepts of media literacy adopted by the EC Media and Media Literacy Unit of DG Information Society, the concepts of media literacy introduced by the AVMS Directive[20], and the objectives developed by other European Commission initiatives.

As the EC wrote in 2007:

> "*Media literacy may be defined as the ability to access, analyse and evaluate the power of images, sounds and messages which we are now confronted with on a daily basis and are an important part of our contemporary culture, as well as to communicate competently in media available on a personal basis. Media literacy relates to all media, including television and film, radio and recorded music, print media, the Internet and other new digital communication technologies.*
>
> "*The aim of media literacy is to increase awareness of the many forms of media messages encountered in our everyday lives. It should help citizens recognise how the media filter their perceptions and beliefs, shape popular culture and influence personal choices. It should empower them with critical thinking and creative problem - solving skills to make them judicious consumers and producers of information. Media education is part of the basic entitlement of every citizen, in every country in the world, to freedom of expression and the right to information and it is instrumental in building and sustaining democracy.*"[21]

However media literacy is defined, it must be dynamic, multidimensional, adaptive, fluid and ever-expanding to account for future technological advances, and new purposes for (and ways of) interacting.

1.5 Methodology

Media literacy is a multifaceted phenomenon, observable but not directly measurable. It is by reason of this complexity and scope that the Consortium has, for the purposes of this Study, decided to create a 'conceptual map', or framework, of media literacy. This included criteria for the measurement of media literacy, which in turn led to the identification of quantifiable indicators (pieces of data which may be pulled together to provide a holistic indication of a population's media literacy competence and which may be applied across different demographics). These include Environmental Factors, such as the prominence of media literacy in national policy and legislation, through to individual abilities such as Critical Understanding of media messages.

[20] Directive 2007/65/CE from the European Parliament and the Council 11th December 2007. Cf.: http://eur-ex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1989L0552:20071219:EN:PDF (Consulted 2nd May 2009).

[21] Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/index_en.htm (Consulted 2nd May 2009).

The use of these resources has meant that the factors for assessment and the tools for measurement are robust and relevant. The data has, on the whole, taken the form of statistics created using, where possible, common measures applied across all Member States. The EU has a number of these datasets, most which concentrate on data usage without looking further at those characteristics that are the analytical focus of this study, namely: content evaluation, creation and participation.

Regardless of the relative inadequacies of existing data, it remains methodologically appropriate to seek common datasets from across the Member States. Accordingly, the study integrates various concepts systematically, attributing different weights to each part of each concept in order to make explicit the competences that should be acquired and measured. The criteria were then converted into social indicators to provide a multi-layered instrument. This involved the collation of different indicators sufficient for the formation of an overview of a general adult population's media literacy competence.

Further, the challenges to collecting the datasets required were reliant on the specific nature of the platforms. This feature is by no means static. Technologies and platforms evolve and are often mutated by users into entirely novel entities, divergent from their original purpose. It is crucial, therefore, that the indicators and the tools resulting from this Study are capable of revision and adaptation as and when new technologies and platforms are developed. The Consortium employed many instruments, including desk research, analysis of prior studies and existing research, interviews, consultations, questionnaires and expert opinions. Specifically, there have been ten research stages, namely:

1. **Field Research**

   This entailed gathering information, completing research studies, collating and cataloguing information by country and region, and analysing interviews and case studies. This activity required considerable desk research and delivered a relevant media literacy bibliography *(Annex J)*. In order to collect further information on existing criteria for the measurement of media literacy levels, and more relevant documentation of which other media literacy experts and organisations might be aware, a Questionnaire *(Annex D)* was sent to more than 100 media desks and experts throughout Europe. One third of respondents provided input that was of sufficient quality to be included.

2. **Conceptual Framework and Criteria**

   The creation of a conceptual framework for the Study's analysis entailed a comparison of existing models and definitions, identifying criteria and analysing this criteria's functionality. Activities included identifying common elements, tracing operational concepts and compiling data. Replies to the questionnaire were analysed, and a conceptual framework was drafted *(Framework – Annex B)*. This process included the identification of key factors influencing the development of media literacy.

3. Indicators

In order to find the appropriate indicators, and to develop original ones where necessary, the existence of relevant indicators was first established by international studies, including: Towards Information Literacy Indicators, released by UNESCO in 2008[22]; the Global Information Technology Report 2007-2008, from the World Economic Forum[23]; or the United Nations e-Government Survey 2008[24], as well as those obtained from Eurostat, Eurobarometer and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Further, national and regional reports on Media Literacy, such as the UK's Office of Communication's (OFCOM)[25] Media Literacy research reports from the United Kingdom or the Evaluation of Media Literacy Levels in Romania[26] were considered.

To provide a multi-layered instrument to measure media literacy levels, the conceptual framework was validated empirically and, through several cycles of consultation with national experts, resulted in the creation of a consensus for the identification and selection of indicators.

- Existing indicators (extracted from statistical researches or from the questionnaire);
- Original indicators, tested through a new assessment questionnaire sent to Experts for validation or rejection;
- International indicators, created specifically for assessing the Media Literacy Context in every country.

4. Pilot studies

The case studies consisted of the assessment of media literacy levels in different countries based on a general and transversal analysis, which established whether or not the chosen indicators could be applied multi-nationally. The proposed model was revised and translated into a first assessment instrument for measuring media literacy levels. For four pilot countries, namely the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, and the UK (see *Country Reports, Annex E and F*), the results were analysed, conclusions were generated, and the criteria were tested (*Framework Annex B).* In light of the results offered by the pilots, changes were introduced.

[22] http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001587/158723e.pdf

[23] http://www.weforum.org/en/initiatives/gcp/Global%20Information%20Technology%20Report/index.htm

[24] http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN028607.pdf

[25] www.ofcom.org.uk

[26] A study elaborated within the project "Are we Media Literate? A Pilot Research to Evaluate the Level of Media Literacy in Romania" implemented within the Media Education program of ActiveWatch - Media Monitoring Agency and financed by Open Society Institute (OSI), London, Great Britain.

5. European Countries (case studies)

27 country reports were sent to media literacy national experts (*see Country Reports and Authors, Annex E and F*). Additionally, a specific European-level report was compiled (*the Media Literacy European Regulatory Framework – see Annex A*), and data from selected indicators were also collected.

6. Assessment Tool

An Assessment Tool *(Annex G)* was created using the selected indicators and weighting them according to their relevance in the global picture to provide an overall picture of a population's levels of media literacy.

7. General assessment

Following the pilot studies, and subject to the modification of the indicators and the Tool, it was applied across the EU27. This application of the Tool provided an assessment of Media Literacy Levels across Europe; not only in reference to individual skills, but also the policies and initiatives on Media Literacy put forward by governments and other the stakeholders.

8. Conclusions and recommendations for future assessment

In order to optimise the assessment Tool for future use, this Study advises measures to be taken to improve it. The development of new indicators is proposed (Critical Understanding indicators and communicative indicators), as well as more in-depth analysis of the environmental context within which media literacy exists.

9. Socio-Economic Impact Analysis

This entailed a consideration of the social and economic impact of current levels of media literacy, as well as the likely impact of certain initiatives and measures.

10. Policy Recommendations

This section consisted of the collation, analysis and selection of policy actions and conclusions by dozens of experts.

1.6 Team and Management

This Study has sought the advice and counsel of media literacy specialists and national and international organisations, involving dozens of experts across Europe (see *List of Experts Consulted – Annex I*). First contact was made to all EC Media Desks across Europe, and also to Media Literacy Experts Group Representatives within the EC DG Information Society. In addition, national media literacy experts have drafted their respective national country reports, and numerous consultations were conducted with relevant media stakeholders. The importance of media literacy expertise in each country has been demonstrated by the production of qualitative assessments at a national and European level.

This Study has also benefitted from previous studies in the field, not only because these documents provide the foundation on which the Consortium might base its work, but also because it counts among its experts the authors of the most relevant studies conducted in Europe. The Consortium has been able to refer to findings and previously published expertise in the field of media literacy in Europe, therefore it has been able to conceptualize the steps necessary to fulfil its brief in only ten months.

To study and analyse the documents, research teams have been established and charged with the tasks of gathering and analysing basic information, as well as information pertaining to individual countries - all of which were checked, as far as possible, with the stakeholders involved.

This Final Report and an Interim Report have been drafted for the European Commission by EAVI. Regular meetings have been attended with EC representatives in Brussels.

The EAVI Consortium

1. EAVI, European Association Viewers' Interests, Belgium
   Paolo Celot, Secretary General – (Project coordinator and editor);
2. UAB, Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Spain
   José Manuel Pérez Tornero – (Scientific coordinator);
   Research Director of the Gabinete de Comunicación y Educación;
3. CLEMI, Ministère de l'Education nationale, France
   Evelyne Bevort, Vice Director;
4. UCL, Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium
   Thierry De Smedt, Département de communication;
5. UTA, University of Tampere, Finland
   Tapio Varis, Chair of Media Culture and Media Education.

Individual Experts

Paolo CELOT (EAVI) - Project coordinator and editor

Paolo Celot is an economist, founding member and Secretary General of EAVI. Over the last twenty years he has accumulated a considerable international experience working for long periods in London, Brussels and Milan. Brussels-based advisor on European policies in the field of media, he collaborated with public (RAI, BBC, UER) and private broadcasters, for TV advertising agencies and with public Institutions. He is a member of Groups of Experts setup by international organisations (Media Literacy of the European Commission; Public Service Broadcasting of the Council of Europe; Active European Citizenship of the European Commission).

José Manuel PÉREZ TORNERO (UAB) - Scientific coordinator

PhD, is Full Professor of Communication at the Communication Department of the Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona. Former director of the educational television channel of RTVE, expert in media literacy for the European Commission and UNESCO. Director of the International Master of Communication and Education, at the above mentioned university.

Evelyne BEVORT (CLEMI)

Evelyne is director of the Centre de Liaison de l'Enseignement et des Medias d'Information (CLEMI). The Clemi (centre for liaison between teaching and information media) is the centre dedicated to media education and part of the French Ministry of Education. Paris, France.

Thierry De SMEDT (UCL)

Teacher at UCL (Belgium), Thierry De Smedt has been graduated in social communication (UCL, 1976), graduated in economical sciences (UCL, 1977), doctor in social communication (UCL, 1987). He is a teacher in the department of communication of UCL and member of the research group on mediation of knowledge (GreMs). He is a member of the Media education Council (CEM).

Tapio VARIS (UTA)

Professor of Vocational Education, with particular reference to global learning environments at the University of Tampere, Finland, Research Centre for Vocational Education, and UNESCO Chair in global e-Learning with applications to multiple domains. He is principal research associate of UNESCO-UNEVOC, acting President of Global University System (GUS), former Rector of the University for Peace in Costa Rica, expert on media and digital literacy to the European, Communication and Media Scholar at the University of Helsinki and the University of Art and Design in Helsinki. and the University of Lapland, Finland, and has published approximately 200 scientific contributions.

Expert Organisations

EAVI – European Association for Viewers' Interests

The European Association for Viewers Interests (EAVI) is an independent, not-for-profit international association registered in Brussels. Its primary objective is to promote and enhance the interests of citizens and media users across Europe. EAVI has been created to facilitate the unifying process of all those who support citizens' and consumers' interests. Its activities are designed to meet the objective of engaging the interest of European institutions in the development and promotion of media literacy, social responsibility and active citizenship; to defend public interest objectives, to promote best practices in media accountability, focusing on instruments ensuring citizens' participation in media governance, and to promote best practices in media programming, with a particular attention to information and knowledge-based programmes.

Gabinete de Comunicación y Educación (Journalism and Communications Sciences) Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona

It is a research group specialized on Media Literacy and Educational Media (Audiovisual Media Services, Educational Television and Cyber-communications). It is integrated by more than twenty researchers and teachers. The Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona (UAB) was established in 1968 by reference to four principles of autonomy; the freedom to select teaching staff, ensuring admission available to all students, freedom to create and develop its own study plans and freedom to administrate the University's capital. The UAB is internationally renowned for its quality and innovation in research. Its overseas scientific and technological centre promotes new business projects and by disseminating new knowledge directs its projects and activities towards its socio-economic surroundings.

CLEMI - Centre de Liaison de l'enseignement et des Médias de Information

The Centre for Liaison between Teaching and Information Media (CLEMI) is part of the French Ministry of Education. It was created in 1983 to promote "especially by means of training activities, the multiple uses of news media in teaching with the aim of encouraging a better understanding of the world by pupils while simultaneously developing Critical Understanding." To achieve this mission, CLEMI offers training sessions, educational programmes and events, opportunities of exchange and networking, and pedagogical publications.

Université Catholique de Louvain

The Université Catholique de Louvain's (UCL) mission is to become a leading European university. It is a centre of knowledge and innovation, a place of cultural celebration, invention and achievement. UCL has an international reputation in the field of teaching and research.

University of Tampere - The research Centre for Vocational Education

The University of Tampere (UTA) is a research-oriented, multidisciplinary university committed to advanced teaching and research. The hallmark of UTA is sound administration and culture, health and welfare of the individuals. The Research Centre for Vocational Education belongs to the Faculty of Education at the University of Tampere, Finland. It has the status both of a research and education institute of vocational and professional education.

The Study received key contributions and advice from ENPA - the European Newspapers Publisher Association and from their members.

The following are national experts which have contributed directly to the work carried out for their respective countries:

• Andriopoulou Erini – Hellenic Audiovisual Institute, Greece; • Colombo Fausto – Osscom, Osservatorio sulla Comunicazione, Italy; • Danielsson Helena, Independent, Sweden; • Doherty Helen – Iadt National Film School, Ireland; • Fotiade Elisabeth Nicoleta – Media Monitoring Agency, Romania; • Hartai Lazlo – Hungarian Moving Picture and Media Education Association, Hungary; • Hasselbalch Gry – Media Council for Children and Young People, Denmark; • Jirak Jan – Charles University, Czech Republic; • Juraite Kristina – Magnus Vytautas University, Lithuania; • Krucsay Susanne – Ministry of Education Science and Culture, Austria; • Maassen Gabriel – Dutch Institute for Film Education, The Netherlands; • Millwood Hargrave Andrea – Media Literacy Task Force, UK; • Pinto Manuel – Universidade do Minho, Portugal; • Ricceri Marco – Eurispes, Italy; • Rivoltella Pier Cesare, Cremit, Italy; • Wojtac Jacek – The Chamber of Press Publishers, Poland.

In addition UAB (José Manuel Pérez Tornero, Oralia Paredes, Mireia Pi, Santiago Giraldo Luque, Laura Rojas, Nùria Fernández, Nùria Simelio and Laura Cervi) Spain; UCL (Thierry De Smedt, Pierre Fastrez, Thibault Philippette) coordinated the Belgium report; UTA (Tapio Varis, Petri Lounaskorpi) Finland; Clemi (Evelyne Bevort, Pierre Fremont, Emmanuel Tfibel) France; Marco Ricceri, Maddalena Monge and Nicola Ferrigni contributed to Italy.

Finally, of EAVI, Paolo Celot, Lucía González and Naomi Thompson.

2 Framework and Indicators

2.1 Introduction

By reason of the complex nature of media literacy, and in order to establish the criteria by which it could be measured, a conceptual map had to be created. This would determine the dimensions of media literacy, their component parts, the factors which indicate them, and the indicators themselves. It would also clarify the relationships between each of these elements. This conceptual map became the Framework, and organised the process that combine to create the concept of media literacy. The developed criteria coincide with the European Commission's definition of media literacy, are simple and easily useable, and allow for the diagnosis of different situations that permit both a comparison as well as the monitoring of progress over time. All the data has the capacity to be standardized and homogenized beyond the differences between countries and regions and their social contexts.

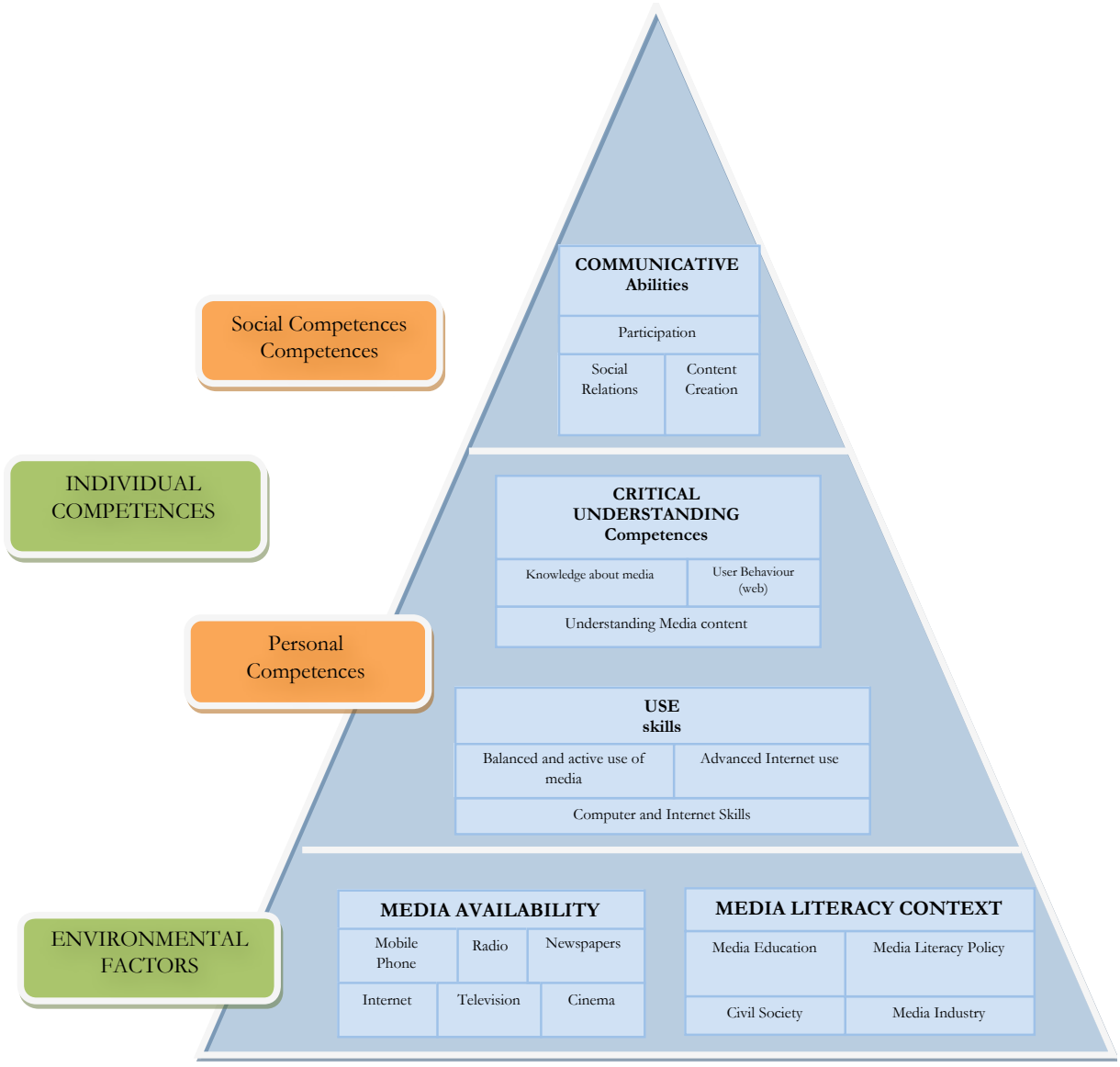
The two Dimensions of media literacy were identified as Individual Competences and Environmental Factors, on the basis that the symptoms of media literacy are manifested in the capabilities of the individual, and the Environmental Factors which may encourage them or hamper them.

- **Individual Competences**: A personal, individual capacity related to exercising certain skills (access, analysis, communication). This competence is 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.

These Dimensions were then broken down into Criteria. Individual competences are indicated by Use, Critical Understanding and Communicative Abilities. Environmental Factors are manifested in Media Policy, Media Education, Media Industry and the actions of Civil Society. This is all on the foundation of availability. The selection of indicators was based on the relevance of the data to indicate the component, and in a small part on the availability of existing data. The following diagram illustrates the conceptual map.

It takes the form of a pyramid in order to represent the various Criteria of media literacy and the ways that they are reliant on each other; it is to state the obvious that the higher steps cannot exist without the lower ones. The base of the pyramid illustrates the pre-conditions of the Individual Competence: Media Availability, which is the availability of media technology or services; and Media Literacy Context, which are the activities and initiatives of institutions and organizations in order to foster media literacy capacities. Without these two Criteria, media literacy development is either precluded or unsupported. They share a level because, although they are autonomous components, they are, to a degree, interrelated; media literacy policy is carried out in the context of availability, and certain aspects of availability are conditioned or influenced by context.

Graph 1: Structure of the Media Literacy Assessment Criteria



The Individual Competences are illustrated by the second level of the pyramid, which begins with Use, a secondary pre-requisite of media literacy development. Use is the intersection between availability and operational skills. They are practical skills with a low degree of self-conscious awareness.

There follows Critical Understanding, which is the knowledge, behaviour and understanding of media context and content, and how it manifests itself in behaviour. It includes all the cognitive processes that influence the user's practices (effectiveness of actions, degree of freedom or restriction, regulation and norms, etc.). Use requires knowledge; this factor requires meta-knowledge (knowledge about knowledge). This allows the user to evaluate aspects of the media, by way of comparing different types and sources of information, arriving to conclusions about its veracity and appropriateness, and making informed choices.

The apex of the pyramid represents Communicative Abilities, which are the manifestation of media literacy levels, and the quality of which rests on the success or failure of the lower levels. These are skills that manifest themselves in communication and participation with social groups via the media, and content creation. This is the highest degree of media literacy.

Media literacy is the result of dynamic processes between the base (Availability and Context) and the apex (Communicative Abilities). The route from the base to the peak is individual media competence (Media Use and Critical Understanding).

2.2 Individual Competences

Any individual skill or operation is developed along three criteria: doing (operative ability and practical use); knowing critically (or Critical Understanding); and their relation to the objective that the skill or operation should meet. In this case they should enable creation, communication, social relationships and participation in the public sphere.

Within Individual Competences, there are the following Criteria:

1. **Use (Technical Skills)**
   The capacities related to media access and use.
2. **Critical Understanding (Cognitive Competences)**
   The aspects related to the comprehension and evaluation of contents and media.
3. **Communicative Abilities (Social, Participation, Creative Abilities)**
   The aspects related to content creation, social relations and citizens' participation.

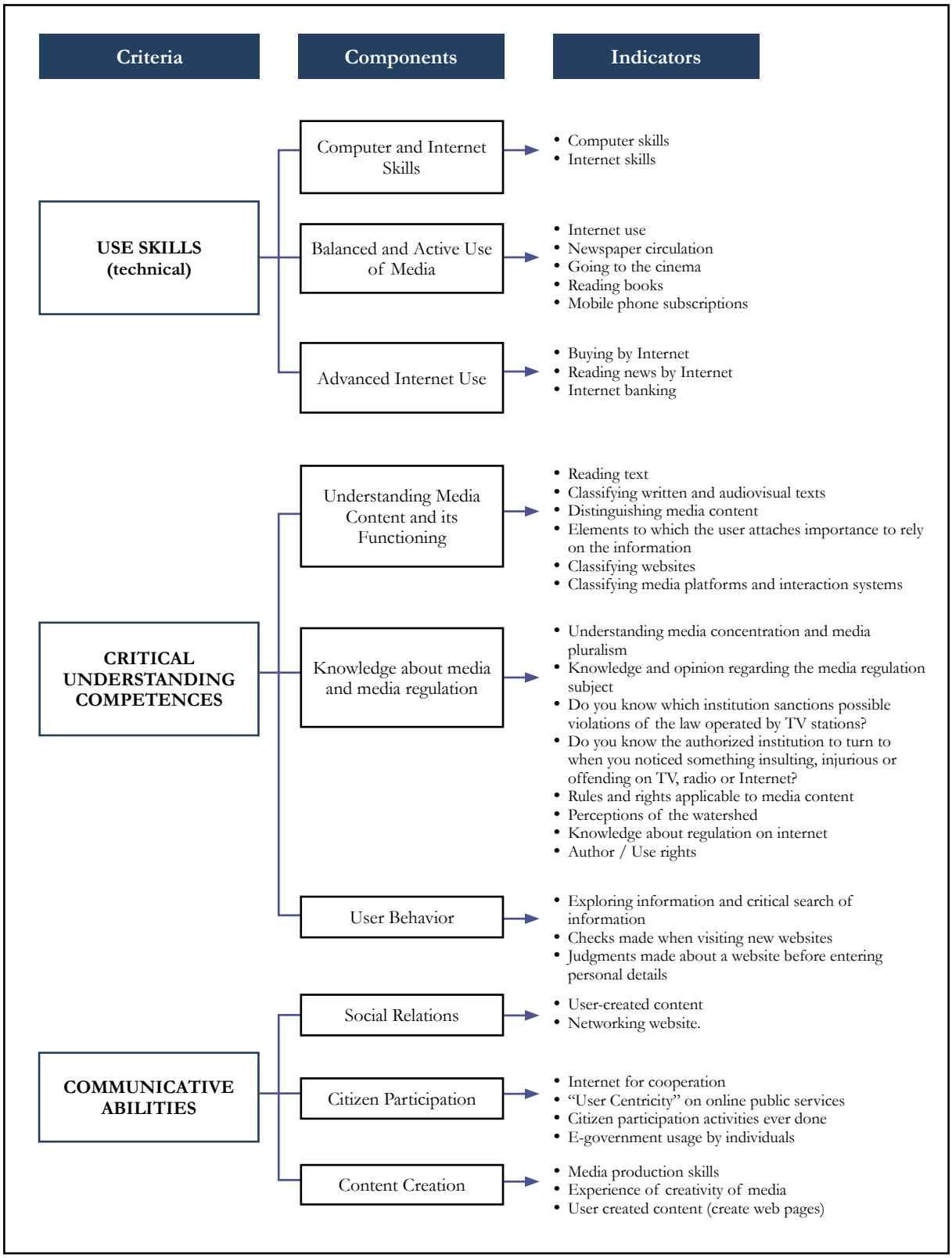
Table 1: Personal and Social Competences

Competences	Action	Individual skills dimensions	Objectives (Associated operations)
Personal competences	Use	Technical skills *Media operational skills required for the effective use of media tools*	Using Media *Instrumental use*
	Critical Understanding	Cognitive skills *Capacities related to knowledge and semiotic operations: encoding/decoding, interpreting, evaluating media text*	Evaluating and taking account of Media and Media Content *Comprehension and awareness*
Social competences	Communicate	Communicative and participative skills *Capacity to interact with others and maintain networks*	Building Social Relations *Media networking* Participating in Public sphere Citizens' Participation Skills *Active citizenship* Creating and Producing Content *Content creation*

Components of Individual Competences

To clarify and develop the different components of the above-mentioned abilities:

Graph 2: Dimension 1: Individual Competences



2.2.1 Use: Technical skills

These are the operative abilities required to access and effectively use media communication tools. They specifically refer to devices and tools available in a certain context or environment. The Use Criteria rely on the individual's ability to use media platforms. Technical skills are necessarily a prerequisite to use. They are developed by the individual to adapt to their needs. They include certain decoding capacities (especially of interfaces), as well as the practical ability to use specific functions of media tools. They overlap to a certain degree onto Critical Understanding, insofar as some critical capacity is required to use media tools. However, this study recognises more sophisticated competences as an advanced level of Individual Ability.

Technical Skills allow the individual to use different media tools and platforms in an appropriate and functional manner, from radio, mobile telephones and newspapers, to state-of-the-art computers. Whatever the use of such tools, a certain operative capacity is fundamental. They include the user's capacity to comprehend and use these tools, as well as the ability to adapt them to their needs.

In order to further define these concepts of the use criterion we have proposed the following items:

- **Understanding simple technical functions**: Understanding the basic function of each tool and its components. For example, it is not possible to correctly use a computer without having at least a basic knowledge of the function of the monitor and the ability to use the mouse.
- **Decoding interfaces**: Understanding and deciphering the basic functions of the tools. For example, the user of a mobile phone must be able to decode and distinguish a call from an SMS.
- **Understanding complex technical functions**: The use of advanced functions. For example, using a mobile phone to not only receive and make calls, but to store a contact list, classify the list into groups and assign a special sound or image to each group.
- **Adapting and personalizing interfaces**: The capacity to personalise the function of the tool and, in so doing, to adapt it to an efficient and specific use.
- **Ability to search and choose technical information, devices and configurations**: The capacity to find, identify and select different media tools, functions and services.
- **Ability to convert informal procedural knowledge into deductive, formal and declarative knowledge (tutorials, guides, etc.)**: The capacity to understand abstract information that may be applied to new situations. This capacity is not simply intuitive knowledge that the user develops, but the capacity to articulate information and convert it into instruction for others.
- **Critical awareness of technical issues**: A conscious, explicit, and therefore articulated knowledge of the technical options that tools offer.

Holistically, these operations together guarantee technical ability sufficient for the use of media tools. A user with these abilities is autonomous and able to use and adapt media tools to their individual needs. It is common for individuals have only a few of these abilities, and the degrees of development may be sorted and measured, identified according to the type of operation that the user is able to carry out.

In relation to these Criteria, there may be distinguished the following Components:

- **Computer and Internet Skills**

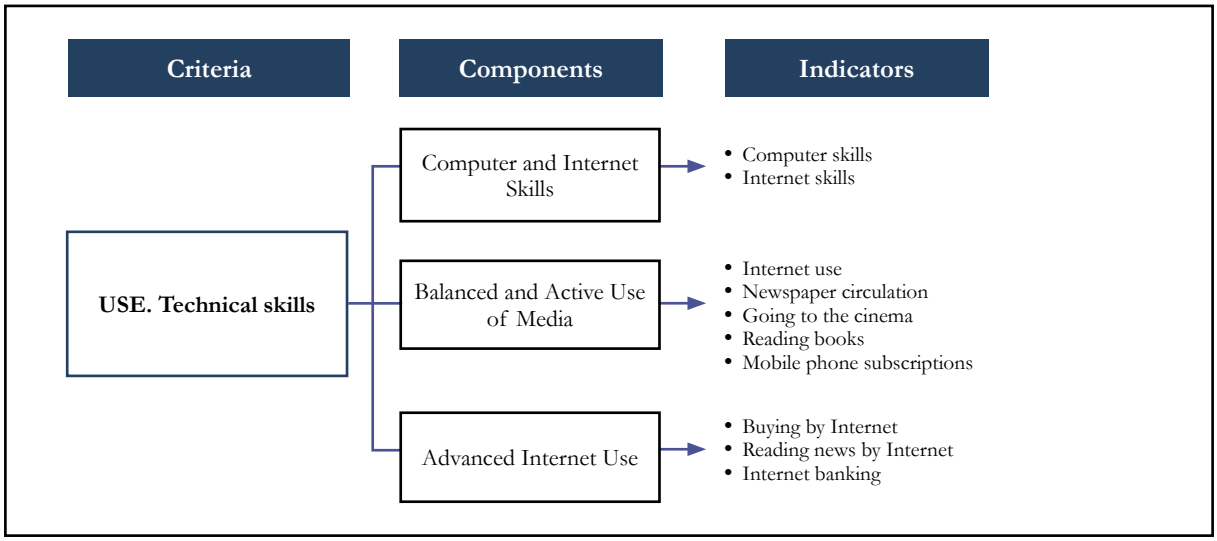
  Digital media is increasingly the primary source of media for many individuals. The ubiquity of computers and the use of the Internet make the skills associated with their use reliable indicators for the use of media.
- **Balanced and active use of media**

  The use of media by the individual in everyday life, with reference to the functions and type of media (newspapers, cinema, books, mobile telephones, etc.) are manifestations of use and therefore a reliable indicator for this Component.
- **Advanced Internet Use**

  Advanced use of the Internet demonstrates a sophisticated level of media use. Activities such as internet banking, e-government and buying by internet are reliable indicators of the individual's use of the media.

The following indicators have been chosen to illustrate the use Components of media literacy:

Graph 3: Technical Skills



Together, these operations guarantee sufficient and efficient technical capacity for the Use of media tools. The following indicators have been chosen to illustrate the Use Components of media literacy:

2.2.2 Critical Understanding

Critical Understanding is the most important aspect of the relationship between the individual and the media. How the individual interacts with the media is dictated by their Critical Understanding of both the content and its context. In order to understand and utilise the content, the user decodes it to make sense of its message. These processes are cognitive insofar as they rely on or correspond with cognitive or knowledge-related operations.

The user's ability to process information is fundamental to understanding media messages and texts, without which they cannot find meaning in it. Critical Understanding competence allows the user to capture, assimilate and produce information. It includes also the use information to obtain an appropriate understanding of the environment and to use the information solve problems, to create and produce meaning, etc.

The following three Components of Critical Understanding are developed in detail:

2.2.2.1 Understanding Media Content and Function

This Component indicates the ability to read and make sense of media messages, be they audiovisual or text, interactive or passive. It implies a sequential cognitive process by which the individual recognises a code (or codes) in the text, to classify it and establish its global meaning in the context of previously acquired information. In so doing, the user classifies the information to make correct and appropriate use of it, and to appropriately respond to it.

There is an increasing concern that damaging fiction may be disseminated as fact by, or via, the media. The first mainstream example of this occurred in 1938 when Orson Wells read The War of the Worlds on CBS radio in the United States. Some listeners understood the message as news and were unable to recognise it as fiction. Mass hysteria ensued until the radio authorities were able to reassure listeners that they were not listening to fact or information, but rather a work of fiction. It demonstrates the fundamental requirement of listeners to be able to classify the messages they receive (reading, listening or watching) before they are able to respond to it.

Therefore, the user has to understand the content and its form. The ability of the user to distinguish between information and opinion, for example, is fundamental to allow further understanding of the elements, and also to formulate an appropriate response to it. Media messages may be categorised according to its content, genre, source, etc. The categories need not be common to all media users, and are the result of different approaches. However, it is necessary that the user is aware of the relative nature of the classification, and subsequently to be able to create original categories when appropriate.

The individual capacity to evaluate content relates to the value the user attributes to it. Whether it is trusted, legitimate, legal or outdated are all pertinent issues to be addressed when assessing content. This ability to evaluate and attribute value to media content is a keystone to media literacy development. It requires a perspective of remove from the overwhelming influx of messages transmitted by the media in its myriad of forms in order for the user to make sense of them.

There can be several degrees of complexity in the process. At the low end of the spectrum, the user adopts a binary classification (true/false; legal/illegal; trustworthy/unreliable; good/bad). This is an ordinary and pragmatic judgment ("Is this bank note authentic, or fake?", "Does the editor own the copyright of this text?"). However, on occasion, the media situation avoids clear logic ("If I order this item on this website, am I certain to receive it?"), and the evaluation becomes a matter of risk management. All content is evaluated by its representation, information and intention, and therefore can rarely be absolutely true, absolutely trustworthy, absolutely outdated, or absolutely good.

Therefore, even as a simple consumer of goods and services, the citizen must be capable of establishing the value of the message in order to make an informed choice. They must be capable of evaluating their options, orientating themselves within them and distinguishing from among them persuasive discourse (advertising, publicity, commercial promoting, etc.). The user who can evaluate media content has the opportunity to promote their own interests and safeguard their rights. They will therefore make better choices, which will eventually benefit the whole system.

Therefore, this criterion includes the following general abilities:

- **Coding and decoding**: To understand the code upon which a text is based, and the capacity to understand the title and content of a text.
- **Competence to critically evaluate, compare and contrast information and media text**: The capacity to assign value to information based on its content, form, genre, source, consequences and according to the specific requirements of the user.
- **Exploring and searching information actively**: The capacity to explore and search information to satisfy set objectives.
- **Summarising**: The capacity to summarise, condense and communicate information provided by a text, requiring the ability to comprehend the content of a message.
- **To synthesise**: The ability to amalgamate different sources of information into one synthetic construction.
- **Ability to remix and recycle media content**: The basic creative capacity to combine existing elements in order to compose a recycled media text that serves a set objective.

2.2.2.2 Uknowledge of Media and Media Regulation

This ability allows the user to evaluate the media system and its function in relation to the user's aims and objectives. It includes knowledge of the conventions, rules and norms that impact on the media, and the laws, regulatory authorities, knowledge of the stakeholders, etc.

With an understanding of the context in which media operates, the user is equipped to receive and respond to media messages with a full understanding of the who, what and why. For example, private broadcasters operate in order to acquire audiences and to resell them to advertisers, and do so within set parameters, which may take the form of strict regulation (legislation), informal regulation (self or co-regulations) or general guidelines (good practice guides). The user's knowledge of their rights and obligations in relation to the media has a profound effect on their behaviour.

In detail, these skills include:

- **Critical evaluation of opportunity and restriction, pluralism conditions, regulations, laws, rules and rights of media production**: The ability to assess the general conditions in which the media operates, its context, conditions and strategies, and the ability to modify them to meet set objectives.
- **Appreciation of conceptual frameworks provided by media studies**: The capacity to acquire media knowledge, and to evaluate and interpret media texts. In addition to informally acquired knowledge, the user has advanced knowledge generated by the study of media and communication.

2.2.2.3 User Behaviour (Internet)

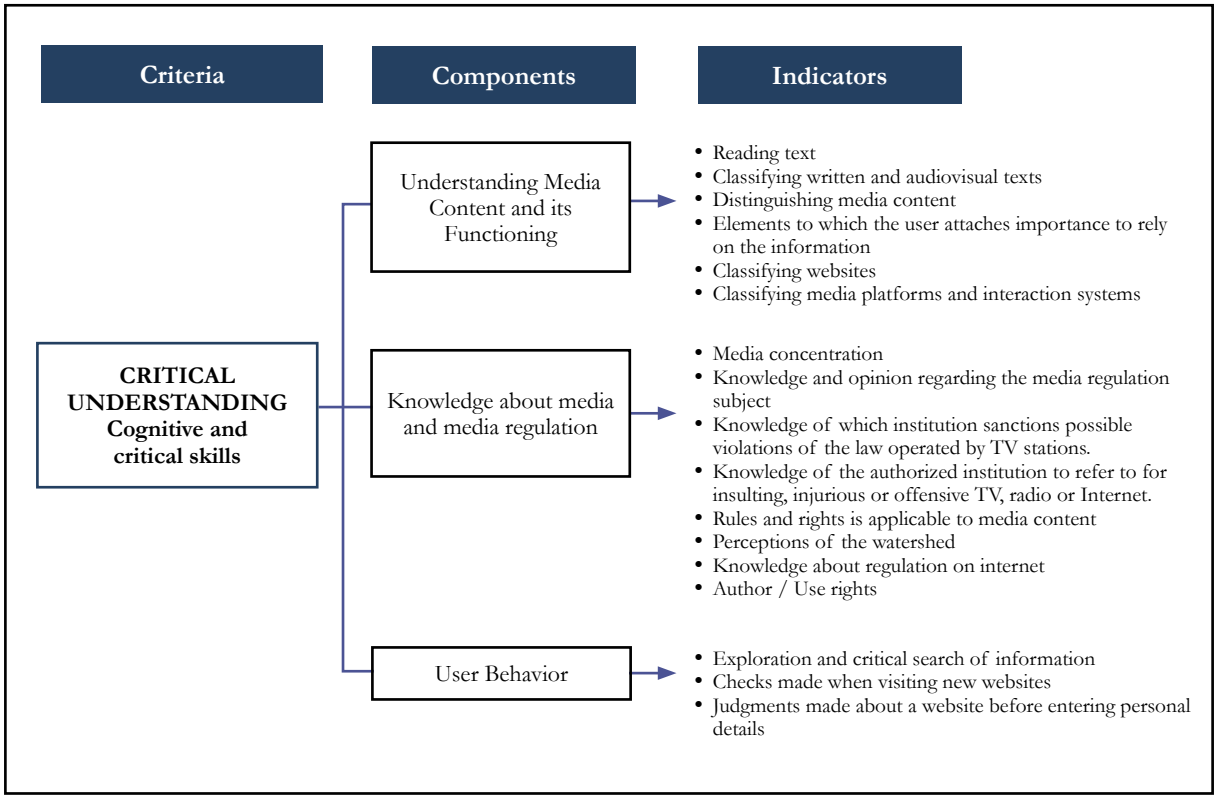
The Critical Understanding of media messages consequently affects, and is evidenced by, user behaviour. The skills are based in semiotic and linguistic capabilities, and allow the user to explore, obtain and use information, to contextualise it, to evaluate it, analyse it and be aware of its validity and utility in relation to set objectives.

User behaviour is the end product of the user's habits of thought, reading, writing and speaking which go beneath surface meaning, of first impressions, myths, pronouncements, clichés, received wisdom and opinion, understanding of the meaning, causes, context, ideology and consequence, events, objects, processes, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy and discourse, and indeed, the way in which individuals understand and relate to the world around them. Therefore, the indicators provide some indication of how well individuals are able to use media.

The user's behaviour provides an insight into the way that Critical Understanding functions in relation to the media. As with operative capacity, there are also levels of development and efficiency that range from simple to highly sophisticated. The following diagram shows the indicators and their structure which will illustrate the Critical Understanding Components of media literacy. In detail, these skills include:

- **The ability to develop Critical Understanding relating to strategies of information use**: The ability to elaborate strategies, protocol and search methods that are the product of the user's own experience. It is also the ability to criticise, reformulate and modify such strategies according to set objectives.

Graph 4: Critical Understanding Competences



2.2.2.4 Communicative and Participative Skills

This criterion implies the capacity of individuals to make and maintain contact with others via the media. This includes basic communication, such as e-government services, to participation with online groups in collaborative work towards a common objective.

This study subdivides Communicative Abilities into different Components:

a) Social relations;
b) Citizen participation; and
c) Content creation.

These abilities range from simple contact with individuals to the creation of complex cooperation and collaboration networks that use media tools as their base.

2.2.2.5 Social Relations

Socialising via the media is a novel concept; MySpace, which was among the first of the social networking sites to enter the public consciousness, was founded in 2003. Facebook (2004), Bebo (2005) and Twitter (2006) have also proved immensely popular and have provided individuals with the opportunity to present themselves remotely, to have relationships and socially active lives online.

These social lives demonstrate the capacity of a user to contact other individuals, to work in cooperation with them and to establish different networks and communities. They necessarily include communicative skills; receiving and producing messages, maintaining contact, and presenting the user's identity via profiles and platforms. These abilities are manifested in the following abilities:

- **Making and maintaining contact through media and social media**: The ability to contact other individuals via the media, fulfilling the minimum communication potential needed to establish groups.
- **To follow trends relayed by the media (mimesis) and peer groups**: The ability to share gestures, attitudes, options and other types of behaviour with other users, and to mimic behaviour and practice. The media reinforce this mimetic capacity, especially in the case of adolescents and young people.

2.2.2.6 Participation in the Public Sphere

Participation in public life via new media falls into one of two categories: 1) use of e-government (government services provided on the internet, such as library services or passport applications, which are simple activities and the performance of traditional tasks by way of new technology); and 2) participation in public life in the political sense (using the media to engage and communicate with governments and other individuals with the aim of shaping policy).

Both of these activities refer to civic participation in public life, which can take the form of simple relationships between individuals and government institutions to more complex and sophisticated cooperative actions, such as the formation or membership of political parties or the organization of protest groups. In detail, these skills include:

- **Maintaining participation with group that shares common models**: The ability (beyond imitation) to participate with others and to consciously share models and tools.
- **Using social media to manage strategically contacts with others through pragmatic acts**: The capacity to develop strategies of cooperation and collaboration to achieve specific objectives.
- **Appropriate presentations of identity (avatars and profiles)**: The ability to utilise and organise various aspects and presentations of the user's identity with concrete, strategic objectives. This includes the ability to build profiles and avatars using online media.
- **Interacting with multiple institutions appropriately**: The ability to effectively relate to social institutions through the media.

2.2.2.7 Content Creation Abilities

Creative abilities manifest themselves, in the main part, on the Internet. It acts not only as a tool by which information in the strictest sense (for example, the population of Belgium) may be shared, but also one by which facets of a user's identity may be transmitted by way of blogs, social networking sites or websites. The creation may be as simple as writing an email, to extremely sophisticated creation of an online identity, and may also be technically complex (for example, creating a videogame).

These abilities are related to the individual capacity to create new content and produce original media messages. They are the manifestation of the user's ability to use, identify and understand information in media messages, and to respond appropriately to them. The capacity to create has different grades of complexity, ranging from the most basic grades of creation to more sophisticated and innovative ones. In detail, these abilities include:

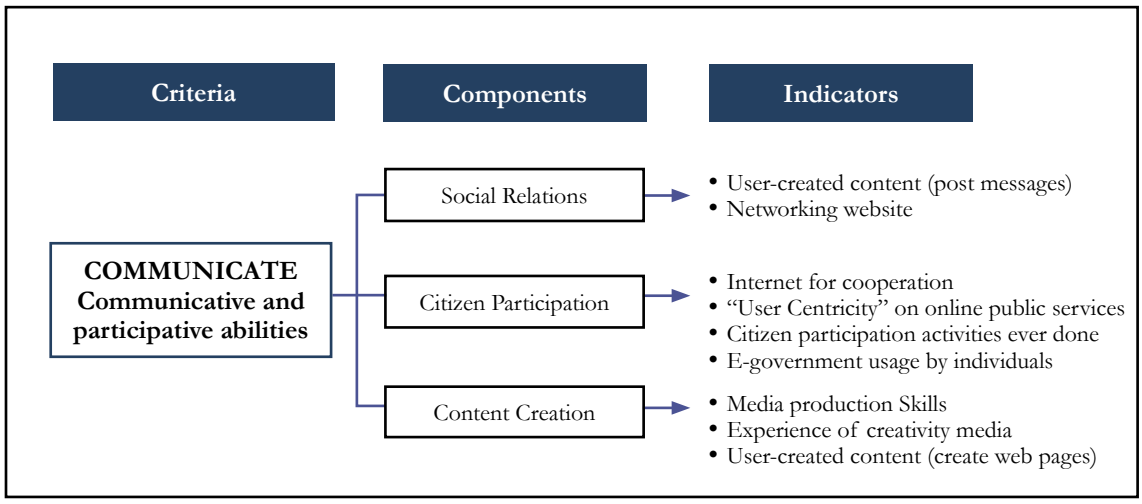
- **Sharing commonly created devices**: The ability to consciously share tools with users to whom they relate and with whom they cooperate.
- **Fostering active collaborative work and cooperation**: The ability to create and develop original strategies and actions in cooperation with others.
- **Solving problems through active cooperation and collaboration**: The ability to solve problems critically, and to interact with groups to meet a common objective.
- **Conceptualising, creating and producing new media texts**: The ability to conceptualise, design and produce original media texts. The level of originality presents enough innovative features in order not to be confused with a simply recycled text, and must be suitable in the context of the needs of the user.

- **To create original media messages**: The ability to establish conditions and norms or factors that affect media creation; constrictions, regulations, laws, rights, aesthetics, etc. These abilities relate to meta-linguistic, meta-semiotic and meta-production.

These combine to create Communicative and Participative Skills. Individuals with these abilities (to greater or lesser extent) acquire the potential communicating via the media.

Social relationships demonstrate the potential for individual and group relationships via the media. To a certain extent, the media manages social groups and dictates the type and frequency of contact, and therefore, prescribes the type of cooperation or conflict among them. However, there is no doubt that individual abilities facilitate social relationships among individuals and create the capacity to solve problems in cooperation with others.

Graph 5: Communicative Abilities



The Individual Competences are a combination of technical skill, Critical Understanding and Socio-communicative Competence. These are the individual's capacity to solve problems, think critically and establish cooperative relations with other citizens via the media. This capacity can lead to the development a type of citizenship that is autonomous, aware, critical and actively participative.

2.3 Environmental Factors

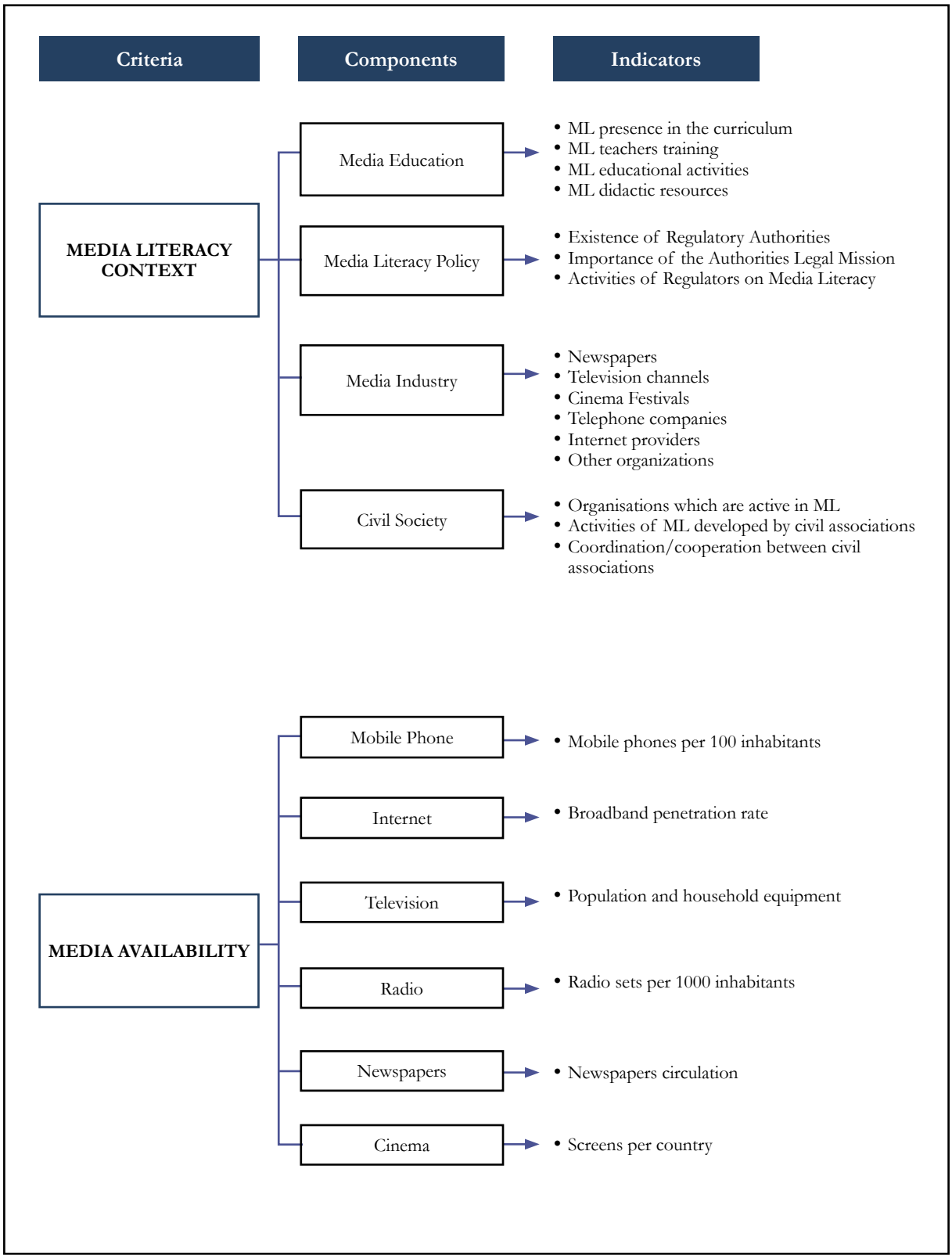
The media does not exist in a bubble, and media literacy very rarely develops in isolation to its environment. Even basic availability of media and technical devices are affected by the attitude of authorities, the existence of non-governmental bodies and their activities, and the initiatives of the media itself in contributing towards the creation of a media literate audience. This Study will not examine the effectiveness of the activities themselves, but rather it will observe the correlative elements between the existence of an involved government, civil society and media industry, and higher levels of media literacy in the populous.

Environmental Factors contextualise the facilitation of media literacy development, and therefore include those factors that engender or endanger individual skills. Statistics on Availability are relatively straight-forward to research, since much of it is contained on Eurostat[27], which provides an insight into user habits and characterises the environment itself, providing figures for mobile phone coverage, broadband access, etc. The activities of stakeholders, education and government were assessed also by media literacy experts in member states.

The following diagram illustrates the criteria for the Environmental Factors:

[27] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/

Graph 6: Dimension 2: Environmental Factors



2.3.1 Media Availability

Availability refers to the type of media and tools an individual can access in any given context and how they are socially distributed. The assessment requires a description of the Media Availability situation in every country.

2.3.1.1 Media Pluralism within Media Availability indicators

Media pluralism is a crucial factor which affects media literacy development. The broader the range of choice of media content, sources and platforms, the more communication practices are affected. A recent independent Study conducted by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven[28] identified five types of pluralism that were important to the overall situation of media in any given Member State, these were: geographical (fair and proportionate representation of local and regional communities and interests); cultural (fair and diverse representation of cultural and social groups); political (fair and proportionate representation of political views and groups); media types and genres (relating to the various types of funding of media) and; ownership and control (relating to the control of media outlets and platforms). These elements relate to the assessment criteria relied upon in this Study, and provide an insight into the Environmental Factors that shape media literacy.

Social indicators such as media pluralism, which are intrinsically related to freedom of the press, have become an international reference point for the state of media in any given country. They establish the fundamental conditions of the media environment, not only for media industry professionals to act freely and without bias, but also for the public to rely on the media as a mediator through which they may participate actively in public affairs. Therefore, freedom of the press (which includes broadcasting) is a three-way shared obligation between the authorities who should not bias the media, the media themselves, who should provide reliable information, and the audience who should be allowed freedom of expression, which must be guaranteed in order for debate and citizens participation to take place, increasingly via the media.

Some of these issues are included in the Study within the Contextual Factors, which include the role of the media industry and the legal conditions that safeguard diversity and plurality of media sources and diversity and plurality of the information itself. However, in this Study, neither the results of the above-mentioned study on pluralism (which are not yet available) nor the research carried out by Freedom of the Press[29] have been included in the formula that provides a media literacy assessment.

[28] Independent Study on Indicators for Media Pluralism in the Member States – Towards a Risk-Based Approach, April 2009.

[29] Freedom of the Press 2009, Freedom House -a United States-funded, Washington-based international non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, political freedom and human rights -publishes an annual report assessing the degree of perceived democratic freedoms in each country (www.freedomhouse.org). Nations are given a score from 0 (best) to 100 (worst). The degree to which the free flow of news and information is facilitated determines the classification of its media as "Free," "Partly Free," or "Not Free". Countries scoring 0 to 30 are regarded as having "Free"; 31 to 60, "Partly Free"; and 61 to 100, "Not Free". The ratings and reports cover events that took place between January 1, 2008, and December 31, 2008.

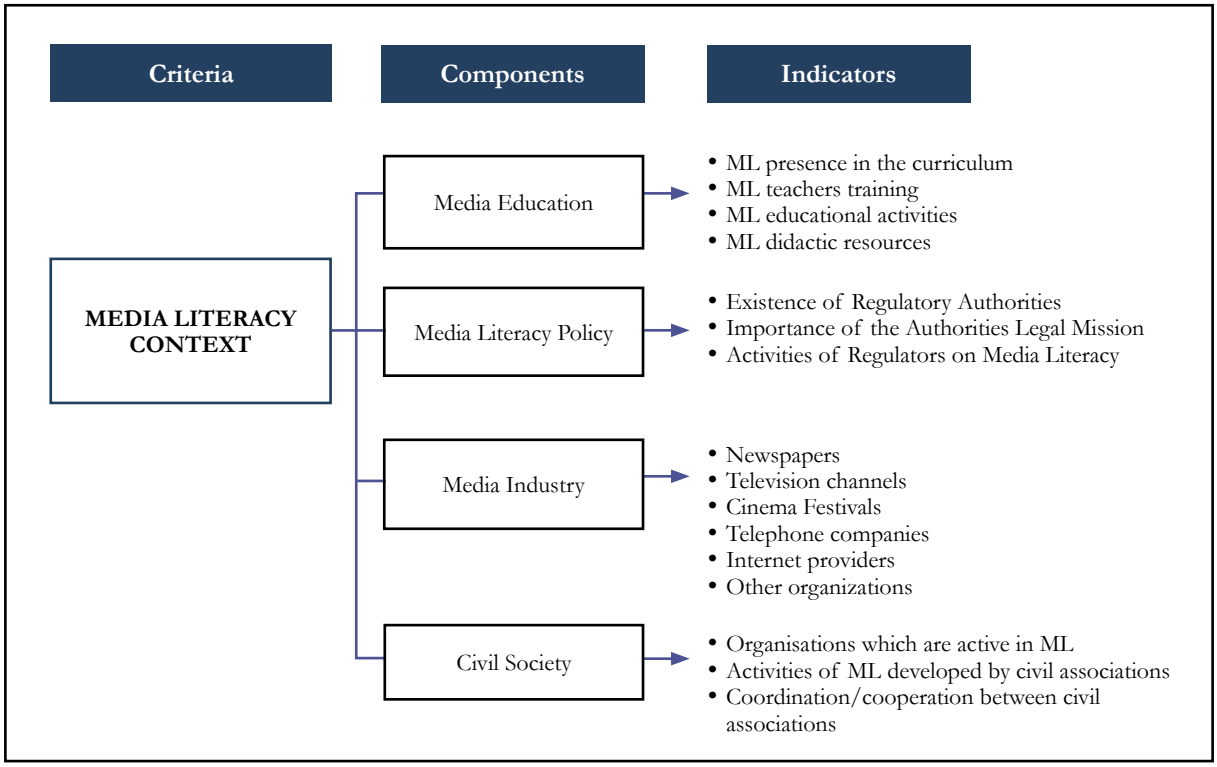
The results may later constitute an indicator in their own right, to be been taken into account when the refinement of the Tool takes place.

2.3.2 *Media literacy context*

Environmental Factors provide an insight into the media literacy environment. If the factors are favourable, and media literacy has an important and considered position in national policy, it follows that media literacy levels will be high. This relationship can be demonstrated statistically, and does not exclude the possibility that, in environments largely hostile or neutral to the development of media literacy, or without the economic capacity to foster access, exceptional cases of individual development may be isolated. However, these are likely to be an exception, and not the norm.

In addition to availability, the following factors form the environment which influence media literacy: a) media education; b) media policy and regulation authorities; c) the role of the media industry; and d) the role of civil society.

Graph 7: Media Literacy Context



The Environmental Factors are based on qualitative data which is then converted into quantitative data. A table has been constructed for each of the Criteria, and they are explained in detail below.

2.3.2.1 Media Education

Media literacy may be is isolated as an explicit competence or exist in its component parts in the curricula of general education and life-long learning. The prominence of media literacy in the national curricula, and resources for teacher training and didactic material has a profound effect on media literacy development. Special attention is paid to school curricula and the capacity of teaching staff, based on their training levels and the system within which they operate.

Using education to indicate media literacy levels is perhaps misleading. Traditional media have never had a prominent place in education, and new media, such as mobile telephones, interactive television, and the Internet, are relatively neglected in the curriculum also. However, if a Member State has a very effective media education curriculum in place, and it is well established, citizens will logically be more confident in interacting and engaging with all general forms of media.

Special attention is paid to compulsory curriculum, which may or may not include media communication, but makes no mention of the capacity acquired by the teaching staff to develop such a curriculum. It is assumed that this ability depends upon the teachers' training level and system. The indicators within the Media Education Criteria are separated into four parts:

1. Curriculum;
2. Teachers' training;
3. Media education activities;
4. Resources.

2.3.2.2 Media Literacy Policy

The level of engagement a public or authoritative body has with the media, the more literate that society may be said to be. The role of public bodies is fundamental to the identification of the general viewing public's media literacy, particularly if the body exists to protect viewers' interests, and promotes and protect users' rights to freedom of expression.

This factor provides an assessment of national legislation and policy relating to media literacy, including legal obligations, regulations, and actions, organizations, manifestos of organizations and civic participation with a view to influencing the regulation of media literacy. The indicators within the media policy and regulation authorities are separated into three parts

1. Existence of Regulatory Authorities;
2. Importance of the Authorities' Legal Mission;
3. Activities of Regulators on Media Literacy.

2.3.2.3 Media Industry (role on media literacy)

The media is, first and foremost, an industry. It demands a uniquely high level of interactivity and involvement from its subscribers. Although public service broadcasters have a remit to act for the common good, rather than (purely) profit margins and shareholder interests, they must still justify their existence by retaining audiences. Some parts of the industry invest heavily in the civic lives of their audiences, the press (known also as the Fourth Estate, after the executive, the legislature and the judiciary), provide an essential public service, and often conduct activities to encourage the media literacy development of their audiences. Industry initiatives, compounded by the work of non-governmental organizations, have had a significant impact on the literacy of their subscribers. It is for this reason that they occupy a position among the key indicators.

This Factor provides an overview of non-governmental, non-educational activities and initiatives relating to the promotion of media literacy. It takes into account programmes, campaigns, user-participation organizations, strategies, supply of resources and the development of didactic material. The indicators within the media policy and regulation authorities are separated into six categories:

1. Newspapers;
2. Television channels;
3. Cinema Festivals;
4. Telephone companies;
5. Internet providers;
6. Others organizations.

2.3.2.4 Civil Society (role in media literacy)

Civil society organisations and initiatives stimulate the environmental support that increases levels of media literacy. The number of associations, their activities and their quality illustrate the impact of civil society. They do not exist in isolation, however, and their ability to promote citizen participation rests on the cooperation of authoritative bodies and with links to media education. The indicators within the civil society criteria are separated into six categories:

- Organisations which are active in ML;
- Activities of ML developed by civil associations;
- Coordination/cooperation between civil associations.

2.4 Justification of Media Literacy Indicators

2.4.1 The character of the indicators

An indicator is an instrument which provides information about the status and progress of a specific situation, process or condition. They enable simple, straightforward and accessible knowledge regarding a specific phenomenon. They may be simple or complex, depending on whether they are a set of specific and precise data or whether they are the result of a number of simple indicators gathered together. The indicators proposed here are diverse in nature; some are quantitative data obtained from various sources (questionnaires, statistics, etc.), and others are the judgment of experts who have qualitatively analysed the data. There are also indicators, which result from combining simple indicators in accordance with mathematical algorithms, which attach a quantitative value to simple indicators.

2.4.2 Function and objectives of the indicators

The indicators proposed are intended to provide an overall assessment of the level of development of media literacy in the EU27. They also provide an insight into various dimensions of media literacy; use, Critical Understanding and Communicative Abilities. Each of the indicator sets may be considered on the basis of a number of variables, such as gender and age.

Since media literacy ultimately refers the individual's relationship with the media. In all likelihood, the type of individual referred to in this Study cannot be found in reality, the majority bear a certain resemblance to either an individual who represents the average of the attributes of the individuals surveyed in each country, or an average individual who represents the average condition of the individuals in his or her country.

The definition of media literacy used has been developed within a framework in which different dimensions of media literacy are organised and the homogeneous indicators are grouped. The indicators are based on the concept of media literacy adopted by EU Institutions. Therefore, they place an emphasis on skills related to media and media platforms of new and traditional media. Factors related to the protection of minors in media and audiovisual production and creativity are also taken into consideration. The ultimate goal is to allow a systematic development of a European policy. The indicators should respond to the goals set out in the Audiovisual Media and Communication directive[30], in the Report of the European Parliament on Media Literacy[31] and in the Audiovisual Media Service Directive[32].

[30] Cf. in English, http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/docs/com/en.pdf. (Consulted May 2nd 2009).

[31] Directive 2007/65/CE of the European Parliament and Council of December 11th 2007. http://eur-ex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1989L0552:20071219:EN:PDF

[32] Cf. in English, http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/docs/com/en.pdf. (Consulted May 2nd 2009).

The indicators have prioritised certain aspects of media literacy. Necessarily, other aspects have been pushed to the back. They have been selected according to the following principles:

1. The analysis of indicators must assume the symbolic nature of the signs and symptoms (aspects that deduce or assume other aspects of reality which cannot be accessed). They should therefore be considered as signifiers, and are, to a certain extent, reductive.
2. The detailed, exhaustive and comprehensive description of an integrated and comprehensive media skill is unattainable by reason of its complexity and infinite nature. Therefore, models and frameworks of representation that are summarised are simpler to handle.
3. The symptomatic nature of the indicators and their orientation toward political action must allow for focus.

It is assumed that environmental influences (education, institutional, industry, etc.) affect the way individual skills develop. Therefore, educational opportunities and favourable Environmental Factors produce better educated and developed individuals. This is an assertion based on the experience (both scientific and anecdotal) that has been accumulated in this field over decades. However, these factors do not guarantee a specific result. Research cannot encompass all the variables that may potentially affect a particular process.

The European Commission requires assessment of the condition of the individuals in each country and also what institutions can do to improve individual conditions. The institutions that are included in the key Environmental Factors are mediators between the policies of the Commission and national governments, and the improvement of individual skills.

2.4.3 The Role of Media Education

Any media education initiative is based on the assumption that educational efforts have a positive effect on the skills and capabilities of the individual recipient. It is therefore not unreasonable to establish a positive, though not unanimous, relationship between media education and the progress made in individuals' technical, Critical Understanding and Communicative Abilities.

However, there may be cases of good media education which nonetheless fail to impact on media literacy levels. Alternatively, a Member State with no media education may nevertheless develop media literate individuals. In any case, the indicators, and their progress over time (historical series), allow for the analysis of both variables.

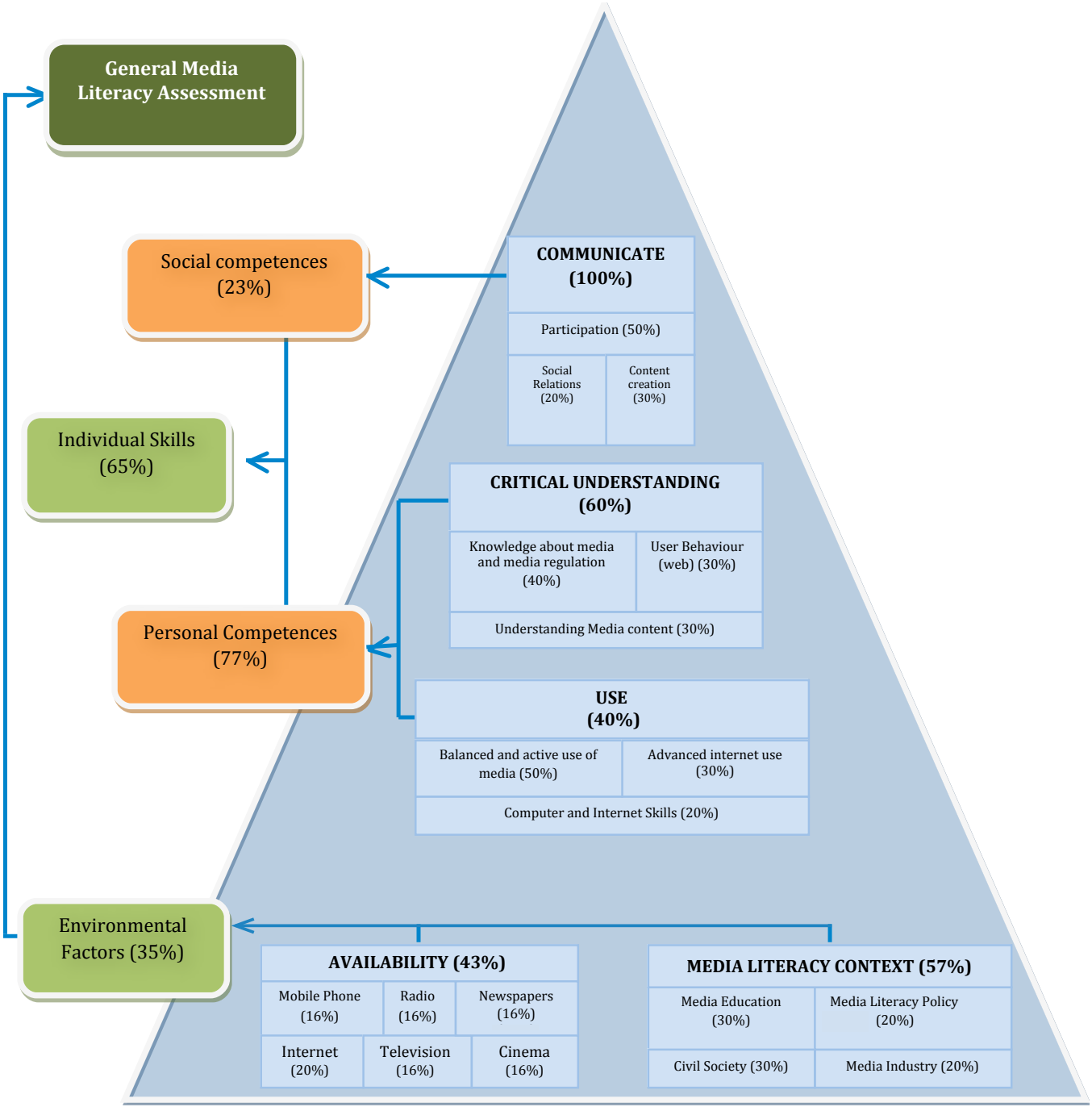
The mass use of traditional media, such as television, indicates that, at least from a technical-instrumental point of view, there are no significant barriers to traditional mass media (radio, television, etc.). In contrast, the relatively low use – in terms of the entire population – of new media reveals that media skills and abilities related to these need to be developed and expanded.

The framework that has been used to select the indicators demonstrates the criteria used. Nonetheless, we may consider the following:

- **Criterion of comprehension**: Technical abilities have been considered in conjunction with Critical Understanding and communicative skills in order to determine the function of these dimensions.
- **Criterion of empirical evidence focused on the use media**: Many of the proposed indicators relate to the specific use of media, which is driven and dictated by individuals. Therefore, the use of media indicates the existence of certain media skills.
- **Criterion for assessing the critical meta-cognitive role that types of knowledge have**: The indicators rely on the individual's self-assessment of their knowledge and understanding of the media (protection of minors, ownership of the media, etc.). Some of the self-assessment is binary (yes or no, correct or incorrect), others only reveal the awareness of a specific aspect of media. Therefore, these indicators are not entirely reliable. However, presupposing a reasonable degree of sincerity in the responses, they can reveal, in statistical terms, the existence of specific know-how about the media or significant gaps in that knowledge. Both operate as factors that act as critical modulators of certain types of information or knowledge provided about, and by, the media.

Different weights and values have been assigned to the indicators and their Criteria in order to integrate them appropriately and in a way that reflects their impact on media literacy levels.

Graph 8: Weighting and Value of Components



Evaluation of the Competences' Levels

In order to define media literacy levels, individual abilities and Environmental Factors are sorted into three levels of development. Here follows a breakdown of each level:

Table 2: Level of Competences

Level	Definition by Dimension	
	Individual	**Environmental**
Basic	The individual has a set of abilities that allow a basic use of media. The user knows its function, deciphers its basic codes and uses it for specific ends. The user's capacity to critically an-alyse the information received is limited. His commun-icative capacity through media is also limited.	The environment does not provide stimuli for the development of media literacy.
Medium	The individual has a medium level of media use, knowing in depth its function and is able to carry out complex operations. The user knows how to obtain and evaluate the information required, he evaluates the information search strategies. The user is an active producer and participates socially	The environment provides some stimuli but in a sporadic, irregular way.
Advanced	The individual is an expert in media use, being aware of and interested in the legal conditions that affect its use. The user has an in-depth knowledge of the techniques and languages and can analyse and convert the conditions affecting his/her communicative relations and the production and communi-cation of messages. In the public sphere, the user is capable of activating cooperation groups that allow him/her to solve problems.	The environment provides sys-tematic stimuli. Actions are coor-dinated to develop a media literate population

3 The Tool

Following the identification and selection of the indicators, a Tool was designed in accordance with the Pyramid Structure to assess media literacy levels within each country. The construction of the Tool underwent four processes:

1. Each of the selected indicators was assigned a specific weight (100%), because not all indicators have the same relevance when measuring media literacy. The weighting of the indicators was based on an expert consultation, and priorities set by the Commission. The process was carried out for each Criteria and Component; for instance, Critical Understanding was given a weight of 30%, and was therefore considered more relevant as an indicator than was Use (20%), while Communicative Abilities was given a weight of 15%;
2. The quantitative indicators (for the components of Use, Communicative Abilities, and Media Availability) referred to EU national data for each indicator. This data was divided into three levels: namely basic, medium and advanced, taking the EU average as a point of reference. This allowed for an internal comparison between the levels of EU countries. A detailed explanation of how the quantitative indicators were processed is illustrated at section 3.1;
3. Qualitative indicators (Media Literacy Context) relied on the consultation of national experts; their opinions were analysed and homogenised according to the Study's Criteria, and so as to avoid personal bias. A detailed explanation of how the qualitative indicators were processed may be found in section 3.2; and
4. After the weighting process, the data derived from both operations was combined to complete the Tool.

The resulting Tool presents one table for each media literacy criterion (subdivided into its corresponding units), with their assigned weights and data classified into basic, medium or advanced levels. For a complete template of the Tool, please refer to Annex G (Country Reports – Spreadsheet Template); for more detailed information about how the tool works you can also refer to Annex M (Tool Template and Instructions).

3.1 How the Tool Works: Construction and Interpretation (Individual Competences)

The three phases of construction entailed the following:

Phase 1: Indicators' Comparative Tables

1. Selection and extraction of indicators from a valid source, for example: Computer Skills (Eurostat)
2. Establish a comparative table of the indicator for the EU;

Table 1: Computer skills in the EU, 2007

Level of basic computer skills, which could include up to 6 specific tasks related to the computer use.	
Country	**2007 (%)**
European Union (27 countries)	23
European Union (sample of 25 countries)	24
European Union (sample of 15 countries)	26
Luxembourg	39
Norway	37
Denmark	36
Iceland	36
Austria	33
Netherlands	32
Finland	29
Germany (including ex-GDR from 1991)	28
Spain	28
Slovenia	28
France	27
Hungary	27
Sweden	27
United Kingdom	26
Estonia	24
Belgium	22
Portugal	22
Italy	19
Cyprus	19
Lithuania	19
Ireland	18
Slovakia	18
Czech Republic	17
Malta	17
Greece	15
Latvia	14
Poland	12
Bulgaria	7
Romania	5

3. The values were converted into a standard scale, based on the EU average, which was converted to 100. To ensure homogenisation, the indicators were expressed as the same unit of measurement. The new values were classified into tertiles according to their position in relation to the EU average. Taking 100 as the average, the Study defined 30 points higher (130) and 30 points lower (70) than the average to determine the tertiles. The first tertile (advanced, shown here in green) identifies individual country results above 130; the second tertile (medium, shown here in yellow) is between 130 and 70; the third tertile (basic, shown here in pink) is below 70. Each indicator was classified in one of the three levels, allowing for a comparison of results at EU level.

Table 2: Computer skills in the EU (2007) with assigned levels

Country	Data 2007	New Value
European Union (27 countries)	23	100
European Union (25 countries)	24	104,35
European Union (15 countries)	26	113,04
Luxembourg	39	169,57
Norway	37	160,87
Denmark	36	156,52
Iceland	36	156,52
Austria	33	143,48
The Netherlands	32	139,13
Finland	29	126,09
Germany	28	121,74
Spain	28	121,74
Slovenia	28	121,74
France	27	117,39
Hungary	27	117,39
Sweden	27	117,39
The United Kingdom	26	113,04
Estonia	24	104,35
Belgium	22	95,65
Portugal	22	95,65
Italy	19	82,61
Cyprus	19	82,61
Lithuania	19	82,61
Ireland	18	78,26
Slovakia	18	78,26
Czech Republic	17	73,91
Malta	17	73,91
Greece	15	65,22
Latvia	14	60,87
Poland	12	52,17
Bulgaria	7	30,43
Romania	5	21,74

Level	Advanced	Medium	Basic
Colour			

Phase 2: The Spreadsheet

The spreadsheet operates on Windows Excel, taking the data from each indicator and country and providing a value for the components (marked blue) and the indicators in accordance to the structure of the Study. Table 3 illustrates, as an example, the spreadsheet of the Use component for Austria. The first part of the spreadsheet concerns the indicators (e.g. computer skills); each has a specific level (Column 3), resulting from the previous classification of data into tertiles, and a weight assigned through expert consultation (Column 4). The indicators combine to form a single component. Column 5 shows the level of each indicator multiplied by its weight.

Table 3: Table for Use Criterion, Austria

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7	Column 8
	Use. Technical Skills	**Level**	**Weight**	**Weighted value**	**Weight of component**	**Component weight x value**	**Reached vs. EU average**
	Computer skills	143,48	50%	71,74		14%	143%
	Internet Skills	100	50%	50		10%	100%
COMPONENT 1	**Computer and Internet Skills**		100%	121,74	20%	24,30%	122%
	Internet Use	108,93	20%	21,78		11%	109%
	Newspaper Circulation	250	25%	62,5		31%	250%
	Going to the Cinema	82,35	15%	12,35		6%	82%
	Reading Books	94,59	30%	28,37		14%	95%
	Mobile Phone subscriptions	105,66	10%	10,56		5%	106%
COMPONENT 2	**Balanced and Active Use of Media**		100%	135,58	50%	67,80%	136%
	Buying by Internet	113,04	35%	39,56		12%	113%
	Reading News by Internet	106,73	26%	27,74		8%	107%
	Internet Banking	100,78	39%	39,3		12%	101%
COMPONENT 3	**Advanced Internet Use**		100%	106,61	30%	32,00%	107%
	Total			124,12	100%	124,10%	124%

Level guide	Level
above 130	Advanced
70 - 130	Medium
below 70	Basic

Column 6 shows the weights of the components within their corresponding criterion (here, Use). The result in Column 5, which reflects the sum of the indicators, is the total value for the Use component. Column 7 reveals the average of the indicator in relation to the component weight (multiplication of indicator's weight times the component weight). Column 8 illustrates the difference between the EU average and the value obtained by country.

Phase 3: Assessment Tool

Once the data has been introduced and calculated in all the components' tables, the global assessment of media literacy can be made. The final spreadsheet (Table 4) illustrates the criteria of the Study (Use, Communicative Abilities, Critical Understanding, Media Availability, and the Media Literacy Context) with their respective weights within the individual or environmental dimensions.

Column 1 represents the dimensions (marked dark blue) and Column 2 provides the name of the criteria (marked yellow and green), and the sub-dimensions (marked light blue). Column 3 specifies the total level obtained by the criteria in the previous assessment stage. Column 4 provides the weight assigned to each criterion, and Column 5 the weighted value obtained for each criterion. Column 6 corresponds to the weight of each criterion and sub-dimension according to its dimensions.

Table 4: Global Assessment of Media Literacy, Austria

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7
	Media Literacy Criteria	Level	Weight	Weight Obtained	Weight of Sub Dimension	Weight of Dimension
	Communicative and Participative	120,14	100%	18,02	23%	15%
	Subdimension 1 - Social Competences	120,14	100%	18,02	23%	15%
	Critical Understanding	122,13	60%	36,64	46%	30%
	Use	124,12	40%	24,82	31%	20%
	Subdimension 2 - Personal Competences	122,92	100%	61,46	77%	50%
DIMENSION 1	**Individual Competences (Sub 1 + Sub 2)**	122,28	100%	79,48	100%	65%
	Media Availability	95,11	43%	14,266	n.a	15%
	Media Literacy Context	91,62	57%	18,32	n.a	20%
DIMENSION 2	**Environmental Factors**	93,12	100%	32,59	100%	35%
	Total	**112,08**		**112,08**	100%	100%

Level guide	Level
above 130	Advanced
70 - 130	Medium
below 70	Basic

Phase 4: Comparative Tables

Once the data has been processed, comparative tables may be produced. For an explanation of the criteria, components, indicators, and the comparative tables and graphs, refer to Annex K (Criteria Cards).

3.2 How the Tool Works: Construction and Interpretation (Environmental Factors)

The Media Literacy Context criterion differs from the individual criteria because it is based on qualitative data sent by national experts. Therefore, qualitative information was transformed into quantitative data. The procedure allowed for data processing and weighting to be carried out in accordance with the structure designed and presented in the Study pyramid.

The criterion consists of four components (Media Education, Media Literacy Policies, Media Industry, and Civil Society). In line with the Framework, each component has a set of indicators that were assessed subjectively by national experts. In turn, each indicator dictated the specific component that it belongs to and each component dictated its respective criterion.

The Media Literacy Context was assessed as follows:

- A questionnaire on the Environmental Factors was designed and sent to EU national experts on media literacy;
- The questions were analysed and compared;
- A table was created for each component, reflecting the weight assigned. For example, if civil society was assigned a weight of 30% within the whole Media Literacy Context component, the maximum value obtainable for civil society would be 30;
- Based on the ranks and the detailed answers of the national experts, as well as on certain criteria developed to homogenise their assessment, a rank was provided by the Consortium for each country; and
- This numerical assessment was then introduced into the Tool template and the same operations were then carried out as for the Individual Competences.

In detail, measuring the Media Literacy Context component was conducted in three phases:

Phase 1: The Design and Submission of the Questionnaires to the National Experts

The questionnaire (Annex D) contains 26 questions and is divided into the four components of the Media Literacy Policy criterion. For each component there are specific questions and, in the case of the first component (Media Education), a subdivision by relevant topic: Compulsory Curriculum, Teachers' Training, Media Educational Activities and Resources. Each relevant topic poses questions to measure the indicator. The questionnaire was sent to national experts from the EU27, twenty of whom responded. With this material, the Consortium elaborated the Country Reports to be analyzed and measured.

Phase 2: Analysis and Evaluation

The 20 Country Reports were formatted in accordance with the established structure of the criteria and components. Each of the questionnaires was analyzed and homogeneous criteria were elaborated to assess the different answers given by the experts. After the analysis, a summary table of the answers was drafted for each questionnaire, illustrating the level of indicators per country, according to the information provided by the experts and in comparison with the defined criteria. Taking the Spain Country Report as an example, the summary table is as follows:

Table 5: Classification of Answers in the Questionnaire

MEDIA EDUCATION	
Curriculum	
Reference to media education in the curriculum	YES
Media Literacy as part of the key competences	YES
Core course on media literacy	NO
Optional course	YES
Cross curricular topic	YES
Ad hoc Governmental department	YES
Any evaluation of media literacy	NO
Teacher Training	
Official initial training on media literacy	YES
Evaluation of the teachers media literacy levels	NO
Official system of tutoring for teachers' training on media literacy	NO
Media Education Activities	
Main events	YES
Specific actions at national or regional level directly linked to media literacy in school	NO
Resources	
Main resources	YES
Studies/Publications	YES
MEDIA LITERACY POLICY	
Legislation (it exists)	NO
Actual legislation activity (it exists)	NO
Media communications authority (it exists)	YES
MEDIA INDUSTRY	
Newspaper Implicated in media literacy	YES
TV stations implicated in media literacy	YES
Cinema Festivals implicated in Media Literacy	YES
Telephone companies implicated in Media Literacy	NO
Internet Providers implicated in Media Literacy	NO
Others initiatives	NO
CIVIL SOCIETY	
Relevant associations (good level)	YES
Initiatives (good levels)	YES
Coordination (good level)	NO

Table 5 synthesises the questionnaire answers, homogenizing the evaluation criteria. Based on the answers and the general weight structure proposed in the Study, each component was weighted as follows:

- Media Education: 30%;
- Media Literacy Policy: 20%;
- Media Industry: 20%;
- Civil Society: 30%.

Once the weight was established, each component was assessed individually. The subdivision of the criteria according to the questions and their specific weight within the environmental dimension allowed for the designing of the following tables. Each criterion's maximum value was equalized to the percentage of its weight. For example, for the Media Industry criterion, the assigned weight was 20%; the maximum value was therefore 20.

1. Media Education

The media education evaluation table is divided into four topics: Curriculum, Teacher Training, Media Education Activities, and Resources. Each topic was assigned a specific weight. The addition of each weight (12 + 9 + 3 + 6 = 30) equals the total weight of the Media Education component (30%).

Table 6: Media Education Assessment

Media Education													**Total** (Maximum 30)
Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Teacher Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9				
Media Education Activities	1	2	3										
Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6							

A specific table was then constructed for each of the topics within Media Education.

1.1. Compulsory Curriculum

Following the analyzed questions and answers, Table 7 illustrates four cells with an evaluation scale. The upper columns show the scale adopted. The maximum value for this element is 12. Each cell was evaluated, measured, and the sum of the results in each cell is represented by the total value for the element (last column).

Table 7: Compulsory Curriculum Assessment

0	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	**Total** (Maximum 12)
No curricular implementation	Basic curricular implementation			ICT/ Digital Media and Media literacy as cross curricular subject			Media Literacy as competence			Systematic implementation and evaluation			

1.2. Teacher Training

Using the same methodology as adopted for the Compulsory Curriculum component, a table was created to measure each component. Table 8, Teacher Training, was given a maximum value of 9.

Table 8: Teacher Training Assessment

0	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	**Total** (Maximum 9)
No activity	Occasional teacher training in service			Compulsory, official training of teachers			Systematic teacher training and evaluation of this training (or competences)			

1.3. Media Education Activities

With the same procedure, the assessment of the third element (maximum 3), is showed in the next table:

Table 9: Media Education Activities' Assessment

0	1	2	3	**Total** (Maximum 3)
No activity	Continuous and regular activities			

1.4. Resources

The last element of the Media Education criterion, Resources, was evaluated in the same way. Its maximum value is 6 and the corresponding table used is showed as follows:

Table 10: Resources' Assessment

0	1	2	3	1	2	3	**Total** (Maximum 6)
No resources	Some general resources			Good level of resources			

Once each element of the component was measured, it was possible to complete the initial criterion table using the obtained results.

Table 11: Media Education General Assessment

Media Education													**Total** (Maximum 30)
Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Teacher Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9				
Media Education Activities	1	2	3										
Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6							

Taking Spain as an example, the tables are completed as follows:

Table 12: Assessment of Compulsory Curriculum in Spain

0	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	**9/12**
No curricular implementation	Basic curricular implementation			ICT/ Digital Media and Media literacy as cross curricular subject			Media Literacy as competence			Systematic implementation and evaluation			**Total**

Table 13: Assessment of Teacher Training in Spain

0	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	**5/9**
No activity	Occasional teacher training in service			Compulsory official training teacher			Systematic teacher training and evaluation of this training (or competences)			**Total**

Table 14: Assessment of Media Education Activities in Spain

0	1	2	3	**2/3**
No activity	Continuous and regular activities			**Total**

Table 15: Assessment of Media Resources in Spain

0	1	2	3	1	2	3	**5/6**
No resources	Some general resources			Good level of resources			**Total**

Table 16: General Assessment of Media Education in Spain

Media Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	**Total**
Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	9
Teacher training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9				5
Media Education activities	1	2	3										2
Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6							5
													21/30

The same procedure is carried out for each of the remaining components: Media Literacy Policy, Media Industry, and Civil Society.

Phase 3: Definition of the total criteria assessment

The last part of the criterion measuring process is the sum of individual component assessments. Each Country Report presents a table that summarizes the value obtained for each component. The total sum corresponds to the total value of the criterion. The summary table is showed as follows:

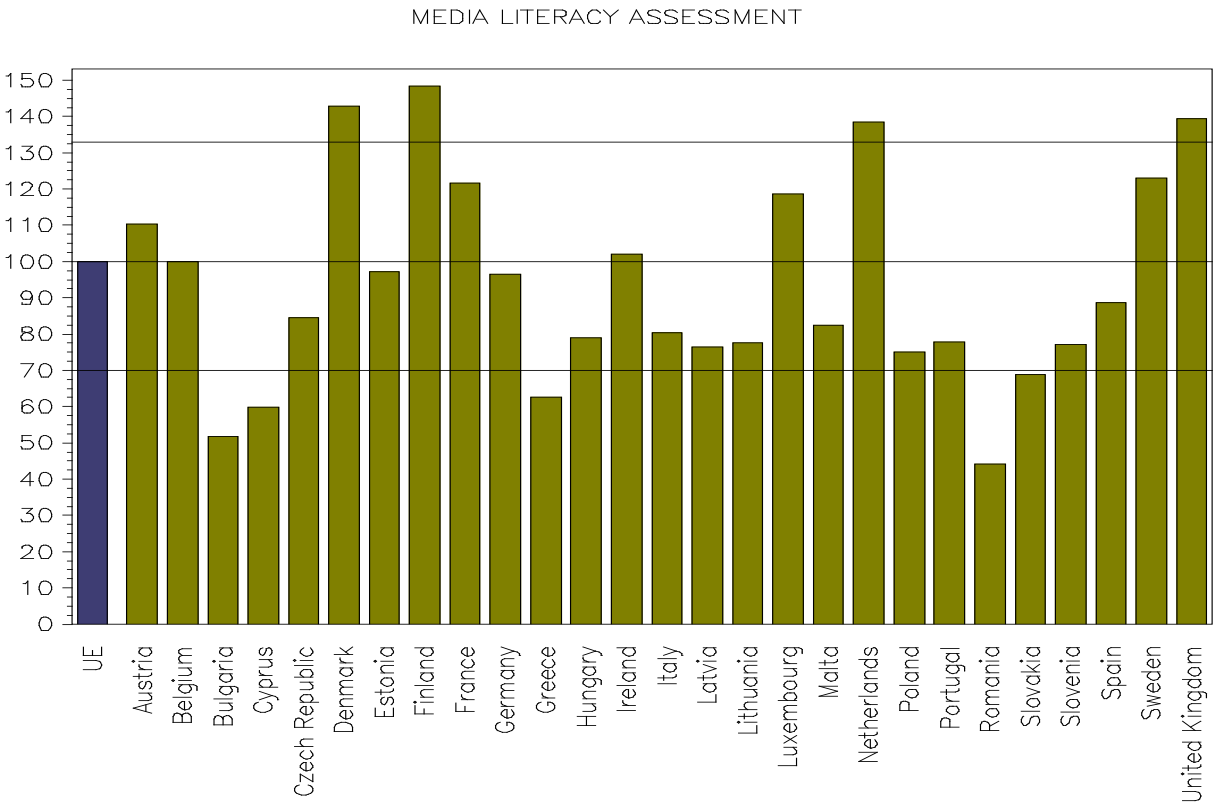
Table 17: General Assessment of Media Literacy Context

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR	Maximum	Total
Media education	30	
Media literacy policy	20	
Media industry	20	
Civil society	30	
Total	100	

The same procedure was applied to each of the 20 reports received from the national experts.

3.3 Findings and Assessments

Table 18: Media Literacy Assessment in Europe



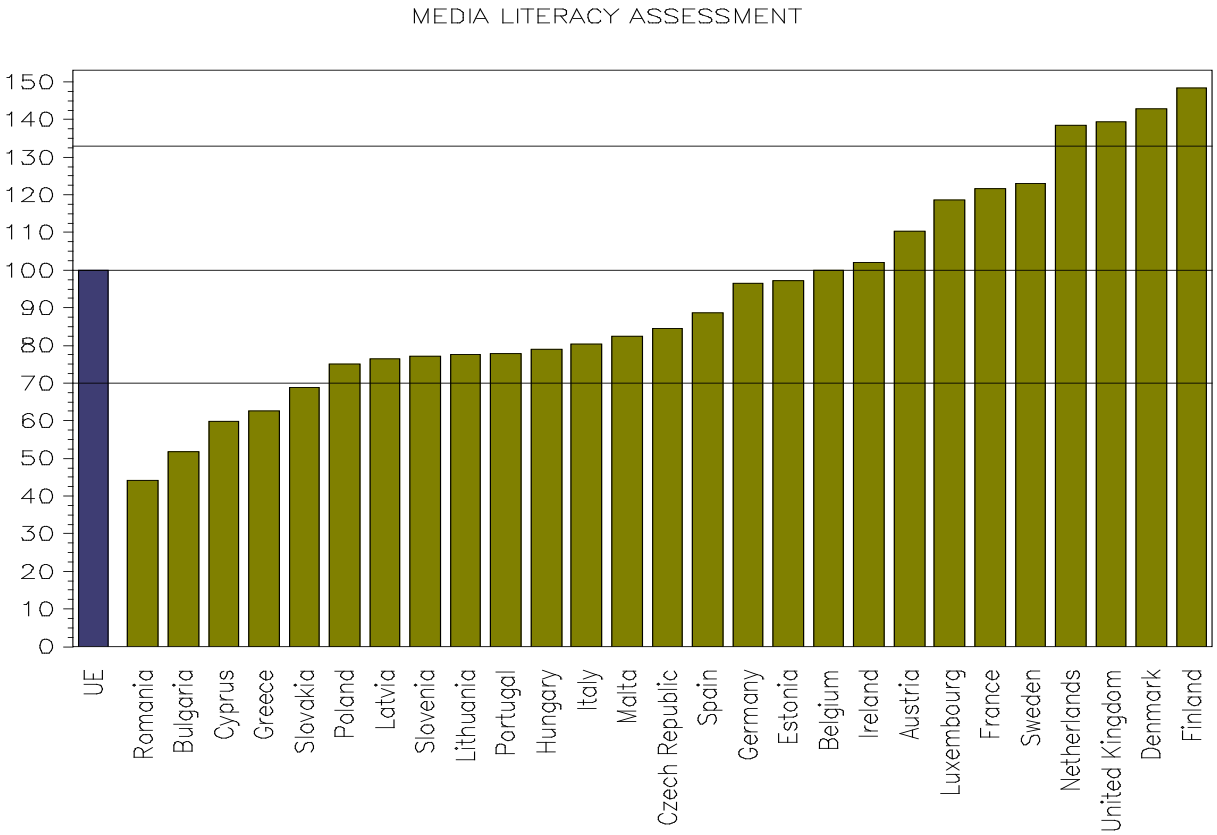
Value guide	Level
above 130	Advanced
70 - 130	Medium
below 70	Basic

Table 18 illustrates the preliminary media literacy assessment per country of this Study. This result combines the Individual Competences and Environmental Factors which compose the framework.

The primary observation is the widely differing results across Europe. The differences range from 150 or 140, as obtained by countries such as Finland, Denmark, Netherlands or United Kingdom, to 45 and 60, obtained by Bulgaria, Romania or Greece. However, although the European average stood at 100, to which Austria, Ireland, Germany and Spain, et al, rank, many countries are to be found in the range of 60 to 80. The difference between countries with advanced levels and basic levels, therefore, is considerable.

As a general conclusion, Northern and Central Europe generally obtain good results. The United Kingdom is an anomaly in this ranking as the most outstanding of the highly populated countries. More usually, and as demonstrated by France, Germany and Spain, highly populated countries tend to achieve a medium level. Of the small countries, only Luxembourg obtained an advanced level.

Table 19: Media Literacy Assessment in Europe (ascending order)



At the other end of the scale, there are a number of countries that do not exceed 70, including Romania, Slovakia, Cyprus and Greece. These are small or medium sized countries, recent entries to the EU and mostly Eastern European and Mediterranean. Therefore, there may be cultural differences that account for a lesser enthusiasm for media.

Poland, Latvia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Portugal, Hungary, Italy, Malta and the Czech Republic, as well as Spain, Germany and Estonia score slightly below the average (100). Many of these countries are medium to highly populated countries; and some of them are high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) countries. There is little pattern, therefore, to be found in this group.

Countries which score Advanced are Sweden, Holland, the UK, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Ireland, Austria, Luxembourg and France. All of them are countries with a high GDP, based in Central or Northern Europe, and most of them have been a part of the European Union for a significant period. Those countries which scored remarkably highly are the UK, Finland, Denmark, Holland and Sweden, all of which score over 130, two or three times higher than other countries.

The conclusions that may be obtained from these results are striking. The differences between Advanced countries and Basic countries (140 for Finland to 40 for Romania) represent a nearly four-fold variation, which is considerable. It may be asserted that the considerable gap between countries results from a noticeable lack of cohesion with reference to media literacy policy, education and civil society initiatives. It is important to emphasize that the Finnish model for the development of digital competence, accompanied by that of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, is the most successful and has provided very noticeable results.

The following table shows the results of applying the Tool for each EU country in its various components of the media literacy global picture. As mentioned in earlier sections, data is missing for the Critical Understanding criterion and for the Environmental Factors of certain EU countries. Nevertheless, these preliminary results are a good basis for a more detailed assessment of media literacy levels in Europe.

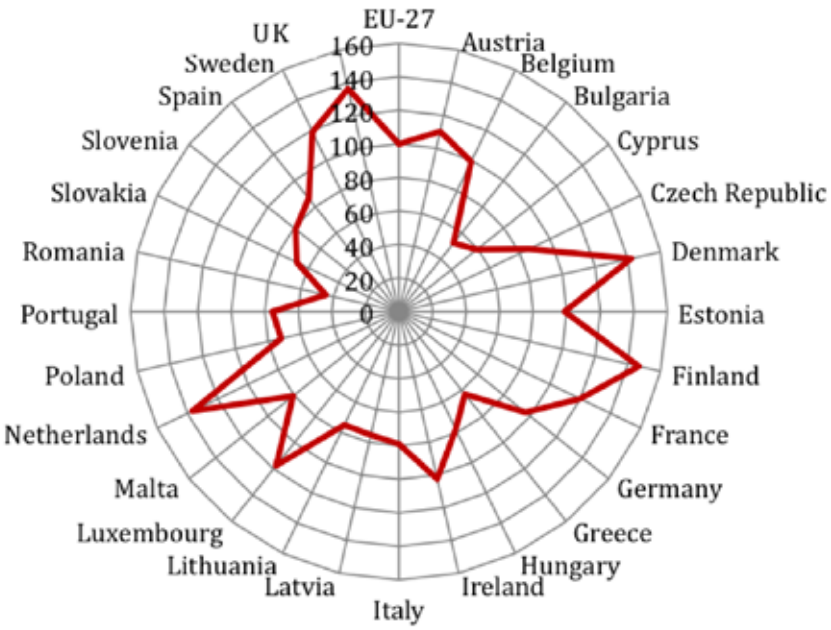
Table 20: Country Assessment of Media Literacy by Criteria

Country	Individual competences				Environmental Factors			Total
	Use Skills	Communi-cative Abilities	Critical Understan-ding	Total individual competen-ces	Media Availability	Media Literacy context	Total environ-mental factors	
EU-27	**100**	**100**	**0**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Austria	124,12	111,14	0	124,12	95,11	91,63	91,40	110,17
Belgium	96,22	62,89	0	96,22	85,65	141,10	117,26	99,26
Bulgaria	54,50	72,86	0	54,50	64,23	43,00	44,72	52,18
Cyprus	69,77	48,63	0	69,77	89,52	43,00	54,55	59,30
Czech Rep.	101,36	90,31	0	101,36	100,08	42,08	67,02	86,03
Denmark	148,69	131,07	0	148,69	135,09	119,67	126,30	141,93
Estonia	130,24	80,64	0	130,24	112,64	43,00	65,54	98,76
Finland	136,00	142,89	0	136,00	156,21	157,94	157,20	146,67
France	110,94	88,28	0	110,94	107,92	155,15	134,84	119,89
Germany	108,55	105,46	0	108,55	91,49	43,00	55,59	96,44
Greece	55,76	58,05	0	55,76	64,74	81,98	74,57	63,01
Hungary	84,84	92,44	0	84,84	69,27	77,27	73,83	77,93
Ireland	123,84	79,15	0	123,84	98,29	118,30	109,70	102,48
Italy	68,40	57,36	0	68,40	90,15	92,35	93,13	79,03
Latvia	102,96	54,84	0	102,96	83,96	43,00	53,20	75,52
Lithuania	91,29	45,61	0	91,29	67,96	84,05	76,76	75,04
Luxembourg	148,14	113,46	0	148,14	138,75	43,00	77,13	117,45
Malta	81,84	78,31	0	81,84	117,82	43,11	75,24	80,76
Netherlands	141,51	138,51	0	141,51	102,73	135,11	121,19	136,69
Poland	78,52	94,52	0	78,52	42,24	63,83	56,44	72,10
Portugal	69,91	97,70	0	69,91	68,76	82,02	76,32	75,37
Romania	38,70	28,16	0	38,70	66,75	59,24	62,47	44,76
Slovakia	84,25	71,86	0	84,25	66,33	43,00	45,62	67,62
Slovenia	102,82	82,37	0	102,82	65,65	43,00	45,33	78,81
Spain	85,91	63,12	0	85,91	101,91	94,59	97,74	86,37
Sweden	140,12	123,93	0	140,12	148,93	43,00	81,66	118,89
UK	130,83	115,60	0	130,83	119,22	171,65	149,10	136,26

Level	Advanced	Medium	Basic
Colour			

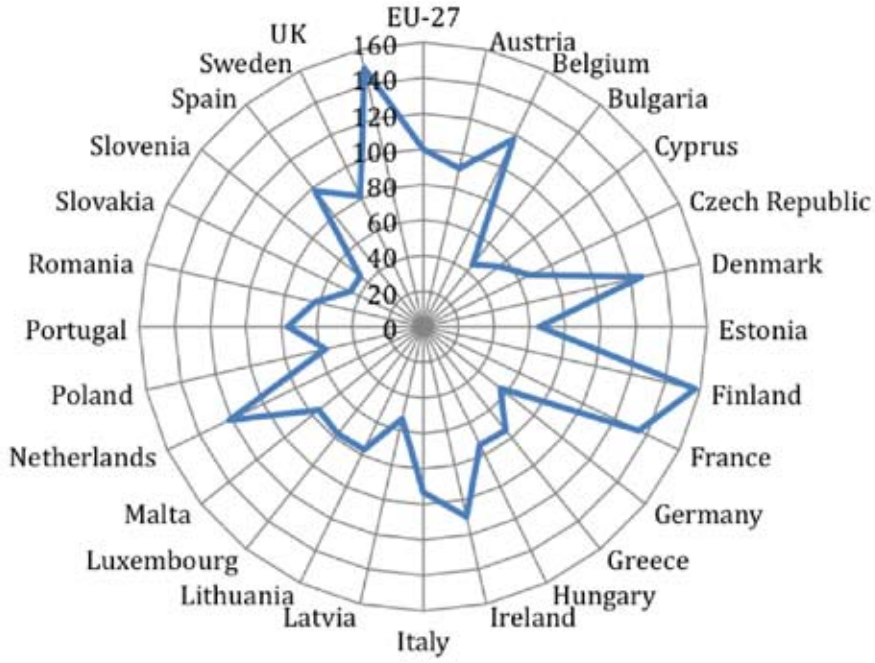
Value guide	Level
above 130	Advanced
70 - 130	Medium
below 70	Basic

Graph 1: Total Media Literacy Assessment

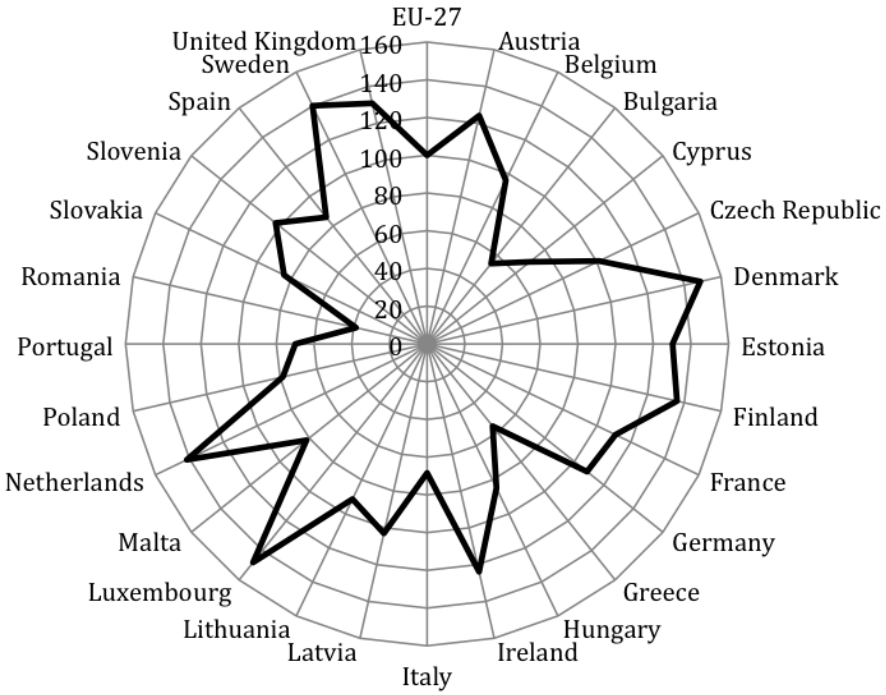


Given the similarity between graphs 1 and 2, there is a clear correlation between the Environmental Factors and the global media literacy result. It is expected that the more favourable the context will be to media literacy, the highest level its population will show.

Graph 2: Environmental factors

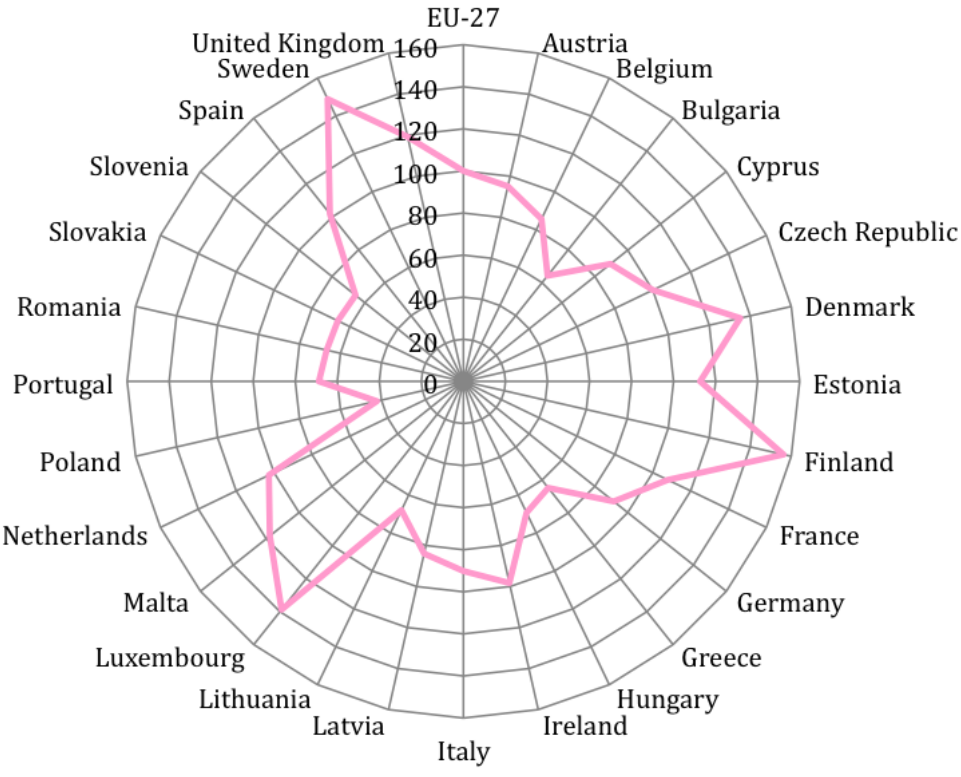


Graph 3: Use Skills

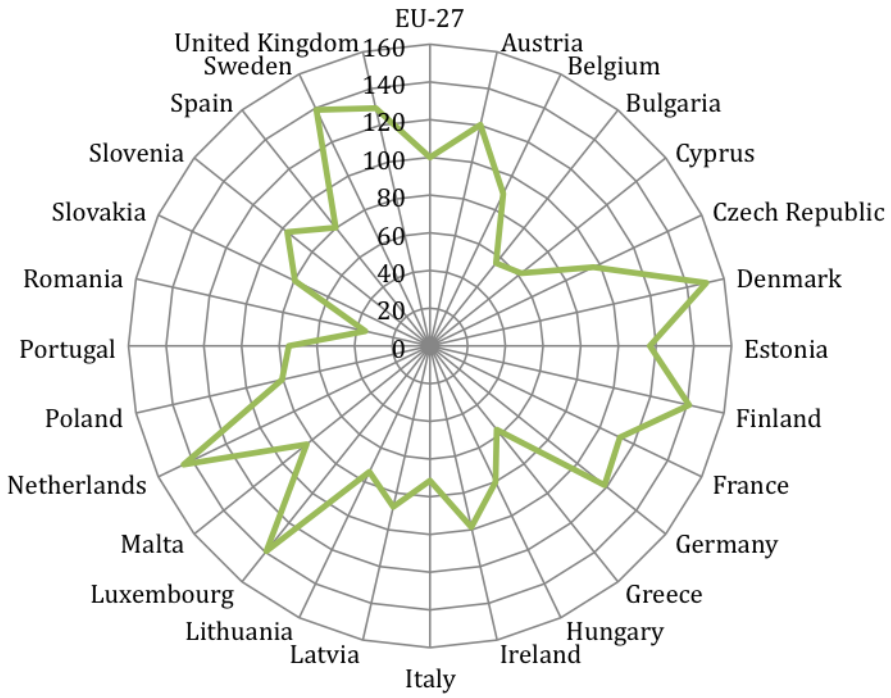


The Media Availability Components have more impact in use, as indicated by the resemblance between these two corresponding graphs.

Graph 4: Media availability

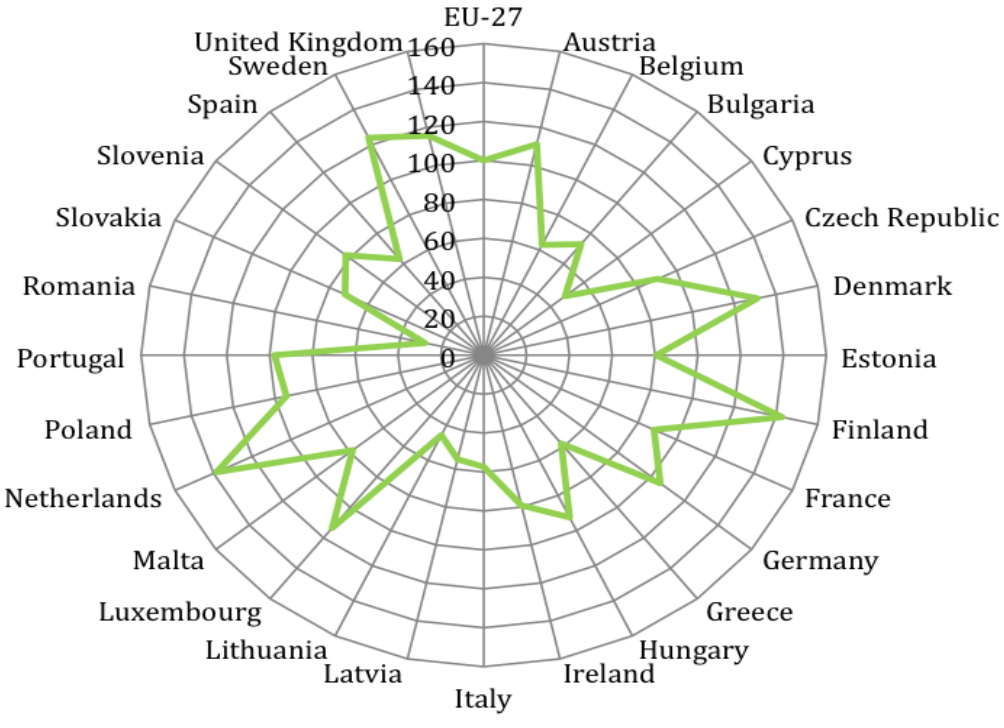


Graph 5: Individual competences



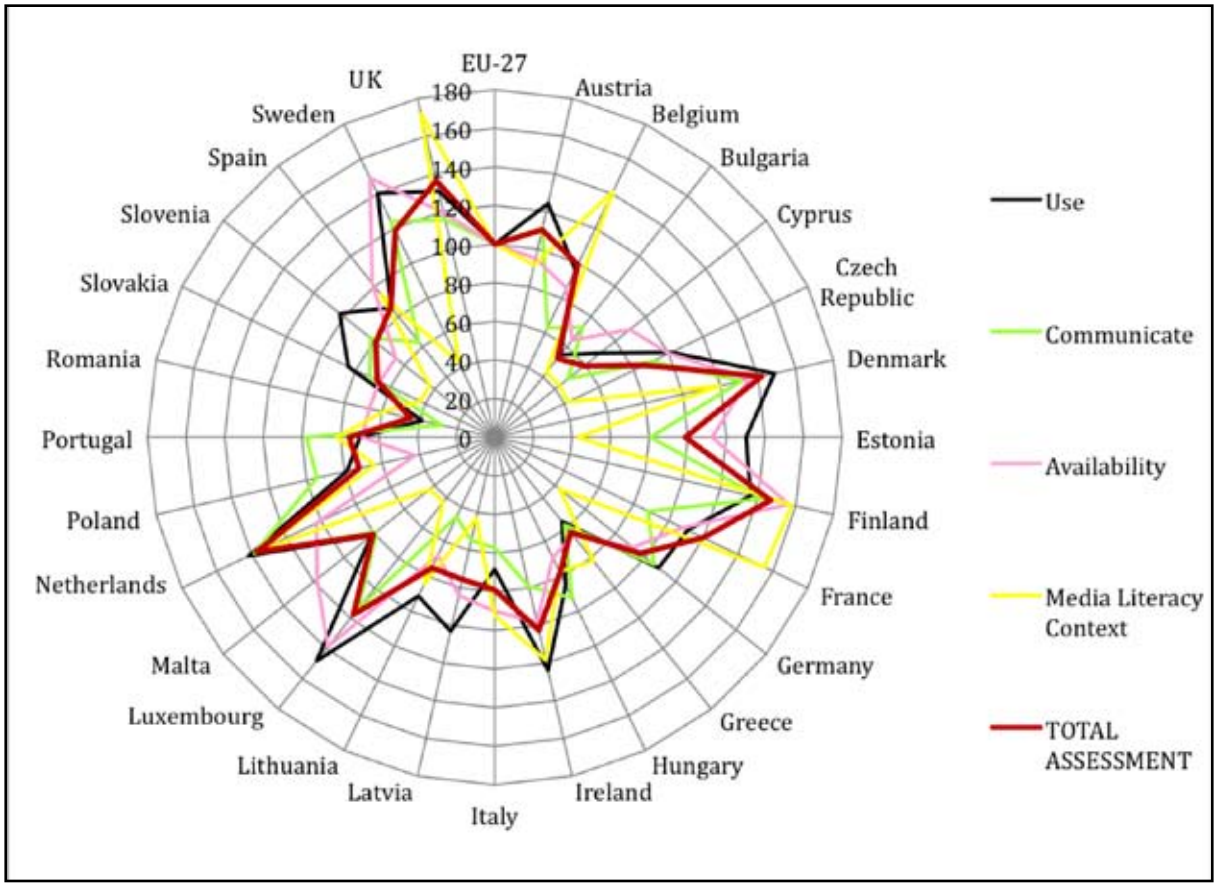
Computer and Internet Skills are a result and synthesis of both, as can be appreciated in this graph. A less homogeneous component in the global and criteria results is Communicative Abilities. Although not all countries have available data, the deviation of results shown is considerable.

Graph 6: Communicative abilities



Greece, Malta, Spain, Ireland and Slovakia, among other countries, obtained good results for communication in relation to the other Components. This indicates that social relations on the Internet and the capacity to create content are reliant on Components such as availability and competences. It is possible that a variable not yet recognised had an impact on some countries in this Component.

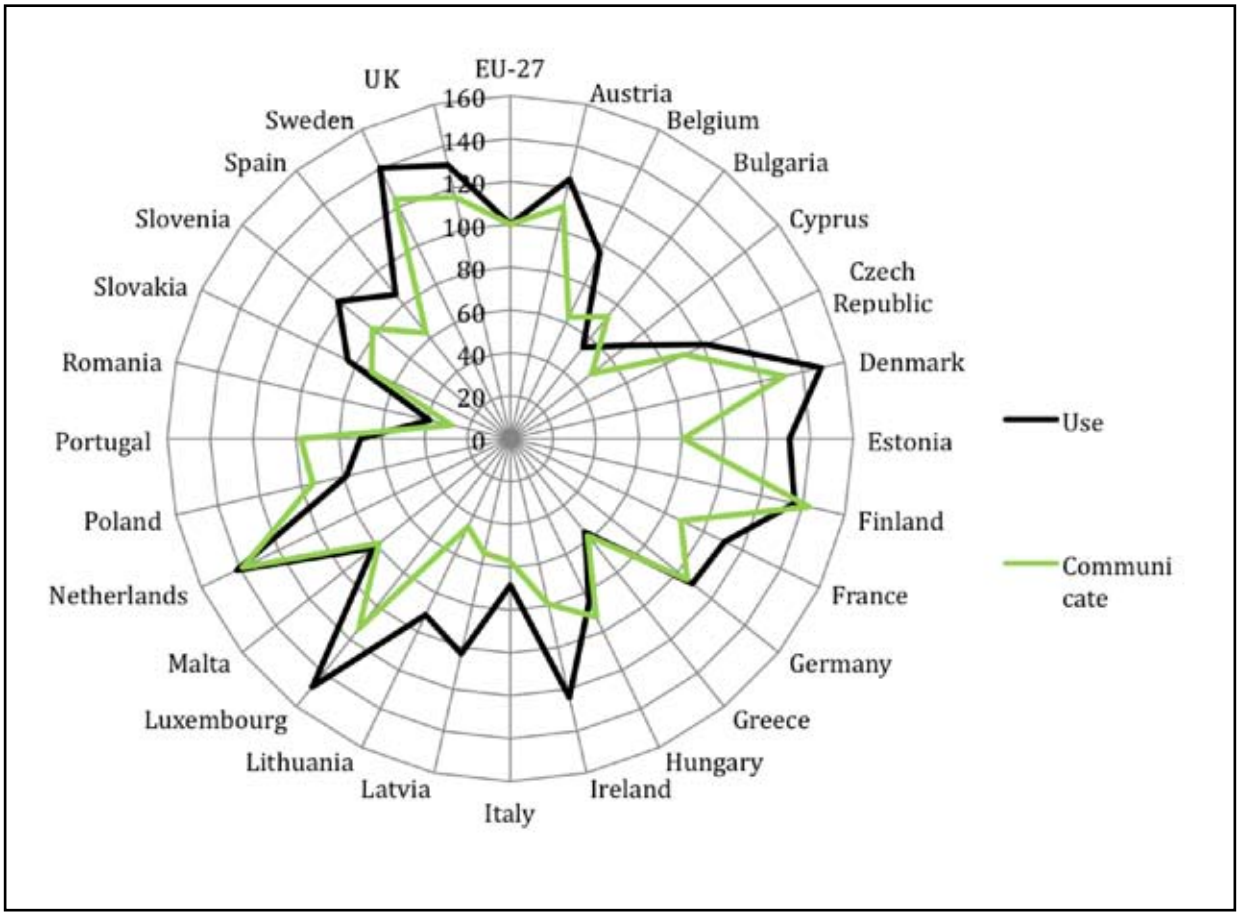
Graph 7: Media Literacy Criteria and Total Assessment



Media Literacy Context (in yellow) is the component which differs most when compared to the Total Assessment (in red). Nevertheless, there is a stable tendency: the Media Literacy Policy always coincides in its upward or downward trend if compared to other indicators. The lines of "Context" and "Communicative Abilities" are those that differ most in the layout. This situation could be explained by the absence of data for some countries, and by the differing results amongst the four Media Literacy Context components.

When comparing the Communicative Abilities (in green) with the Use Skills (in black), Use is almost always higher. On this basis, it may be deduced that access to and use of media are conditions that can facilitate the impulse of media literacy but do not guarantee it. However, it is remarkable that, in countries such as Finland and Portugal, an inverse relation occurs (higher levels of Communicate Abilities than Use). There is an important rating for the Social Relations Component, showing an individual tendency in those countries to use social networks and chat rooms as spaces to develop and maintain social relationships.

Graph 8: Use and Communicative Criteria

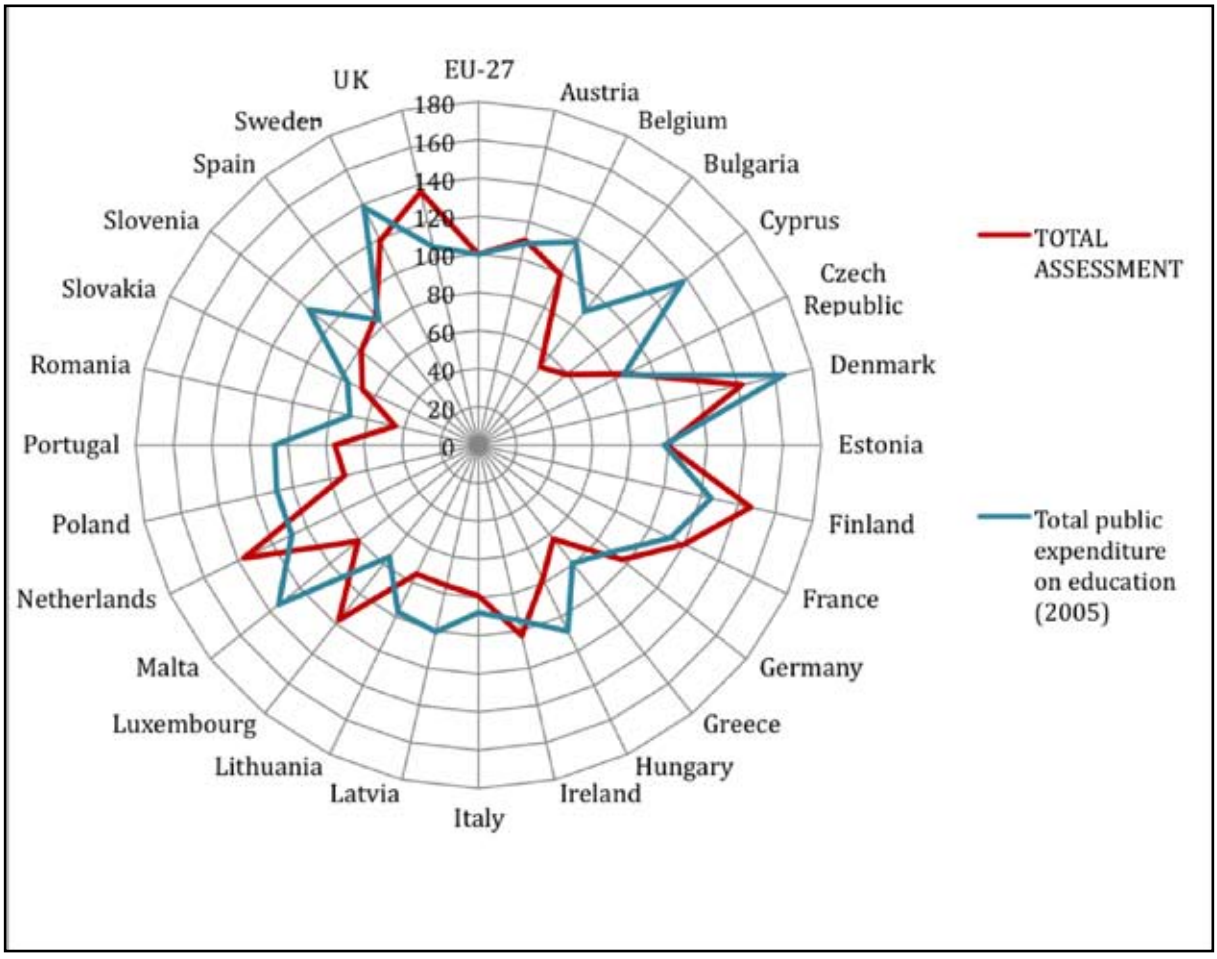


The similarity between the graphs comparing the levels of media literacy (all aspects) with levels of media literacy by each dimension, indicate that the parameters chosen to evaluate the Member States are consistent and opportune, since coherence can be seen in the existing relationship between the development of material conditions and policies, at least when referring to use of communication Tools that European citizens can use.

As it can be seen in the graph on the following page, introducing the variable 'public expenditure in education' as percentage of the GDP, it is possible to assert that, in the majority of cases, a high investment in education ensures higher levels of media literacy.

Countries that have investment below the European average (100 points for the scale of the Study) show a lower level of media literacy, except the case of Luxembourg which, due to its population situation, has an advantage over the other Member States. Countries with advanced media literacy levels have an educational investment above the European average. Nevertheless, there are countries with above-average levels of investment, which nevertheless maintain low or medium-low media literacy levels. This reveals the complexity of media literacy as an integration of both Environmental and Individual Dimensions. Countries such as Portugal, Poland, Slovenia and Hungary, with an educational investment above the European average, show low levels of media literacy, perhaps due to structural failures which may be located at the base of the media literacy pyramid (Media Availability and Media Literacy Context).

Graph 9: Total Media Literacy Assessment and Total Public Expenditure on Education



3.4 Some preliminary Considerations on the Assessment

There is 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 European countries, with the bulk of the EU population, show a medium level. Generally, countries in Southern Europe and those who have recently joined the EU from Eastern Europe are found in the Basic level.

If this Study was extended beyond Europe, and the same criteria were applied to other continents, it is expected that Europe would rank high in the analytical spectrum. A trans-continental analysis would also provide a broader value with which to assign the three levels of media literacy, and is needed to assess whether the score for individual skills in the EU is high, medium or low in the global context.

However, having found that many of the best performing countries are highly developed in terms of democracy, infrastructure, and social and economic welfare, it may reasonably be assumed that Europe, as a continent with high levels of social and economic development, has higher media literacy levels than do other parts of the world.

There is a discernible correlation between media literacy levels in individuals and media policies and measures implemented by institutions. As demonstrated both by the framework of this Study and its results, there is a general correlation between individual media literacy skills and Environmental Factors. For example, Finland and the UK have an advanced level of technical and communicative skills. At the other end of the spectrum, Cyprus, Poland, Portugal and Greece score "basic" for Individual Competences and most Environmental Factors. Countries across the centre of the spectrum show more mixed results, but there is still no acute dissonance between individual and Environmental Factors.

The relationship between an individual's skills and Environmental Factors is two-way – a more favourable environmental context enhances individual media literacy levels, and the existence of media literate citizens compels the development of coordinated policies and actions. However, the role of individual inclination becomes determinant probably only after a certain threshold of support for the advancement of media literacy has been reached.

As demonstrated by the low-scoring countries in the table of comparative results, if there is no formal strategy for the fostering of a media literate population, that population is unlikely to be highly media literate. The media literacy policy developed by the most advanced countries can become, with changes to account for socio-economic differences, a development model for the remaining countries, especially by those ranked in the basic level.

The effects of a strong Media Literacy Context are not necessarily immediate or direct, and may not be visible immediately following the implementation of policy. The potential of policy measures and good practice flow from the creation a strong and sustained institutional network which may open the way for other initiatives, and which will raise awareness of the importance of media literacy.

Investing resources and social capital in media literacy programs, policy and initiatives is more likely to generate a variety of studies, initiatives, and legislative measures at the national level. It is one of the conclusions of this Study that a common public policy drive towards the improvement of media literacy levels across the population will impact inevitably those individuals who need it most.

4 The Recommendations

4.1 Recommendations, Overview

The multi- and international nature of media requires multi- and international response. This Study encourages EU action on the basis that there should be as much coordination as possible in order to avoid creating zones of lawlessness, overlap, or facture. A European approach would require Member States to involve themselves in the development of national media literacy levels, it would provide a platform for coordination, and also provide a best practice example for federal countries such as the United States and Russia, and to continents to form a coordinated response.
The implementation of the Audiovisual Media Service Directive at a national level would stimulate the promotion, evaluation and assessment of media literacy in conjunction with other Member States. In order to do so, the following points are essential to be considered:

1. **To identify Critical Understanding as the key factor in the development of policies for promoting media literacy.** This would encompass policies aimed to increase understanding of media content and function, to increase knowledge about media context and regulation and to enable the adoption of appropriate user behaviour. This will also encourage the development of competences needed, *inter alia*, to confront the ubiquity of commercial communication and to recognize different communicative modalities (persuasive, informative, educative, political, etc.) as a key element in the policy to promote media literacy;

2. **To promote citizen engagement as an essential component of full and active European citizenship.** This entails supporting citizen communication, social engagement, citizen participation in civic life, and individual content creation, including the stimulus to creativity, innovation and social relations;

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 exchange of good practice.** While it is felt that self-regulation and auto-regulation are useful, there is also a requirement for statutory regulation (with rules and sanctions).

4. **To facilitate and extend access to ICT, with specific focus on the Internet.** Policies in this field must as a priority encourage social inclusion and combat the digital divide; media literacy concerns all forms of media and it should be targeted at all citizens, regardless of gender and age. Particular attention should be given to empowering children and minors to use media appropriately and safely, with an emphasis on videogames.

5. **To promote public debate and awareness of media literacy.** European, national and local information campaigns should be considered. Politicians and decision makers at large should be provided with the necessary relevant information. Media literacy should be introduced in the family environment, as well as in other non-formal contexts.

6. **To encourage the integration of media education in educational curricula both as specific goals and cross-curricular subjects.** Special attention must be given to the promotion of teachers-training in media literacy and to the development of creative and participative skills among students. Likewise, the introduction of media literacy as a key competence in the long life learning activities is essential and must involve mature and elderly people. The creation and use of trans-European sources for didactical resources in media literacy and the development of pedagogical methods should be encouraged;

7. **To sustain the role of civil society organizations and related media literacy initiatives in order to foster a democratic culture and shared values.** This would facilitate a more effective participation in the public sphere, allowing for activities by the representatives of citizens' national institutions. This would contribute to increasing the quality of content and communication standards;

8. **To encourage an active involvement by the media industry, especially audiovisual media,** by way of developing media literacy initiatives, following the activities of newspapers already active in this field. Attention should be given to mass media, including traditional and digital, public and private platforms, content and processes. The training of media professionals should also be considered a priority.

To implement these recommendations and ensure effective results, it is recommended that European Institutions and National governments promote media literacy by way of a balanced use of coercive and self-regulation instruments. The reluctance to legislate in concrete terms, rather than by way of self-regulation and co-regulation, represents the international and national approach to audiovisual policies.

When examining the possibility of introducing new norms and to determine case by case which course of action is preferable, systems which provide for the use of regulatory tools based on cooperation (self-regulation, codes of conduct, etc.) and which create more cooperation than resistance (co-regulation) are certainly to be encouraged.

The media sector itself prefers co-regulation and self-regulation. The absence of European and national legislation results from the difficulty and inefficiency of passing and enforcing regulation relating to the media by reason of its size, transnationality and mutating nature. This, and pressure from industry lobby groups, have resulted in the EU's preference for co-regulation. It is a disguised form of de-regulation. Referring to the scope of this Study, there emerges a connection between the level of media literacy and its prominence in legislation.

4.2 Specific Recommendations

In order to translate the above-mentioned overview into specific actions and promote ml in Europe, this Study makes the following policy recommendations.

4.2.1 Media Availability and Content use

A prerequisite to media literacy is the availability of technologies and media platforms. However, use does not automatically translate into skill development, other conditions, such as the development of the ergonomics of media devices and guidance in using the media device, are important.

Young people who are digital natives have developed learning systems through use, horizontal learning and network cooperation. This is not so true among adults and particularly among the elderly, who, despite having possibly a greater experience of information and communication management, and traditional media, such as television and print, have inadequate experience of new media. The European eLearning initiative brought with it some concern as to a disproportionate attention to technology without a focus on cultural, humanistic approaches, and the preparation of citizens for the digital society.

Discussions on pluralism and freedom of press refer not only to the rights and responsibilities of the press and journalists, but also the right of the public to receive fair and reliable information. If citizens have access to reliable information from a variety of sources and on various platforms, they are better equipped to form their own opinion. Media education and the promotion of awareness issues are essential to effectively preserve these rights and to grant public interest. Citizens should be aware of their commercial rights. Protecting commercial rights are fundamental to protecting the public interest. For example, Microsoft's monopoly of software has significantly stalled the progress of certain applications[33].

Recommendations:

- 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 (local, regional, national, European and international) should be pursued actively;
- Public authorities should promote policies that ensure media content diversity and plurality, with particular emphasis on the preservation of media content with a public benefit;
- Authorities should promote policies both to enable participation in global communication networks, and to foster local cultural diversity in form and content; and
- Public authorities should protect intellectual property rights while at the same time respecting the need for fair educational applications.

[33] Microsoft Corp. v Commission of the European Communities, Judgment of the Court of First Instance (Grand Chamber) of 17 September 2007

4.2.2 Platforms for cooperation

The European Community will benefit from a more homogeneous approach to the challenges of the Lisbon Agenda[34]. This does not dictate the adoption of coincident modalities across Europe; neither does it require that equivalent resources and organizations be applied generically. It does, however, oblige Member States to advance media literacy with a commitment that is supportive of diversity, and global in perspective. Individual Member States engaging in good practice can by their conduct help launch or reinforce policies and practices. Platforms for cooperation[35] should be created, developed and maintained among the different actors related to regulation and media literacy

Any truly impactful development of media literacy requires the mobilization of civil society and media industry. Policy recommendations concerning the necessity of integrating and coordinating different sectors should be addressed to the EC both at European and national level, specifically the education sector (schools and lifelong learning), civil sector, the media sector and the regulatory sector.

The plurality of sectors requires a broad and inclusive approach, the demands of which may best be served by the creation of two formal European bodies:

Recommendations:

- 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; and
- 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; and
- These, and every other relevant and engaged authority, should promote public (offline and online) spaces so that debate about the values, benefits and risks of media can be debated.

[34] http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm

[35] In this context, the platform created in the UK by Digital Britain and Media Literacy Task Force is exemplary.

4.2.3 The Collaboration of European Institutions and Stakeholders

The investment of media and cultural industries in the development of activities relating to media literacy is necessary at the national and European level. By providing devices, services and content, the media industry implicitly fixes the level of skills required for citizens to exist fully in a media-dependent environment. The industry should contribute to ensure that users have the technical skills required to operate their devices, and the competences to receive their services and content while developing products and services, and the user skills required for their operation. More generally, the industry will need to cooperate across the civil and public landscape to develop media literacy.

Recommendations:

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

4.2.4 Media Education

The growing integration of Information Communication Technology ("ITC") in education programs enable the development of interactive educational resources, distance learning and collaborative online platforms as educational tools. The growing role of the media environment in young and adult education is an important reason to stimulate and promote media literacy. The goal, therefore, of media education is to encourage each individual to access (without exception or exclusion, and regardless of age, gender, status and culture) all media types as potential tools for understanding the world, and for participating democratically in public life. Critical thinking and active citizenship depend, in no small part, on the media literacy development.

Furthermore, the knowledge society in which Europe functions requires that media literacy has a place at the core of education. Innovation and creativity through information and communication technology are fundamental skills which those in education must acquire. It is for this reason that media literacy must be stimulated to achieve a creative educational environment.

Recommendations:

- Authorities should introduce dedicated curricula to develop media literacy competences both as specific goals and cross-curricular subjects. As a consequence, education authorities must implement student assessments of media competence;
- Authorities should dedicate resources to the training of educators in media literacy; and consequently to promote the evaluation of their media competence;
- General evaluation measures and a new system of accreditation in media literacy competence are needed at all levels; and
- Vocational and occupational training should include media training and media education.

4.2.5 Research

The media landscape is constantly shifting, and requires ongoing and insightful observation and research in order to provide not only a snapshot of the media situation at any given moment, but also to provide trend data over time in order to ensure that authorities are armed with the most relevant, accurate and up-to-date information when creating media policy.

Such monitoring need not necessarily be centralized to a dedicated institution, but may take the form of an integrated, multi-national network of research institutions, taking a multidisciplinary approach. These disciplines take into account not only issues specific to each Member state, but may also consider the various and evolving uses of media and media platforms, legal aspects, economics, social sciences, cultural studies, information and communication, psychology, ICT, etc.

Recommendations:

- 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 technology must be accompanied by research into media literacy. The quality of innovation will depend upon it.

4.2.6 The General Public

Network technologies construct interactive and collective entities through which the actions of the most powerful institutions intersect with those of the citizens. Media literacy must enable citizens to correctly situate the status of agents with whom they communicate. A general and specific approach to different sections of the public is required, which distinguish between the needs of youth and adult population. Citizens may be separated into two groups in relation to media literacy: 1) children, young people and their families, and 2) the remainder of the adult population.

The first group is more enthusiastic in its adoption of new digital media, and tends to be autodidactic in relation to its use, which covers many areas of life, including communication, gaming, socialising, studying and working. Although in this respect they could be considered to be more media literate, they often lack critical capacities.

The remainder of the adult population, however, is less receptive to media and technological innovation, responding later than the first group. Depending on their social origin and educational level, they are a group who tend to be more resistant to innovation.

Therefore, strategies must be specifically tailored for each type of public in order to better adapt to its singular context.

Recommendations:

- 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 specifically tailored 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, the media industry and civil society organisation should promote 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 must be taken to ensure that vulnerable sections of the population are not excluded by inequality of resources, race, age, gender, sexuality or geography.

4.3 Some Socio-Economic Considerations

It is predicted that media in all its forms will increase between ten and one hundred times its current volume in the next decade. The exponential growth of media over the last fifteen years has proven that the boundaries that hindered its development traditionally, such as geography, resources and access, can be overcome by the effects of collaboration, innovation and willingness by citizens to embrace and utilize their part in the media's relationship with its subscribers.

It is no longer an advantage to be media literate; rather, it is a debilitating disadvantage not to be.

The cumulative effect of a digital divide and a knowledge divide – limiting citizens' access to digital media – can be bridged only by the intervention of media literacy. The transfer of knowledge is increasingly dependent on digital technologies. The media literate can access these technologies without difficulty, and this ability (and the freedom born of it) enables an engagement with, and a participation in every level of public life, from social networking to e-Government. Individuals not equipped to utilize digital technologies are necessarily isolated from (this aspect of) the media flow. For as long as they are removed from digital media they will remain (knowingly or in ignorance) on the "wrong" side of the digital and knowledge divide.[36]

This divide discriminates against people according to their economic and social status and ethnicity. Although Europe provides (theoretically) media access to everyone (in addition to the limited free access provided by most Member States in publically-funded spaces), citizens must first be able to afford to buy a media device before learning how to operate it. Mobile phones, computers, Internet connectivity etc. are all sufficiently costly to limit user access. Indeed, the economic barrier to digital media has been rendered explicit by the onset of the replacement of their analogue television sets and receivers with digital upgrades by the end of 2012.

That this makes sense technologically does not detract from the discrimination of a large cross-section of Europe's citizens. This high hurdle may be unique legislatively (insofar as the same analogue/digital upgrade has not been required of radio users) but it is typical of the manner in which subscribers to analogue (as opposed to digital) media are increasingly isolated by the pace of technology. It is fundamental to meet the most recent challenges created by media convergence.

Further barriers are raised by language. There are well over a trillion distinct URLs accessible on Google, but the majority of these are in English or Mandarin only. Although there are many translation services offered by the Internet, they are far from perfect. The Internet is a long way from re-building Babel.

[36] EC Communication: Preparing Europe's Digital Future COM(2008) 199 Final.

Wikipedia offers almost three million articles in English, fewer than one million in German, 900,000 in French, and around half a million each in Italian, Spanish, Polish, Portuguese and Dutch. For this reason, citizens unable to read English or Mandarin at a reasonable level are excluded from a sizeable percentage of the information contained online.

All of this indicates that those without digital access in Europe, namely individuals caught by the low end of the socio-economic continuum, are denied by reason of their circumstances that sense (and reality) of empowerment to which the economic autonomous are entitled by right. The impact of this social-media divide cannot be underestimated.

In economic terms, the media has two major functions: as a commercial industry, and as a tool by which business may be conducted more efficiently (for example, by email, telephone conferencing, online transactions, etc). The media industry now generates trillions of Euros annually. Media conglomerates and ISPs rely on the media literacy (and engagement) of their consumers. The communication industry is absolutely fundamental to the way in which business is conducted internationally – regardless of the existence (or significance) of national boundaries. Of the Forbes Global Top 2000 Companies, 127 are media and telecommunications companies, not including conglomerates such as AT&T, and media dependent retailers such as Google, eBay and Amazon. The telecommunications industry alone generates 3% of the European Union's GDP.

As an e-Commerce facilitator, the media's value as a tool for research, and as an enabler of communication and economic growth, is unquantifiable. As many as 90% of all purchases are made using credit and debit cards, the majority of which rely on wireless communications. 4.2% of industry in Europe is conducted via the internet or e-Commerce[37], while 39% of Europeans work on a computer with internet access[38].

Computer access has been a feature of life in Europe for more than 20 years, and few businesses can now hope to compete in the market without embracing the presumption that an ever increasing percentage of consumers prefers to consult a website prior to making a purchase, even if that purchase is not made over the internet. Computer access is not yet ubiquitous, but it is a recognized trend – as is the resignation of many households and employers to the hypnotic power exercised by technology and media access.

Indeed, the 21st Century gold rush towards universal media access is not without its problems – particularly in terms of the value of (and need for) media literacy. Media literacy generates (or enhances) for users an analytical capacity from which the media must inevitably benefit. More informed audiences raise media standards as a function of interactivity. However, media literate consumers could be subjected to greater, not lesser, realms of choice and temptation. The virtue of media access should not presume that everything to which a subscriber has access is worthwhile or constructive.

[37] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsiir100&plugin=0

[38] http://nui.epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=isoc_pibi_pci&lang=en

For example, many of the earliest personal computers contained an electronic version of the card game Solitaire, made available primarily as a tool to assist users in mouse dexterity. In 1987, the first Solitaire Collection was introduced to all personal computers using Microsoft Windows. Solitaire was no longer simply a tool for workers, but a form of entertainment – and distraction. By 1995, Solitaire began to be removed from work computers because employees were spending so much of their time playing the game that productivity began to suffer accordingly.

The Internet now poses a similar dilemma for employers. Although the world wide web is a useful (if not irreplaceable) tool for many industries, employees waste so much of their working day on sites unrelated to their job description that many companies are now compelled to restrict those sites to which employees have access. To this extent, the "value" of media access can come at a very high price.

Indeed, the Confederation of British Industry ("CBI") estimated that in 2008 individuals expended up to 5% of their working day on Internet access unrelated to work. This equates to nearly £1000 of wasted time per employee annually. The CBI's estimate may even prove to be conservative, since other international studies have concluded that up to 25% of each PC-using employee's day may be wasted on online activities, such as chat rooms, social networking sites and online shopping. The CBI poll estimated also that 13% of businesses have had to dismiss an employee for persistent misuse of the Internet at work.
The impact of these behaviours on the productivity of workers has to be taken into consideration when examining the overall value of media, and media literacy to the economy.

Similarly, for all the positives flowing from the headlong expansion of media and media access, there are consequences that many consider to be nothing short of catastrophically negative. Both online and offline forms of print media, for example, are increasingly subject to three significant sources of destructive pressure: (1) the slump in newspaper/print sales, (2) the growth in online self-publishing, and (3) the emergence of citizen journalism. The 2008/9 financial crisis has had a palpable impact on international print journalism, an industry which many commentators believe was in decline during the 1990s by reason, primarily, of the internet. The many and varied consequences of the internet on news, including access to news trans-nationally, the fading of established news and opinion providers, the rise of informal (independent) news and opinion, as well as the means by which newspapers are funded – with a major shift from newspaper sales (the success of which was dependent largely on the tastes, expectations and prejudices of readers) to corporate advertising.

If the hypothesis that higher levels of media literacy would mean not only more sophisticated media use, but also an increase in subscriptions to the industry in its many forms, then it follows that an increase in media literacy levels will foster a concomitant increase in media sales. It is logical also to assume that higher levels of media literacy will lead to business being conducted more efficiently, with increases in e-Commerce and online services, as well as improved, more efficient Internet and telecommunications use at work. But

whether higher media literacy levels would foster more time being wasted on the media by workers during working hours depends to a great extent on individual inclination, and it may be considered that distractions have existed for as long as there has been anyone worth distracting. It may simply be a function of the environment – with computer and Internet usage being so easily recorded and analysed – that employers now fixate on the use of computers by employees for something other than work.

Whatever the perceived (or anticipated) consequences of the expansion of media as a force (for good or bad), for as long as there is an attendant level of education and transparency – compounded by an awareness of the consequences of abuse and misuse – then even the worst excesses can be checked, addressed and resolved. This can be ensured confidently only through the nurturing (and preservation) of a media literate populace, for whom every right – whether inalienable by association or immutable by Convention – requires first and foremost that the people's freedom to speak is matched always by a freedom to listen fully.

1 List of Annexes

- **Annex A**
  European Regulatory Framework
- **Annex B**
  Framework Media Literacy Study
- **Annex C**
  Methodology
- **Annex D**
  Questionnaire
- **Annex E**
  Light Country Reports
- **Annex F**
  Full Country Reports
- **Annex G**
  Country Tool Tables
- **Annex H**
  Statistical Report
- **Annex I**
  List of Main Contributors to the Study
- **Annex J**
  Bibliography and References
- **Annex K**
  Criteria Cards
- **Annex L**
  List of Indicators, Components and Criteria
- **Annex M**
  Tool Template and Instructions

Please note that as the annexes are often tens or hundreds of pages each, they are available separately on the EAVI and the European Commission respective websites.

Notes