

# High Council for Media Education

## Brussels Declaration on Lifelong Media Education

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### Background

European policy on Media Education is going through a crucial phase of emergence that makes it necessary to bring together experiences and exchange good practices within the framework of an open dialogue. Consequently, on Thursday 2 and Friday 3 December 2010, 300 experts from more than 30 European and extra-European countries gathered in Brussels to participate in the international conference **“Media Literacy for All”**, organised by the High Council for Media Education (CSEM) of the French-speaking Community of Belgium, within the framework of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The conference **“Media Literacy for All”** intended to bring together all the actors involved in the implementation of lifelong media education: educators, trainers, media industries and institutions, educational organisations (school and non-school ones), people responsible for educational policies, research institutions, etc.

The objective of that European conference was to generate links between practical experiences and policy recommendations in order to stimulate the implementation of lifelong media education, for the benefit of all European citizens. These activities have resulted in **the Declaration of Brussels for Lifelong Media Education**, written in collaboration with the eight international experts<sup>1</sup> who attended the whole conference.

This declaration takes into consideration:

- The definition of media education as proposed in the recommendation [2009/625/CE](#) of the Commission of 20 August 2009<sup>2</sup> on media literacy in the digital environment for a more competitive audiovisual and content industry and an inclusive knowledge society. In it, Media literacy is defined as being “the ability to access the media, to understand and critically evaluate different aspects of the media and media content and to create communications in a variety of contexts.”. It is not limited to access problems but encompasses all media. “The aim of media literacy is to increase people's awareness to the many forms of media messages encountered in their everyday lives. Media messages are the programmes, films, images, texts, sounds and websites that are carried by different forms of communication.”
- The definition of “media literacy”, that designates all informational, technical, social and psychosocial competences of a user when he consumes, produces, explores and organizes media.
- The necessity to integrate media education in the framework of lifelong education and training, as defined by the European<sup>3</sup> reference frameworks (Lisbon Strategy and the “Education and Training 2020” strategic framework). The aim is to enable, persons, at every stage of their life, to participate in stimulating learning experiences and to contribute to the development of the education and training sector in Europe.
- The necessity to warrant access for citizens to media diversity, beyond the market, and when needed through the intervention of public authorities when this diversity is threatened.

The preparatory activities of this declaration have shown that it is necessary to consider that conception differences as regards media education are enriching dialogues and reflection and not hasty solutions to shy away from debates.

This declaration is aimed at offering a whole of recommendations related to education actions to be initiated, to the media competences of any citizen to be developed, to the access of citizens to media education, research and European policies. The implementation of these recommendations regards the local level as well as the regional, national or European ones.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32009H0625:FR:NOT>

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78\\_fr.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_fr.htm)

## Recommendations

### 1. Leading actions in favour of media education

- a. Single out media education as a mission of general interest pertaining to ambitious public policies and to voluntarist public financing devices with full respect for the operational autonomy of beneficiaries.
- b. Develop and promote various pedagogies adapted to each audience, to all ages of life, to varying social and cultural backgrounds.
- c. Favour the production and dissemination of pedagogical resources in the field of media education adapted to specific groups of beneficiaries.
- d. Provide school and association circles with equipment adapted to media education practices.
- e. Develop training to media education for media professionals.
- f. Identify and implement, for each education action, qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria.
- g. Warrant media diversity through an appropriate device with public and private means, among other things as concerns media partners who are useful for media trainers.

### 2. Developing media competences in all citizens

- a. Identify and care for the updating of a large range of necessary media competences, all life long, for everyone, for all media.
- b. Validate these competences through a concerted process including civil society.
- c. Adapt this range of media competences to the various education and training actors, in function of the role they play.

### 3. Promoting the access of the citizen to media education

- a. Enhance the citizen's awareness of media education through, for instance, the organization of a European Day for Media Education, a European Week for Media Education at school ...
- b. Promote the public visibility of media education actions.

### 4. Developing research in media education and media literacy

Supporting permanent extensive research on

- the appropriation of media through social groups and communities, at all age,
- the evolution of formal and informal practices of media education.

### 5. Leading media education policies

Giving force without delay to the resolution of the European Parliament of 6 November 2008 wishing: "Media literacy to be made the ninth key competence in the European reference framework for lifelong learning set out in Recommendation 2006/962/EC"<sup>4</sup>.

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Website of the conference with documents, reports, workshops and media: [www.csem-eu-conference.be](http://www.csem-eu-conference.be)

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?language=FR&reference=A6-0461/2008>