Good Media Literacy
National Policy Guidelines 2013–2016

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Foreword

Media literacy is the literacy of today. We all need media literacy skills in our different roles in the information society: as citizens, consumers, employees and students.

Good media literacy enables us understand and critically appraise the world and the culture we live in. Hence it is also relevant for our growth as human beings and for living a good life.

These policy guidelines for good media literacy build on the principles set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. An important basic assumption in the Convention is the belief that children and adolescents are active subjects.

Being active also manifests itself in the relationship that children and adolescents have with media: they use media to play and pursue their hobbies, experience various emotions, learn something new and take part in different communities.

Experiences should thus take centre stage in media education. Interaction between generations is also vital. Adults play a key role in promoting good media literacy in children and adolescents.

Media education in Finland has made headway in recent years. Awareness of media literacy has spread. The field of media education has changed and expanded. Media education cuts across different areas of society, and a range of actors from the fields of cultural policy, child and youth policy, education, social welfare and health care and consumer education are all involved in providing media education.

The Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media, which was set up to replace the Finnish Board of Film Classification, has been operating in Finland since 2012. The Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media will merge with the National Audiovisual Archive at the beginning of 2014, and key tasks of the resulting new agency, the National Audiovisual Institute, will include promoting media education.

These media literacy policy guidelines and their implementation aim to help achieve the goal in the Government Programme of making sure that every child and adolescent has the prerequisites for participating and accessing the information society. Good skills in media literacy are an important element for participation and inclusion in society.

The shared principles in these policy guidelines allow us to develop media education by fostering equality, diversity and quality. In the future, our need for media literacy can only increase.

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Abstract

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has drawn up Cultural Policy Guidelines to promote media literacy for 2013–2016. The Guidelines draw on the objectives set out in the Government Programme, on the growing range of media education actors, on the constantly evolving media environment and on the field of media education.

One of the Ministry's strategic cultural policy priorities is to strengthen the position of media education. The Ministry's audiovisual culture policies have set good media literacy as one of its priorities.

These media literacy guidelines examine media education from various angles, in particular in terms of social inclusion, active citizenship, critical thinking, creativity and self-expression.

The backdrop to these Guidelines is in the changing field of media education: there is now more public debate in media education and there is a wider range of stakeholders in the field. The Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media has been Finland's public authority in charge of promoting media education since 2012.

The document looks into key trends and challenges, such as the changing media environment and culture of children and adolescents, questions of social inclusion and exclusion, cooperation in this field, supporting the competence of media educators and the need of defining good media literacy.

The policies highlight the fact that media literacy has many interfaces with different sectors of society. The promotion of media literacy also raises many issues that are interlinked. The horizontal policies across different sectors draw attention to common principles and key approaches.

The Guidelines provide goals and measures involving every-day media education focussed on children and adolescents, sustainable structures to help pursue and institute media education, stakeholder profiling and partnerships and Finland's active role in global efforts.

Further discussion is required before these policies can be implemented. The policies include annual monitoring that can be carried out by expert panels in 2013–2016.

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1 Introduction

This publication contains cultural policy guidelines drawn up by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture to promote media literacy in Finnish children and adolescents. It is designed to cater to a wide range of stakeholders in the field of media education – the government, civil society, the media sector and all those engaged in practical media education work. The policies and principles in these Guidelines involved an inter-administrative process and were drawn up in cooperation with the stakeholders.

These Guidelines aim to strengthen our shared determination to foster good media literacy in children and adolescents and to formulate clear plans for reaching the desired goals and targets. The purpose is also to trigger processes where stakeholders together and separately are willing to take the proposals further. The Guidelines cover a four-year time span (2013–2016).

To provide some background, the publication presents a synthesis of the current national and international circumstances in media education and key trends and challenges in this area that are within sight. The background section focuses on the changing media environment and media culture of children and adolescents, questions of social inclusion and exclusion, cooperation in this area, supporting the competence of media educators and the need of defining good media literacy.

As outlined in the Programme of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government, action will be taken to make sure that every child and adolescent has the prerequisites for participating and accessing the information society. This aim is linked to the Child and Youth Policy Programme[1] drawn up by the Ministry of Education and Culture, whereby children and adolescents will be assisted in becoming active citizens with shared sense of responsibility, for instance by strengthening their participation in the information society and by honing their media skills. The Policy Programme focuses attention on media literacy and technological competencies as part of general education and highlights the importance of broad-based literacy as a prerequisite for participation and inclusion in society. Media literacy as part of broad-based literacy and writing skills is seen as a means for learning, gathering information, self-expression and participation.

The previous cultural policy publication of the Ministry of Education and Culture that addressed media education comprehensively dates back to 2004. The purpose of the publication[2] was to examine ways to prevent the effects of media violence. Two concrete proposals contained in the publication were to reform the Finnish Board of Film Classification and create new perspectives to media education.

The Ministry's has set as one of its strategic cultural policies the ensuring a stronger position for media education[3]. The policy approaches adopted for audiovisual culture published in autumn 2012 also underline

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1 Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2012–2015. Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2012:8.
2 Media violence. Children and Media. A Draft Action Plan of 2005–2007. Ministry of Education 2004:10. (in Finnish)
3 Strategy for Cultural Policy. Publications of the Ministry of Education, Finland 2009:12.

the importance of good media literacy. It is seen in the policy approaches that media education bolsters broad and versatile literacy competencies, thus reinforcing the life control skills in children and adolescents.[4]

This publication contributes to bringing the previous documents related to media education and media literacy up to date[5]. While some of the earlier policies and action plans on media education have already been brought to a conclusion, many are still topical.

In recent years, the field of media education has undergone a change. There is more public debate on and awareness of media literacy. The Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media, set up to replace the Finnish Board of Film Classification, has been operating as the main public authority in charge of promoting media education since the beginning of 2012.

The field where media education operates has expanded beyond early childhood education, pre-primary education and school education to also include such stakeholders as public libraries, youth work and the cultural sector. In addition, a number of national organisations and media sector representatives are active in this area. The media environment is constantly evolving too, constantly presenting new challenges to the sector.

With this new situation in mind, the Ministry of Education and Culture has striven to draw up new policy approaches that cut across different sectors of society so that good media literacy can best be promoted among children and adolescents. It was considered important to bring national activities into sharper focus: to define shared principles, to elaborate key lines of action, and to encourage stakeholders to profile themselves.

The basic assumption is that media literacy links in many sectors of society, such as education and the school system, youth and the cultural sector, social welfare and health care sectors, consumer issues and naturally the media sector. Promoting media literacy brings together questions involving media, pedagogy and the life control of children and adolescents. Indeed, one of the core elements in media education is collaboration between various stakeholders.

As the name indicates, these Policy Guidelines focus on media literacy. Media education is instrumental in facilitating good media literacy. This publication addresses media literacy in a broad sense. Of the different perspectives on media education, these Guidelines pertain in particular to participation, being active as a citizen, critical thinking, creativity and self-expression. Fostering good media literacy in children and adolescents also helps ensure they operate in the media environment in safe ways.

Promoting good media literacy is our shared goal. But there are many types of media education, many kinds of stakeholders and different approaches to media education. These Policy Guidelines do not therefore aim to establish one single direction to take but instead strive to highlight the diversity and richness of Finnish media education. It is to be hoped that these Guidelines will inspire the promotion of media literacy and encourage stakeholders to pursue the debate.

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4 Audiovisual Culture in the Digital Era. Set of Policies. Reports of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2012:31. (in Finnish)
5 For a list of earlier Ministry of Education and Culture publications on media literacy, see Appendix 1.

2 The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as the value base for Media Education

From the perspective of the rights of the child, a child is an active participant with many types of rights in relation to media use and the media environment. The Convention on the Rights of the Child takes a comprehensive view of promoting media literacy: among others, it is relevant to receiving and producing information, self-expression, play, participation, diversity of media content and needs for safety. Media education with a value base in the Convention supports the holistic wellbeing of children and adolescents.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasises a balance between the child's personal freedom of speech and expression and his or her protection. The environments in which children grow and act, and the fundamentals for nurturing, growth and education, are different in early childhood and in youth, and the needs of children and adolescents of different ages are also different. In addition, the Convention draws attention to the rights of children who belong to linguistic minorities or are indigenous to use their own language and to promote their own culture.

Key principles of the Convention are the priority of the child's best interest, the equality of children, particular protection and care of children, and taking children's views into account.

In the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the following general principles are relevant to media education[6]:

1. The best interest of the child must be taken into consideration as a priority in all public decision-making.
2. The child has the right to participate and to express his or her view in accordance with his or her age and maturity.
3. The child has the right to grow and develop at his or her individual rate.
4. Children must be treated equally.

Under the Convention, a child is entitled to
1. Receive information.
2. Produce information and express him/herself.
3. Become familiar with cultural life and arts.
4. Receive protection.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child highlights the primary responsibility of parents for the upbringing of their children, and the parents' right to receive support in this duty. Where adults, both parents and other educators, have an understanding of media education, it becomes easier to implement the rights of the child.

Children are entitled to access through the mass media information that promotes their development and wellbeing. For this purpose, the Convention urges governments to encourage the mass media to produce and disseminate this type of information and material.

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6 Principles of children's rights relevant to media education are discussed in publications such as 'A Proposal for Developing the Media Education of Children and Adolescents' 2007. Ombudsman for Children and Kerhokeskus - The Centre for School Clubs. (in Finnish)

3 Media Education in Finland in 2013

3.1 The national scene

There are many ways of categorising the various stakeholders in media education. In this publication, national actors have been divided into those that promote and support media education, and those that implement media education in various sectors.

3.1.1 Parties that foster and support media education

National actors that foster and support media education all work to create versatile conditions for providing media education. This is done for example by promoting the possibilities and ability of those involved in implementing media education to incorporate media education in their activities and by lending support to the planning, implementation and evaluation of media education. Their aims also include facilitating the building up of a high standard, up-to-date and research-based knowledge base of media education.

Bodies that promote and boost media education comprise the government and local authorities in the public sector, and NGOs, associations and other cultural and arts institutions in the third sector. Media sector operators include companies, associations and representative professional organisations. Universities and higher education institutions also operate in the field of media education as independent institutes and foundations.

Advocating media education in the Ministry of Education and Culture and in its executive agencies

As part of the Government, the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for developing education, science, culture, sports and youth policy and for encouraging international cooperation in this sector. The Ministry of Education and Culture contributes to the promotion of media literacy through resource allocation and providing and disseminating relevant information. The Ministry's duties also include developing legislation in this sector.

Under the Ministry of Education and Culture's mandate, promoting media literacy is a content area that falls within the remit and policy areas of two departments at the Ministry: the Department for Education Policy and the Department for Cultural, Sport and Youth Policy. The policy areas include cultural policy, youth policy and art and artist policy, and, in the case of the Department for Education Policy, especially general education, including early childhood education.

As part of Ministry's audiovisual policy in the area of cultural policy, appropriations have been allocated to national media education projects, for instance, to help create prerequisites for media literacy. The objectives are to promote media education and improve children's media literacy and to help provide conditions for a media environment that is safe for children. The projects have set out to develop media education for children aged under

12 in various settings, including libraries, day-care centres, pre-primary and basic education, and in morning and afternoon activities for schoolchildren and school club activities. Appropriations have also been allocated to building up the knowledge base of media education. As the most recent legislative project in audiovisual policy, amendments were made to legislation on film rating during the 2007–2011 government term.

Media education is also advocated as part of the library policy under the umbrella of cultural policy. One of the goals of the Ministry's latest library policy (2015) is that public libraries will play their part in helping children develop their information management and media literacy skills. Projects, training and the creation of networks have for several years contributed to developing media education offered by public libraries. Evaluations indicate that national media education projects adopted by the libraries have created a key framework for media education provided by libraries and promoted the mainstreaming of media education in the library institution[7]. Media education has also increasingly found its place in cooperation between schools and libraries.

The aims of the youth policy conducted by the Ministry of Education and Culture include promoting the active citizenship and social empowerment of young people, and improving their growth and living conditions. These aims are based on the Finnish Youth Act (2006), under which the Ministry is responsible for the general development of youth work and youth policy. Media education is a central part of youth policy. It helps to lay the foundation for participation, civic involvement and being part of society. The Ministry supports competences related to information and advisory work for young people as well as skills and cooperation in online youth work and activities, and strengthens the knowledge base relevant to young people by allocating resources to parties active in the field of media education, including selected service and development centres for youth work. In addition, general grants are given to national organisations engaged in youth work, which also include key media education organisations. Special grants are available for media education projects of local authorities and organisations that emphasise young people's independent activities and peer learning. Young people's media literacy skills and information society capabilities have been enhanced by means of various national and municipal projects, which have also improved the media education skills of youth workers and highlighted the importance of media education in basic youth work and youth activities.

In the sphere of Ministry's educational policy, new objectives for education referred to in the Basic Education Act and distribution of lesson hours in basic education were adopted on 28 June 2012. The Finnish National Board of Education has launched a reform of the core curricula for pre-primary, basic and additional voluntary basic education. In the work to renew the curricula, extensive literacy skills will also be taken into account, including mastering media literacy. The Ministry has channelled funds through the National Board of Education to education providers for developing and diversifying learning environments. In the development efforts, the role of ICT is to link different learning environments, enabling the acquisition, production and processing of information where various extended learning environments are used. The projects must support the comprehensive development of the education provider's pedagogical methods. Financial resources are also being channelled into cross-curricular activities and developing a critical approach to media.

The Department for Education Policy and the Department for Cultural, Sports and Youth Policy at the Ministry of Education and Culture co-finance the national 'Lukuinto' (the Joy of Reading) programme, which aims to foster interest in reading among children and adolescents and to reinforce the skills needed in today's culture of reading and literacy, which has changed over the years. The set of targets

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7 Savolainen, Tarja 2011. Children and media. Assessment of three projects. Cupore web publications 7/2010. (in Finnish, abstract in English)

specified for this programme include encouraging various forms of collaboration between schools and libraries, and building up the awareness and competence of teachers and library professionals in the area of media education. This three-year programme (2012–2015) is coordinated by the University of Oulu. A 'Lukuinto' theme year is planned for 2014.

Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media and the National Audiovisual Archive

As a result of amendments to legislation on audiovisual programmes, a national media education authority, the Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media[8] has been operating in Finland since the beginning of 2012. It's remit includes promoting and coordinating media education nationally and supervising the offer of audiovisual programmes from the perspective of protecting children. It's duties encompass promoting children's media skills, a safe media environment and research relevant to this field. The Centre maintains the age limit classification system for audiovisual programmes and trains audiovisual programme classification officers. It serves as the Finnish centre of the European Union Safer Internet network together with the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare and Save the Children Finland.

The National Audiovisual Archive is an executive agency of the Ministry of Education and Culture responsible for preserving and storing audiovisual cultural heritage for future generations and for promoting audiovisual culture, for example through performances, publications and studies. The Archive provides film education for comprehensive and general upper secondary schools as part of its performance activities together with associations, organisations and other cultural sector authorities and municipal stakeholders.

The Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media will merge with the National Audiovisual Archive at the beginning of 2014 to form a single agency, the National Audiovisual Institute.

The Finnish National Board of Education

As the agency responsible for developing education, key tasks of the National Board of Education in promoting media literacy include developing education, drawing up curricula and qualification requirements, organising continuing education and funding the training of educational services personnel. The Board's education development responsibilities cover pre-primary and basic education, morning and afternoon activities, general upper secondary education and basic education in arts. Development projects play a crucial role in the work of the Board, the most recent one of which was an action plan for media education that encourages participation. The Board also uses its discretionary government grants to supports development, trial and pilot projects at various levels of education.

The Board of Education is currently formulating new curricula for basic education. They will be completed by the end of 2014 and introduced for all year-classes from 1 August 2016. In the rationale for this work, media literacy is seen as part of extensive reading and writing skills that each pupil should be able to acquire through learning over the years spent in basic education. In addition, according to the National Board of Education's strategy[9], the Board will be developed into a national centre of excellence for the use of ICT in teaching and digital learning environments.

Other ministries and authorities

Media literacy is also promoted by other ministries or authorities from different perspectives. The Ministry of Justice addresses media literacy from the viewpoint of social inclusion and exertion of influence as part of democratic education; children and adolescents are one of the target groups for this work. The Ministry of Justice published a report[10] on the national

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8 Act on the Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Programmes (2011), Act on Audiovisual Programmes (2011).
9 Learning and Competence 2020. Strategy of the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE).
10 Kotilainen, Sirkku & Sintonen, Sara (ed.). Media Education 2005: National Needs for Development. Publications of the Ministry of Justice 2005:5. (in Finnish)

development of media education in 2005, which was part of the Citizen Participation Policy Programme and Government Information Society Programme of Prime Minister Vanhanen's First Cabinet. The Finnish Competition and Consumer Agency works from the perspective of consumer education. In addition to its supervisory functions, it produces media related material by drawing on consumer awareness information and education.

During Prime Minister Vanhanen's Second Cabinet, the Ministry of Transport and Communications appointed a Media Forum for Children and Young People (2008) as part of the Government Information Society Programme. The Media Forum served to promote the media capabilities and literacy of children and adolescents, to develop self-regulation of media and internet communities and to encourage debate and awareness in the field of media literacy. During the Media Forum period, reports relevant to topics such as the media world of children and adolescents were published. Tasks related to children and communication were originally handled by the Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority operating under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, until they were transferred to the Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media established in 2012.

National organisations, service and development centres and networks

Certain non-governmental organisations in Finland promote media literacy as their main duties, or as part of them. These organisations serve as experts, exert influence, engage in development efforts, disseminate information and implement projects. The typical starting point is that they have expertise related to given special areas and groups.

There are active child and youth sector organisations in Finland that focus on promoting media literacy as part of ensuring the welfare of children and adolescents. These NGOs include the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, Kerhokeskus – the Centre for School Clubs, Save the Children Finland and the Finnish Parents' League. Child and

youth sector NGOs have strong regional networks, which often extend to the local level.

The most important national service and development centres of youth work from the perspective of media education are the Development Centre of Youth Information and Counselling (Koordinaatti), the National Development Centre for Online Youth Work (Verke) and the Finnish Youth Research Network.

The national network of children's cultural centres, Aladdin's Lamp, is a crucial network for media education. It brings together a number of actors that implement media education as part of their regional activities. The current period, 2009–2013, is the network's third one.

A key actor among organisations in the media education field, especially in bridging the gap between research and practical activities and in supporting the work, is the Finnish Society on Media Education. Practical media education activities are modelled and implemented by the Media Education Centre Metka, for instance. Koulukino - School Cinema Association promotes film education as part of media education. NGOs in the field of media education play a significant role in fostering media education.

National organisations of the audiovisual sector also operate in the field of media education, including associations engaged in the distribution of media art or films, which undertake media and film education projects and are involved in developing media education from the viewpoint of film education. NGOs in the audiovisual field also develop and facilitate regional and local activities.

The Finnish Library Association is very active in the field of media education. The aims of its most recent project include devising new working methods for media education and paying attention to the quality of media education in public libraries.

Media sector activities that support media literacy

The business world, associations and representative professional organisations in the media sector can also promote media literacy. The current operating environment of the media sector is a strongly

international one characterised by global competition for markets and audiences. Increasing numbers of media sector companies have started producing and distributing digital content. The sector continuously researches and develops new business models and service and product concepts, and analyses user needs relevant to factors such as changes in reading habits.

In the media sector, promoting media literacy helps educate audiences to become consumers of media, future readers and other users of content. Media literate consumers can appreciate and select contents that are versatile and responsibly produced. Media education thus bolsters not only the consumption of different contents but also their production and distribution, and consequently the economic and employment prospects in the creative sector.

The Federation of the Finnish Media Industry Finnmedia has chosen developing the media literacy of children and adolescents as its strategic and societal goal. According to the Federation's media education policies, it is important to be media literate to be able to use and consume media services properly.[11]

Representative bodies in the media sector advocate the use of media content in the sectors they represent in society. They produce research and other information on the use of media by children and adolescents, provide material for teachers and other educators, and organise campaigns. In promoting media literacy, the representative bodies actively work together with national media education organisations and authorities.

Promoting media literacy is also becoming more widespread in media sector companies. For example, the Finnish Newspapers Association organises 'Newspapers in Education' activities that have wide regional coverage, and it is an example of media education in Finland that has been pursued over a long period of time. These activities are now an established form of media education cooperation between provincial newspapers and schools. Companies that provide online services and platforms have also become involved in fostering media literacy. They use different ways to achieve this: they may help educational institutions produce their own media, or provide technical online platforms for media education purposes in area such as online youth work, or offer suitable media education material for schools and educational institutions. The games industry also offers content, including game-based learning environments.

The Finnish Broadcasting Company is a media sector company that has consistently pursued to promote media education by producing media education material on its website. In addition, the Company's Media Bus has brought media education training to schools, teacher training colleges, youth centres and libraries around Finland.

Universities, higher education institutions and other research organisations

Universities, higher education institutions and other research organisations contribute to building up a research-based knowledge base of high-quality for media education. Research information is important for all those who promote media education.

Universities engage in scientific research and provide the highest standard of education based on research. Of the ten universities offering studies in culture, art, communications or pedagogy in Finland, eight are involved in continuous research and education activities related to media education. Depending on the university, the studies typically comprise individual courses in various disciplines of science. Media education is offered as a major subject at the University of Lapland and University of Tampere, and as a minor subject at the University of Helsinki. Universities also organise doctoral programmes in the field of media education, and the Universities of Tampere and Lapland have a professorship in media education. In addition, a few universities have separate units or departments that provide education and research and development activities in media education.

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11 Media education policy of the Federation of the Finnish Media Industries 2008. Federation of the Finnish Media Industry, Finnmedia. (in Finnish)

Media education is also included in the course offer of several polytechnics as individual courses or modules. HUMAK University of Applied Sciences offers specialisation studies in media education (30 credits).

The Media Culture Research Programme of the Academy of Finland financed nine research projects in 1999–2002 for a total of EUR 2.5 million. The Programme studied the transformation of media culture and its significance and effect on our every-day lives, especially in terms of culture. Contents relevant to media literacy will be further pursued in the new Research Programme on the Future of Learning, Knowledge and Skills, which is open for applications in 2013.

3.1.2 Bodies that provide media education

Actors in municipalities

Providers of media education – such as teachers as well as child and youth workers and instructors – operate in municipalities in the various growth environments of children and adolescents, where there is a range of settings, goals and activities. The content of media education can be incorporated from various angles into teaching and child education. These are all necessary so that it is possible to inspire versatile media literacy in children and adolescents.

Educators who can provide media education as a part of their everyday tasks with children and adolescents in areas of education such as day-care, pre-primary and basic education and general upper secondary education. Most children in Finland participate in childhood education, and effectively all children of primary and secondary school age participate in basic education. Furthermore, child

and youth workers and instructors work in settings such as morning and afternoon activities, clubs and youth work. Libraries, museums and other cultural services also cater to children. Moreover, non-formal learning takes place at home and in peer networks.

At the local level, media education is largely provided in association with different services offered by the municipalities. In Finland, the municipalities are responsible of offering certain services, such as early childhood education and care[12], pre-primary, primary, secondary and general upper secondary education, and library services.

The contents of many of these services are specified in national policies[13]. Besides the national core curricula, media education manuals drawn up by media education experts are available in general education. They outline the objectives and contents of the core curricula from the perspective of media education. The purpose of the publication 'Media education in early childhood education' (in Finnish), for example, is to help plan and implement early childhood learning in municipalities and in individual units. This publication was later complemented by two more publications: Media Education in Pre-primary and Initial Education (2009, in Finnish) and The Learning Path for Media Literacy Skills in Basic Education (2011, in Finnish).

Cultural services in municipalities, such as libraries, museums and youth services, are particularly active in promoting and providing media education. Some municipalities also have cultural centres for children and adolescents where media education is active. Museums and photographic centres preserve cultural heritage and offer experiences and information that is easy to access. Parishes, local associations and regional and national organisations also work together with day care, pre-primary education, schools and educational institutions both locally and regionally.

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12 Finnish early childhood education and care (ECEC) covers both child day care arrangements offered to families and goal-oriented early childhood education for children.
13 The objectives and key contents of early childhood education, pre-primary and basic education, secondary level education and morning and afternoon activities are defined in sector-specific national core curricula, on the basis of which municipalities formulate their plans for their municipality, and the units then draw up their unit-specific plans.

Regional film centres, for example, organise media and film education events.

The municipal youth services implement media education projects that have links with youth information and counselling services and online youth work. Some of these have extensive cooperation networks. The projects emphasise young people's independent activities and peer learning. An effort is being made to mainstream good practices created in them into basic youth work in municipalities.

Families are a key environment for media education. Families use media in modes, and their skills in supporting children and adolescents in media literacy vary. According to a Finnish survey on media use carried out in 2012 among families with children, parents stress that parents and guardians themselves are responsible for making sure the media environment of children is a safe one.[14]

According to a survey carried out in 2009, Finnish parents see media education as part of the overall upbringing of their children, which involves for instance discussing things with the child, being present and setting boundaries.[15] Parents can promote their child's well-being by focusing on his or her media use and media culture and by taking part in his or her every-day media use. This may help them to understand how their child plays and feels, and can create shared experiences of a positive kind. Children should also be guided in making safe and responsible choices. Parents, in turn, need support in their task of bringing up their children. Parents who are media literate are equipped to assist children and adolescents.

Furthermore, where Finnish parents restrict their children's media use, this usually applies to watching television and is dictated by the time of day and age limits of programmes. Parental restrictions on computer use, on the other hand, are based on the time spent on the computer. According to the children who took part in Children's Media Barometer in Finland (2011), nearly all families had rules on media use, and most of the children in the survey (aged 7–11) felt that the rules in their homes were appropriate.

3.2 Promotion of media literacy in the European Union

Improving media literacy and children's safety in the new media environment has been taken up in a number of European Commission initiatives and strategies. Improving the media literacy and digital literacy of European citizens is also part of the Digital Agenda for Europe included in the Europe 2020 strategy. The aim of this strategy is to boost Europe's competitiveness.

The European Commission and the Council have issued several media literacy iniatives since 2007[16]. The latest Council conclusions were adopted in 2012 with the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children[17]. The European strategy now focuses on creating a safe online environment through media education and media literacy, fighting the dissemination of child sexual abuse material, stimulating the production of high-quality online content for children and adolescents, and stepping up awareness and empowerment.

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14 The media survey of Finnish families 2012. Media use among 0-12-year-old children and media education at home as described by parents. The Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media. Foundation for Cultural Policy Research Cupore. (in Finnish).

15 Aaltonen, Tiina (2009). Media education in Finnish families 2009. Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority's publications 11/2009. (in Finnish).

16 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment. COM(2007) 833 final
Commission Recommendation of 20 August 2009 on media literacy in the digital environment: for a more competitive audiovisual and content industry and an inclusive knowledge society (2009/625/EC).
Council conclusions of 27 November 2009 on media literacy in the digital environment (2009/C 301/09).
Council conclusions on the protection of children in the digital world (2011/C 372/04).

17 Council conclusions of 26 November 2012 on the European strategy for a Better Internet for Children (2012/C 393/04).

Media Literacy Expert Group

The first Media Literacy Expert Group was appointed by the European Commission in 2006, and it remained active until 2010. According to this group, media literacy is associated with active citizenship, democracy, the audiovisual sector, cultural heritage and cultural identity as well as protecting minors in particular by empowering them. Research reports on media literacy were produced, including 'Current trends and approaches to media literacy in Europe' (2007)[19] and 'Testing and Refining Criteria to Assess Media Literacy Levels in Europe' (2010)[20].

In spring 2011, the Commission appointed a second Expert Group with the specific mandate of focusing on media literacy in schools. Both the educational and the cultural sector in Finland are represented in this Expert Group.

Safer Internet

The Safer Internet Programme launched in 1999 specifically aims to promote safe internet use by children and to fight illegal and harmful content. This Programme is used by the European Commission to link European networks and national projects.

In Finland, Safer Internet work has been carried out in cooperation by three parties: the Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media, the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare and Save the Children Finland. The Programme has also funded research, including the EU Kids Online project. After 2013, the Programme activities are to continue within the framework of the Connecting Europe Facility.

In early 2012, the Commission put together a coalition of the CEOs in companies providing social media services. The purpose is to achieve concrete improvements in the following five areas: reporting tools, protection of privacy, content classification, use of parental control and filtering software and procedures for removing child sexual abuse material and cooperation with authorities.

3.3 The international setting

In the Nordic countries – excluding Iceland – duties related to promoting media literacy have been assigned to authorities under the Ministries of Education and Culture. In Finland, this authority is Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media, in Sweden the Swedish Media Council, in Norway The Norwegian Media Authority and in Denmark The Media Council for Children and Young People.

In Europe, the Netherlands, The United Kingdom and Germany have, or have had, actual broad-based media literacy programmes or policies in place. In the Netherlands the media literacy programme has since 2008 been implemented by Mediawijsheid Expertisecentrum – Expertise Centre for Media Literacy established on the initiative of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in the Netherlands. This centre coordinates a network that has defined joint operating policies for promoting media literacy.

The United Kingdom implemented a media literacy programme in 2004–2008. Under this programme, an extensive research programme was carried out on the extent of media literacy and topical issues in media literacy. Partnership networks were also created through the programme.

In Germany, the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth launched a policy process in 2010 aiming to develop a uniform and systematic internet policy for children and adolescents. The content areas of the internet policy for children and adolescents are media protection, promotion of media literacy and parental responsibility.

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18 Current trends and approaches to media literacy in Europe (2007)

19 Testing and Refining Criteria to Assess Media Literacy Levels in Europe (2010) Commissioned by the European Commission Directorate-General for Information Society and Media. Media Literacy Unit, European Commission.

UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization UNESCO has for decades striven to develop principles for media education and the teaching of media literacy. UNESCO examines media literacy and information literacy from the perspective of human rights, taking information society developments into account. A programme Media and Information Literacy - Curriculum for Teachers was formulated in 2008. The programme aims to promote media and information literacy in teacher education.

In 2012, a handbook, Pedagogies of Media and Information Literacies, was published to offer teachers basic information on media and information literacy and ways to teach these skills in practice. The publication was prepared by Finnish experts in media education.

4 Trends and Challenges

Media education is constantly evolving, both in international and national terms. We are gaining more and more knowledge about changes in the media environment, media literacy and media education of children and adolescents. New media education structures are being created, and practices are being formulated.

The following sections will address the key trends and challenges related to media literacy policies. They have been summed up into four core themes: the diversified media environment and culture of children and adolescents, possibilities for participation, social inclusion and exclusion, competence and collaboration of media educators, and clarifying the idea of media literacy.

4.1 The diversified media environment and culture of children and adolescents

Media is a fundamental part of childhood and youth. Media-based games, media contents, stories and the possibility to participate are all elements of the environment in which children and adolescents grow up. The media environment and culture impact children's and adolescents' growth and learning and the way they build their identity and world image.

As human beings, part of our process of growing up takes place in relation to media. A key role is played by experiences, meanings and social activities produced by reading and listening to media, and viewing, writing, recording, filming and playing games. Media enriches the way children play. Children and adolescents have media-related hobbies. With media, they go through experiences of learning, success and inclusion, and process various emotions, such as joy, sadness, excitement and fear.

The knowledge base of the ways in which children and adolescents use media has grown in recent years. The Children's Media Barometers in Finland show that the child's relationship with media may begin as a baby, for example on the lap of a parent who is using the internet. Regardless of an increase in internet use, the television remains the favourite media especially for young children. However, the media world of children as young as 7–8 years and that of adolescents is typically very wide and diverse. It includes books, newspapers, magazines, the radio, recordings, digital games, the internet, the mobile phone, the television and audiovisual recordings[20]. Diversified advertising and brands incorporated into media content are also part of the media environment of children and adolescents. From the viewpoint of marketing, children and adolescents are significant consumers who have a say in what sort of purchases their families make.

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20 Children's Media Barometer 2010: Media Use among 0-8-year-olds in Finland.
Kotilainen, Sirkku (ed.) 2010 The Finnish Society on Media Education. (in Finnish, summary in English);
Children's Media Barometer 2011. Media Use among 7-11-year-old Children and Their Experiences on Media Education.
Pääjärvi, Saara (ed.) 2010. The Finnish Society on Media Education. (in Finnish, summary in English)

The Finnish Barometers indicate that different children and adolescents operate in different ways in the media environment. Personal preferences in media develop at an early age, around the age of 3 or 4. Even before school age, there are already differences in media preference between boys and girls. For example, boys typically play games, use the internet and read comics more than girls do. Girls, instead, read more books than do boys. The media environments of different age groups also differ. Between the ages of seven and nine, children still mainly prefer media content designed for children. By the age of 11, however, the media favourites and amounts of media use already resemble those of adolescents, for example in terms of internet behaviour. For young people, the internet is important, especially as a means of keeping in touch.

Children nowadays use the internet at an ever younger age. In a European comparison from 2010, Finnish children and adolescents aged 9–16 had started using the web at an average age of 7. The data of the Children's Media Barometer, which were collected in 2010 too, indicated that one out of three 3-year-olds, one half of 5-year-olds and two out of three 6-year-olds were using the internet. The rapid advancement of technology produces user-friendly communication devices for the needs of children and adolescents. Tablets, for example, are becoming more common in families with children. Children also start using mobile phones with an internet connection and other mobile devices at a younger age[21].

The internet also involves risks. Compared to young people in other European countries, Finnish children and adolescents are the best at mastering internet safety skills, such as how to protect your privacy. The greatest risks on the internet that Finnish young people are exposed to are related to pornography: 29 per cent of children and adolescents said they have come across pornographic material on the internet. Five per cent of Finnish adolescents said they have been subjected to cyberbullying. There are other risks in media use, such as financial risks, cost-awareness risks and risks related to the binding nature of various media-related contracts.

Generally children's and adolescents' media use is individual and private, and these activities may take place anywhere at any time, but in part, media use is also shared and public. Children and adolescents act in global media environments. The contents and services are often transnational and provided in English. However, there are strong national brands, including the Finnish Broadcasting Company's online service, which is popular among Finnish children.

Challenges and trends:

- To achieve a versatile media environment and culture, it is necessary to have media education with diverse contents that comprehensively takes into account various possibilities of operating with different media. Uniform media education is no longer adequate, and for example targeted media education for children and adolescents with different media use patterns is needed.
- Media education related to digital game playing is a key area for development. Families, for example, pay less attention to children's and adolescents' game playing than they do to other media use. Such issues as gender roles associated with gaming and game contents can be brought up in media education[22].
- Regardless of the expansion of the media landscape, there is still a strong culture of reading in Finland, and Finnish children and adolescents are good readers. However, disparities in the levels of literacy between Finnish young people have increased, for example between girls and boys. The direction of this change gives cause for concern. Versatile literacy skills and reading form a solid foundation for life control for children and adolescents. In online environments, for example, reading and writing skills are increasingly important.

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21 Risks and safety on the internet. The perspective of European children. Initial findings from the EU Kids Online survey of 9–16 -year olds and their parents. 2010. LSE; EU Kids Online: Final Report. September 2011. LSE.
22 Suoninen Annikka (2013) Children's Media Barometer 2012. Media use among 10-12-year-old children in Finland.). The Finnish Youth Research Network. (in Finnish, summary in English)

- In a changing media environment, rather than focusing on device- or media-centred education, we should pay attention to content and stories as well as pedagogical media activities that support growth.
- Children and adolescents of all ages need media education. It is particularly important to focus on honing media education specifically for very young children on the one hand and on educators working with young children on the other.
- It is vital that media content and services are offered to children and adolescents in their native language, taking minority languages into consideration.
- The increasingly complex regulation in a global media environment makes it challenging to protect children and adolescents. This is another reason why there is a growing need to promote media literacy and to support parents in bringing up their children.

4.2 Possibilities for participation and social inclusion and risks of exclusion

By helping children and adolescents to feel they are included and by allowing them to exercise influence in matters concerning them, children and adolescents acquire potential for acting in a democratic society and help them become active citizens and actors. Promoting media literacy facilitates participation and social inclusion.

Participation and social inclusion refer to personal commitment to the activities of a community and a willingness to be involved in exerting influence on shared issues. What plays a key role for children and adolescents is the experience of being able to genuinely have an influence on matters.

The current media culture is referred to as the culture of inclusion in which the media, and the internet in particular, play a key role. The internet enables participation and social inclusion by joining various communities, interaction, and the production and distribution of your own content, for example.

The online environment also involves risks of social exclusion. The web offers paths that are undesirable in terms of the growth of children and adolescents, such as web dependency, hate communities and financial risks associated with the use of irresponsibly produced online services. Children and adolescents who are also otherwise at risk typically also encounter the most risks on the internet[24].

In a culture of participation and social inclusion, media content and services are no longer only produced by the media industry but also by consumers and users themselves. In content production, for example, children and adolescents can be creative, experimental and imaginative in ways that are not immediately transparently seen as having an educational value.

In the EU Kids Online study, the potential offered by the web is described as a 'ladder of opportunities'. For example, practically all European children aged 9–10 operate on the first rung of the ladder, using the internet for schoolwork and playing games on their own against the computer. About one half of the children are on the second rung, where the activities include watching video clips. Forty per cent of the children are on the third rung, where they also use the web as a means of communication. The fourth rung, where you play games against other people, download music and films and share content, has been reached by 35 per cent of 9–10-year old children. Approximately one in five are on the fifth rung, which includes blogging, spending time in a virtual world and creating a virtual character, a pet or an avatar.

Finnish children and adolescents engage in fewer activities of different types on the internet than the average, even though their daily internet use exceeds the average. In online community services and social media, Finnish children and adolescents have the least friends, together with Romanians, Bulgarians and Germans.

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24 Risks and safety on the internet. The perspective of European children. Initial findings from the EU Kids Online survey of 9-16-year olds and their parents. 2010. LSE; EU Kids Online: Final Report. September 2011. LSE.

Challenges and trends:

- All children and adolescents should be able to feel they are part of the media environment regardless of their age, gender, culture and social background and where they live. Special emphasis should be placed on linguistic and cultural minorities as well as children and adolescents affected by various disabilities and in need of special support when developing media education.
- Families use media in different ways and their capabilities in giving support to children and adolescents in media literacy are varied. Promoting media literacy can thus curb inequality and social exclusion. Differences in media literacy can be levelled out by providing media education that is methodical and systematic, especially in early childhood education, in pre-primary education and in basic education.
- The path to participation and social inclusion starts with the every-day experiences of children and adolescents. We need media education that encourages self-expression, fosters independent activities and children to join communities that have a positive influence on growth. Media literate children and adolescents are able to act responsibly and to take into consideration their own and other people's wellbeing in the media environment.
- Finnish children and adolescents need to be encouraged to take up diverse activities in the media. Versatile activities bolster media literacy, and good media literacy helps children and adolescents to protect themselves against the risks of media.
- Even though internet use is more widespread, children and adolescents do not see the online environment as important in their lives as adults may think. It is important to remember that children and adolescents still value their families, friends, hobbies, play, free time and ordinary every-day life. 'Conventional media', such as newspapers and magazines, films and television have not vanished from the lives of children and adolescents either.

4.3. Different actors and the competence of media educators

There are various actors operating in the field of media education in Finland: the government and the regional and local authorities, large and small companies in the media sector, and representative professional organisations, NGOs, regional centres and networks as well as universities and higher education institutions.

At the national level, training designed for professional educators is one of the key working methods in media education. Plenty of information and teaching material is also available. Media educators who work with children and adolescents in practice at the local level are found in places such as child day-care centres, schools, clubs, youth centres, cultural centres for children and adolescents, museums, libraries and in families.

One of the strengths of Finnish media education is that it is very versatile; each actor has a separate role and an individual approach to promoting media literacy. This means that different types of partnerships can be created and media education can operate on a broad basis. Stakeholders in media education also tend to network considerably. For example, Finnish media educators who work at the grassroots level and researchers engage in cooperation in a way that is deemed unique by international standards.

In recent years, the range of stakeholders in media education has continued to expand in Finland. Besides the education system, youth work and libraries have emerged as key actors in media education.

With the Finnish Board of Film Classification having been replaced by the Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media at the beginning of 2012, Finland now has an authority with the specific duty of promoting media education. From the beginning of 2014, the activities of the Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media are to be transferred to a new agency that will be created as a merger between the National Audiovisual Archive and the Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media.

National and regional bodies involved in media education have shed light on some of the problems related to promoting media literacy. For example, there is regional inequality in the availability of media education. In NGOs, in turn, media education is carried out as fixed-term projects, which may at times result in frustration with the development efforts and in problems related to cooperation[24].

Challenges and trends:

- We need to bring together the competence of experts in media education and the skills of professionals working with children and adolescents so that children and adolescents can benefit from it. Partnerships and networks between different sectors make it possible to reach children, their parents and other media educators better and help increase awareness and participation. Through partnerships, high-quality training, learning materials and contents can also be produced for different target groups.
- At the local level, media education can be part of the job description of professionals in a number of different fields. Media educators in different sectors need targeted training and learning material. Tailored training can help those working with children and adolescents of to improve their professional skills. By the same token, however, joint training for different professionals is also necessary, and it helps to clarify the approaches of different fields to promoting media literacy. Copyright issues are a key area in enhancing competence.
- Regional stakeholders have so far been taken into account the least in the field of media education. It is important that the regional level be involved more extensively in developing media education in future.
- A number of media education bodies have been operating at the national level for some time, but

now a new authority has been introduced in this area. In this situation, by profiling themselves, different stakeholders can enhance appropriate resource use, for instance. Joint collaboration in development work and shared discussions between different actors in media education is still necessary, though.
- Project-oriented development efforts necessary in media education, but at the same time it is important to institute established media education, especially at the local level. The continuity of activities must be better taken into account, starting with the planning stages of projects. By not only improving the competence of professionals but by also recording media education and media literacy into documentation that gives guidelines for activities and planning at the national, regional and local level alike, it is possible to formulate more established forms of media education and media literacy.
- No systematically collected data is available on the provision of media education, especially in the municipalities and their services. Individual analyses have been produced, such as a study on the status of media education in public libraries and in early childhood education in municipalities[25]. It is necessary to develop the practices for accumulating and sustaining a knowledge base through studies and reports, also at the local level.

4.4 Clarifying the notion of media literacy

This publication discusses media literacy in a broad sense, and media refers extensively to all media. Various types of literacy have been defined in different ways. The concept of media literacy partly overlaps with other concepts of literacy, including digital literacy, information literacy or visual literacy. As a concept, media literacy accentuates the media environment as an entity that comprises all types of

24 Lundvall & Andersson (2012). The Media Education in Finland 2012. The Finnish Society on Media Education. (in Finnish)
25 Libraries and media 2012. Study on the status of media education in public libraries in Finland. Reports of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2012:23 (in Finnish, abstract in English); Survey on media education in early childhood education in Finnish municipalities (in Finnish). Reports of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2013.

media, and especially the critical understanding of contents and media culture as well as self-expression and personal activities.

The European definition for media literacy as formulated by the European Commission means being able to access all media, to understand how the various types of media work, how to critically evaluate their content, to fully exploit their potential and to use them in a critical, active and creative manner[26]. The definition covers various communication forms, platforms and types of content, i.e. television, film, radio, recorded music, printed media as well as the internet and all other digital communication. The European definition of media literacy is related to promoting citizenship and democracy, fostering audiovisual heritage, encouraging the development of cultural identity, empowerment of people, protection of minors and copyright issues.

As a research field, media education is multi-disciplinary, and media literacy can be approached through different academic disciplines and theoretical frameworks. For example, scientific definitions of media literacy highlight the processing of information conveyed in all communication, conceptual under-standing of media culture phenomena, critical thinking and media activities, or people's social practices in relationship to media[27].

In Finland, media literacy has typically been seen as a citizenship skill in today's information society, so it is embedded in general education. Thus, for example, the learning path for media literacy skills[28] designed for basic education specifies aesthetics, interaction, critical interpretation and safety as skills to be acquired in the context of media literacy.

In sum, a comprehensive approach to media literacy has been adopted in Finland. This has helped bolster media education on many fronts. However, a problem that has sometimes been cited is that because media education and media literacy are such complex issues, they may remain difficult to approach and understand, especially for those who are not familiar with this area.

Challenges and trends:

- Media literacy should be seen as comprehensive capabilities related to children's and adolescents' life management and education. Media literacy is not only about information, skills, competence and mastering the use of media; it is a way of existing and living in relationship with media. Awareness and understanding of versatile media literacy should continue to be strengthened.

- Due to its nature, media literacy is acquired in many different settings. One of the core aspects is that children and adolescents interact with media independently and of their own accord. Learning may take place in peer groups, while pursuing hobbies, in the family or through other free time activities.

- Promoting versatile media literacy relates extensively to many sectors of society. Naturally the education system plays an essential role in nourishing children's and adolescents' core skills and competence. Institutional educational environments, including early childhood education and school, provide the most methodical and equitable support for learning media literacy. There are other key actors in the field of media literacy, though, endowed with their own relevant viewpoints on media literacy.

- Above all, media education is about practical activities. Defining media literacy at the practical level and through activities is important. As an educational goal, promoting good media literacy requires each educator to have an understanding of what good media literacy is.

- In a changing media environment and culture, we need continuous debate on, and a knowledge base of, what good media literacy is and how media education can advocate it. More basic research on the theory of media education and studies into the effectiveness of media education should be encouraged.

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26 Fact Sheet on Media Literacy. European Commission.
27 Kupiainen, Reijo and Sintonen, Sara. 2009. Media literacies, participation, media education. (in Finnish)
28 The Learning Path for Media Literacy Skills in Basic Education. Kerhokeskus – the Centre for School Clubs 2011. (in Finnish)

5 Good media literacy as a goal

5.1 The vision and principles of media education

Our shared intent and value basis are synthesised in the vision and principles of media education. The idea is that the vision and principles will steer activities in 2013–2016 and endorse decision-making that helps promote good media literacy among stakeholders in media education – at the national level, in regional and local planning and in the practical work of education alike. The vision and principles apply to all aspects of media literacy.

Vision

All children and adolescents will enjoy a growth environment that offers better potential for developing good media literacy. Children and adolescents will learn to exercise discretion and selectivity in their dealings with media, to analyse and assess media critically and to use media for learning, self-expression and participation in society and culture in an age-appropriate way. Children and adolescents will also become more active and enthusiastic actors with media, being able to enjoy the experiences offered by media in a more versatile manner.

Educators will become more media literate. They will gain greater awareness and understanding of media education and its potential. Media literate educators who possess media education skills will be able to

support the development of good media literacy in children and adolescents in a more versatile manner and to guide children and adolescents to operate safely with media.

Finland will become a society where media literacy is appreciated and the significance of media literacy is understood better. A society that is appreciative of good media literacy is disposed to invest more in media education.

Principles of media literacy

Equality and pluralism

Children's and adolescents' right to media education are taken into account when promoting good media literacy, and respect is shown for the unique personality and world view of each child and adolescent. Particular emphasis is placed on access to media education for linguistic and cultural minorities and children and adolescents affected by disabilities and in need of special support.

Diversity in media education is valuable. The various dimensions of media literacy and stakeholders handling media education from different angles are seen as a richness. Thanks to this diversity, media education is available and accessible to different target groups.

Systematic and long-term work

Organisations promote good media literacy methodically and systematically as part of their basic functions. Project-oriented development work sets out to make sure that the activities can become established as regular and established part where warranted by the outcomes. Media education is developed so that the needs and direction of the development work are carefully considered and existing outcomes and good practices are taken into account. If necessary, the direction is changed or adjusted, or the development efforts are discontinued.

Transparency and cooperation

The promotion of good media literacy builds significantly on cooperation and various partnerships. Information on media education is disseminated in a versatile way, and conscious efforts are made to establish contacts with other stakeholders. Information on new openings is disclosed in an early stage. Whenever possible, the activities take place in open networks. Good practices and the results of development efforts are shared.

Solid knowledge base and high quality

Good media literacy is promoted using up-to-date research and studies. The knowledge base of media education is methodically maintained, and information is exploited resourcefully. Media education aims for high quality. Stakeholders continuously monitor and evaluate on-going processes by means of both external evaluations and self-assessment. Stakeholders examine their activities critically and are prepared for change where necessary.

5.2 Goals

5.2.1 Every-day media education centred round children and adolescents

The challenges and development perspectives related to the complex media environment and culture of children and adolescents raise the following questions: How do we take different children and adolescents better into account in media education? How do we take into consideration the personal experiences of children and adolescents since early childhood? How do we reinforce the inclusion of children and adolescents in the media culture and nourish every-day wellbeing?

Goal:

High-quality every-day media education centred round children and adolescents will be implemented in Finland.

Actions that help achieve this goal:

Securing adequate resources for media education and educators at the local level.

Including children and adolescents more in the planning and implementation of media education at the national, regional and local level, for example by involving children and adolescents in preparing documents that steer activities and in the planning of training events and materials and using children and adolescents as peer instructors.

Developing and providing a media education pedagogy that helps children and adolescents to learn and participate in media activities in different growth environments independently and of their own accord.

Developing and providing a media education pedagogy that supports parenting and creates opportunities for intergenerational interaction and learning.

Developing targeted media education practices, training courses, materials, services, contents and operating models in media education that take into consideration different children and adolescents.

Developing practices, training courses, materials, services, contents and operating models for emerging target groups and areas of media education (including children aged under 3, playing of digital games, children and adolescents in media productions).

Encouraging and supporting local communities in renewing their operating methods and creating and mainstreaming media education operating cultures, for example through targeted training.

Encouraging and supporting stakeholders in media education to create their own or shared quality criteria for promoting good media literacy at the local, regional and national level.

5.2.2 Sustainable structures

When examining media education from the standpoint of legislation, financial resources and steering, existing challenges and trends give rise to the following questions: How do we respond to changes in the global media environment and to the need to protect children? How can we better secure the continuity of media education and help it become established?

Goal:

Sustainable structures that promote media literacy can be achieved through legislation, financial resources and national and local level steering.

Actions that help achieve this goal:

Systematically monitoring the impact of legislative reforms governing audiovisual programmes, supervising changes in the audiovisual programme market and in the media environment of children

and adolescents and keeping an eye on other changes in the operating environment.

Exploring how the copyright system impacts the provision of media education (e.g. performance rights in teaching)

In cultural policy, media literacy and media education will continue to be promoted, and measures related to the Children and Media programme will be updated.

In youth policy, media education will be incorporated into advocating active citizenship of adolescents. Youth work appropriations will be allocated to finance actions and projects that develop youth work and activities using media education.

In addition to government and local authority funding, other financial resources (e.g. foundations) and the European Union Structural Funds programmes will be used to develop media education.

In the process of reforming the core curricula for early childhood education and general education (pre-primary, basic education, secondary education, basic education in arts), the promotion of good media literacy will be taken into account.

Measures to encourage good media literacy will be incorporated in local government planning documents (including wellbeing plans for children and adolescents), and in unit-level plans in early childhood education and in schools and educational institutions, in libraries and youth centres, and in plans for individual children and adolescents.

More media education will be included in the basic education and training of professionals in various sectors, including sector such as libraries, cultural, youth, social welfare and health care services, the media sector and teacher education at all levels from early childhood education to the secondary level. Opportunities for continuing education will

be provided for professionals in the field.
The need for accumulating and maintaining the knowledge base in media education nationally, regionally and locally and the possibilities for developing indicators for media literacy and media education will be examined.

5.2.3 Profiling and stakeholder partnerships

In terms of the partnerships and the competence of media educators, the challenges and trends raise the following questions: How can media education stakeholders make their individual strengths more manifest? How can more partnerships be developed to reach children, young people and parents? What new forms of cooperation could be created?

Goal:

The activities and various stakeholders in media education will become profiled, networks will be reinforced and new partnerships will be created in the area.

Actions that help achieve this goal:

The media education agency will be profiled as the national centre for media education, which will collaborate extensively with other authorities and bodies, taking into consideration existing stakeholders and activities. The agency's media education activities will be made predictable and transparent through the agency's strategy and other documents that guide its operation.

NGOs in the area of media education will work to promote good media literacy from their own vantage points, for instance by taking part in public debate on media education. The NGOs will support practical media education work by offering training, materials and other services.

The media sector will produce versatile and safe contents and services for children and adolescents.

Children and adolescents from different walks of life will have access to media content and services. Children and adolescents themselves will increasingly participate as producers of media and be involved in media productions. Because media is so visible, key target groups for media education, including parents, will be reached.

The scientific community will work to strengthen and safeguard a multidisciplinary knowledge base in media education. Besides producing scientific data, information will also be spread and popularised for stakeholders in media education, for example through publications and seminars. Among others, working methods for investigative development will be produced by means of collaborative efforts.

Higher education and other educational institutions will educate media literate professionals for the field of media education. Promoting good media literacy will be taken into account from the angles of approach of various sectors both in basic and continuing education.

Media educators in various sectors will further improve their special competencies and strengths by charting good practices and networks in their own fields, for instance. These areas of strength include supporting parenting and encouraging play in early childhood learning, developing basic skills (including literacy) at school, promoting information management and media literacy skills for adults at public libraries, producing your own media and fostering inclusion in youth work and cultural centres for children and adolescents, and images and visuality at museums.

The media education authority, NGOs, the media sector, the scientific community, higher education institutions and other educational institutions and media educators in different sectors will plan and provide media education through broad-based collaborative efforts and in different combinations locally, regionally and nationally. Existing effective cooperation structures (e.g. schools and

libraries) will be made use of and modelled, and bold experimentation with new ideas will be encouraged (e.g. partnerships between NGOs and the private sector). The parties will work together to increase awareness of media education.

Regional media education will be strengthened by setting up permanent networks and hubs in the regions, taking existing actors into consideration.

5.2.4 Finland's role in global activities

Promoting good media literacy is an international issue. Such actors as UNESCO and the European Union have had media education on the agenda for years. Finland works in a close partnership with the rest of the Nordic countries, also in the area of media education. Finnish NGOs, researchers and authorities have taken part in various international, European and Nordic cooperation forums for a considerable period of time. The question now is how can Finland further strengthen cross-border cooperation in media education?

Goal:

Finland will play an active role in global media education activities.

Actions that help achieve this goal:

Supporting children and adolescents in getting their voices heard and promoting the visibility of media content produced by them in international forums.

Taking part in Nordic, European and international cooperation, for example through development and research activities and conferences.

Continuing Finland's participation in the European Union's Safer Internet network.

Exerting influence at the global level by being involved in planning and advancing new openings to promote good media literacy.
Sharing information about Finnish activities on various international fora.

5.3 Follow-up

Progress in the proposed goals and actions will be monitored between 2013 and 2016 by media education expert panels set up by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Meetings will be held regularly, for example once a year. Research and studies produced in line with the policy guidelines at the national, regional and local level will be exploited in the follow-up. The expert panels will also examine the need for new policies or for updating existing polices from 2017 onwards.

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Appendix 1. Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture relevant to media literacy promotion

I Media violence. Children and Media. A Draft Action Plan 2005-2007. Ministry of Education, 2004:10. (in Finnish)

II Proposal for an action programme for developing media skills and knowledge as part of the promotion of civil and knowledge society. Reports of the Ministry of Education 2007:29. (in Finnish, summary in English)

III Strategy for Cultural Policy. Publications of the Ministry of Education, Finland 2009:45.

IV Finnish Public Library Policy 2015. National strategic areas of focus. Publications of the Ministry of Education, Finland 2009:31.

V Audiovisual Culture in the Digital Era. Set of Policies. Reports of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland 2012:31. (in Finnish)

Appendix 2. Goals, actions and implementers

Goal 1: High-quality every-day media education centred around children and young people will be implemented in Finland.

Actions that promote the achievement of this goal	Parties that can have a special role in implementing the actions
Securing adequate resources for media education and educators at the local level.	Local government and planning work in municipalities and units.
Reinforcing the inclusion of children and young people in the planning and implementation of media education at the national, regional and local level, for example by including children and young people in the preparation of documents directing the activities, planning of training events and materials and as peer instructors.	All parties in their own activities.
Developing and implementing media education pedagogy that supports the independent learning and activities with media of children and young people in various environments for growth.	Media educators in different sectors (incl. early childhood education, schools and educational institutions, libraries, youth work, museums), the scientific community.
Developing and implementing media education pedagogy that supports parenting and creates opportunities for intergenerational interaction and learning.	Media educators in different sectors (incl. early childhood education, schools and educational institutions, libraries, youth work, museums), the scientific community.
Developing targeted media education practices, training courses, materials, services, contents and operating models of media education that take into consideration different children and young people.	Media educators in different sectors, NGOs, the media sector.
Developing practices, training courses, materials, services, contents and operating models for emerging target groups and areas of media education (including children aged under 3, playing of digital games, children and young people in media productions).	Media educators in different sectors, NGOs, the media sector.
Encouraging and supporting local communities in renewing their operating methods and creating and mainstreaming media education operating cultures, for example through targeted training.	Local government and planning work in municipalities and units, authorities, NGOs.
Encouraging and supporting media education actors in creating their own or shared quality criteria for promoting good media literacy at the local, regional and national level.	Authorities, NGOs, local government and planning work in municipalities and units.
Developing and implementing various means of increasing awareness of media education.	The media education authority, NGOs, the media sector, the scientific community, higher education and other educational institutions and media educators in various sectors.

Goal 2: By means of legislation, funding and national and municipal level steering, sustainable structures for the promotion of media literacy will be ensured.

Actions that promote the achievement of this goal	Parties that can have a special role in implementing the actions
Systematically monitoring the impacts of the audiovisual programmes legislation reform and changes in the audiovisual programme market, children and young people's media environment and other changes in the operating environment.	Ministry of Education and Culture in cooperation with the sector.
Finding out how the copyright system influences the implementation of media education (e.g. performance rights in teaching)	Ministry of Education and Culture in cooperation with the sector.
In cultural policy, the promotion of media literacy and media education will continue, and the Children and Media programme actions will be updated.	Ministry of Education and Culture.
In youth policy, media education will be taken into consideration as part of promoting the active citizenship of young people. Allocating youth work appropriations to assisting actions and projects that develop youth work and activities through media education.	Ministry of Education and Culture.
In addition to government and local authority funding, making use of various sources of funding (e.g. foundations) and the European Union Structural Funds programmes in developing media education.	National organisations, higher education institutions, regional and local actors.
In the process of reforming the core curricula for early childhood education and general education (pre-primary and basic education, secondary level, basic education in arts), the promotion of good media literacy will be taken into account.	Ministry of Education and Culture, National Board of Education, municipalities, units.
Promoting good media literacy will be incorporated in municipal level planning documents (incl. plans for arranging and developing welfare services for children and young people), unit level plans and plans for individual children and young people.	Local government and planning work in municipalities and units in different sectors (incl. early childhood education, schools and educational institutions, libraries, youth work, museums)
Media education will be stepped up in the basic education of professionals in different sectors. Opportunities will be provided for continuing education of professionals in the field.	Higher education and other educational institutions in various sectors (including education in the media and libraries sectors, in the cultural, youth, social and health care sector and teacher education for all levels from early childhood education to the secondary level), authorities
The needs for building up and maintaining the knowledge base of media education nationally, regionally and locally and the possibilities of developing indicators for media literacy and media education will be established.	The scientific community, authorities

Goal 3: The activities and various media education actors will become profiled, networks will be reinforced and new partnerships will be created in the area.

Actions that promote the achievement of this goal	Parties that can have a special role in implementing the actions
The media education agency will be profiled as the national centre for media education in versatile cooperation with other authorities and actors, taking into consideration existing actors and activities. The agency's media education activities will be made predictable and transparent through the agency's strategy and other documents that guide its operation.	The media education agency, the Ministry of Education and Culture
Versatile and safe content and services for children and young people will be produced. Access to media contents and services will be ensured for different children and young people. Children and young people themselves will increasingly participate as producers of media and be involved in media productions. Through the visibility offered by media, key target groups for media education, including parents, will be reached.	The media sector.
Practical media education work will be supported by offering training, materials and other services nationally. Participation in public debate on media education will be encouraged.	NGOs.
The interdisciplinary knowledge base of media education will be strengthened and maintained. In addition to producing scientific information, information will also be spread and popularised for media education actors, for example through publications and seminars. Research-based working methods for development will be produced.	The scientific community.
Media literate professionals will be educated for the field of media education. Promoting good media literacy will be taken taking into account from the angles of approach of various sectors both in basic and continuing education.	Higher education and other educational institutions.
The special competence and areas of strength of media educators will be improved, e.g. by mapping good practices and networks in different sectors.	Media educators in different sectors (incl. early childhood education, schools and educational institutions, libraries, youth work, museums), local government and planning work in municipalities and units.
Media education will be planned and implemented in broad-based cooperation and in different combinations nationally, regionally and locally. Existing effective cooperation structures (e.g. schools and libraries) will be modelled, and bold experimentation with new ideas will be encouraged (e.g. partnerships between NGOs and the private sector).	The media education authority, NGOs, the media sector, the scientific community, higher education and other educational institutions and media educators in various sectors.
Regional media education will be strengthened by setting up permanent networks and hubs in the regions, taking existing actors into consideration.	Regional and local actors, the media education agency.

Goal 4: Finland will play an active role in global media education activities.

Actions that promote the achievement of this goal	Parties that can have a special role in implementing the actions
Supporting children and young people in getting their voices heard and promoting the visibility of media content produced by them in international forums.	All.
Taking part in Nordic, European and international cooperation, for example through networking, development and research activities and conferences.	All.
Continuing Finland's participation in the European Union's Safer Internet network.	The media education agency, NGOs, the media sector, the Ministry of Education and Culture.
Exerting influence at the global level by being involved in planning and implementing new openings to promote good media literacy.	The scientific community, NGOs, authorities.
Sharing information about Finnish activities in various international forums.	All.

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