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## **Background Document on National MIL Policies and Strategies in Serbia**

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## **I. Purpose of the Background Document**

The Background document aims to offer policy and strategic framework of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) development in Serbia based on an overview analysis of MIL related policies and practice based on UNESCO MIL Policy and Strategy Guidelines. The purpose is to create a starting point for the discussions that will be held during national consultations on national MIL policies and strategies in Serbia. National consultations are organized to enable a cross-sector debate on MIL in Serbia and initiate the process of creating specific policy recommendations on integrating MIL in the formal, non-formal, and informal education system for different stakeholders.

### **From Background Document to Position paper**

Upon discussions, recommendations and feedback gathered during the process of national consultations in cooperation with all MIL stakeholders, this Background Document will be developed into *Position Paper on MIL in Serbia*. The Position Paper will reflect and present specific multi-stakeholder policy and strategy recommendations on MIL enhancement and development in Serbia.

### **Media and information literacy (MIL) as a composite concept**

This documents refers to the Media and information literacy (MIL) as the composite concept as described by UNESCO that recognizes the functions of media and information sources in our personal lives and in democratic societies<sup>1</sup>. It promotes the individual's right to communicate and express, and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas. It encourages the evaluation of information and media content based on how they are produced, the messages being conveyed, and the intended audience (Wilson et al, 2011), as well as people's own experiences and interaction with information. While policy and strategy in Serbia often makes distinction and focuses on either media literacy or information literacy, this document will

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<sup>1</sup> MIL concept presented in this paper is a complex, multi-layered concept that includes "knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Grizzle & Torras Clavo, 2013: 13), as lifelong learning competencies, needed for all citizens in contemporary digital environment and mediatized everyday life (Kaun & Fast, 2013).

provide recommendations in the holistic manner, applying the composite concept of MIL. **Why is the multi-stakeholder approach crucial**

A multi-stakeholder approach *sets strategic directions for MIL development* while harmonizing policies in relevant sectors (e.g. media sector, education sector, ICT sector, youth sector, gender rights sector, minority rights sector, children rights sector etc.) with MIL objectives. Together they form a *favorable environment for MIL development* in formal, nonformal and informal education as a holistic perspective for life-long learning (La Belle, 1982). Negotiation and dialogue between these sectors upon agreed values and standards is dynamic and necessary in the process of achieving key MIL objectives<sup>2</sup>.

## **II. Brief introduction to how is MIL conceptualized in this document**

Media and information literacy (MIL) concept offered in this document is a composite concept. As a composite concept and it recognizes and encompasses various literacies (e.g. news literacy, advertising literacy, film literacy, television literacy, computer literacy, digital, game literacy, social networks literacies, information literacy, etc.) as well as competencies needed for access and use of contemporary communication technologies, media and other information sources. MIL concept also implies development of knowledge that increases democratic attitudes and communication values based on protection of freedom of information (FOI) and freedom of expression (FOE). Since that the process of informing and transforming information into knowledge is complex, UNESCO proposed conceptual model of MIL that identifies four key areas which are presented in the four circles that build on each other and “illustrate the dynamic interaction among the various competences which comprise MIL” (Grizzle & Torras Clavo, 2013: 55). At the center, first circle represent all *information sources and the means* by which information is communicated (e.g. media, internet, libraries, and other communicators, individual or institutional) in the “information society” (Frau-Meigs, 2011;

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<sup>2</sup> Some of them are: building democratic, human rights based, inclusive, pluralistic, economic sustainable and knowledge driven societies. MIL strategy as a “crossing policy” embeds MIL in five key policy areas: MIL itself, education, access to information, media and ICT (Grizzle & Torras Calvo, 2013:13).

Fuchs, 2013; Webster 2014)<sup>3</sup>. The second circle represents citizens' information needs or the *purpose of their information use and their engagement with the media and other information providers* such as problem solving, decision making, entertainment, learning or cultural and political participation. The third circle represents *basic knowledge needed for understanding all forms of media and information providers* such as: roles, functions, operations, professional standards, obligations and rights, etc. The fourth circle represents *basic competences for all citizens for efficient and responsible communication* with individuals, media and other information providers in society, which includes critical use and ethical creation of information and media.

### **III. Toward a development framework (context) for MIL policies and strategies in Serbia**

In Serbia, similarly to other countries in South East Europe (SEE) region, European Union (EU) integration processes opened up possibilities for fundamental changes in the development of MIL policies and strategies, especially in the media and education sector<sup>4</sup>. Many stakeholders are taking roles in these processes: ministries in charge of education, media, culture, CSO sector and also representatives of the international community such as EU, OSCE, USAID, UNESCO and others. The level of MIL development in the SEE region is different for each country, but most commonly the governments are taking a “top down” approach through policy and strategy development while CSOs took a leading role in promoting MIL “bottom up”. They are active in different ways, such as delivering trainings, raising the awareness about the importance of MIL and its aspects, and creating spaces for dialogue through connecting various stakeholders from governmental and non-governmental side. It is a synergetic and mutually beneficial approach. As the theory implies, the evidence from practice shows that MIL implementation is most successful where various stakeholders share a vision and work collaboratively to achieve it through sharing knowledge and resources (Grizzle & Torras Calvo, 2013: 24). In this context, media and information literacy is, within the last five years, becoming

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<sup>3</sup> Further information on other circles in the proposed UNESCO's conception of MIL and main approaches is available in Annex I.

<sup>4</sup> Brief review of MIL development in SEE region is available in Annex II.

a focus of public debates both in media, information sector and technology. However, while there is more attention to MIL, this is still an underdeveloped area.

Serbia does not have an explicit MIL policy and strategy, but some of its aspects are recognized as important in different policy and strategy documents. In strategic documents it has been recognized as a necessity it is important issue of public debate and at the level of designing policy and strategic framework for its further development. As the Republic of Serbia is in the accession process to the European Union (EU) the concept of media literacy<sup>5</sup> is widely recognized as a part of this process. Many strategic and policy directions recognize empowerment of specific social groups but practice shows that various incentives need national coordination by taking a multi-stakeholder approach that will include all interested social actors and all citizens within comprehensive MIL framework.

Freedom of the media is prerequisite and indicator of freedom of information and freedom of expression. As stated in the “Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Indicative Strategy Paper for Serbia (2014-2020)<sup>6</sup>”, although Serbia had a media strategy and an action plan for the period 2012-2016, there has been very little progress and then decrease in terms of freedom of expression<sup>7</sup> and the slowdown in implementation of the action plan of Media Strategy in period 2014-2016<sup>8</sup>.

Having in mind that Serbia is a country of various minorities (religious, ethnic, sexual and other) whose rights are already recognized in the Constitution, specific strategies and policies,

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<sup>5</sup> EU framework refers to media literacy, and not to the composite concept media and information literacy. See: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 20 December 2007 - A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment [COM(2007) 833 final].

<sup>6</sup> European Commission (2014) Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Indicative Strategy Paper for Serbia (2014-2020). Adopted on 19/08/2014, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhoodenlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2014/20140919-csp-serbia.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhoodenlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2014/20140919-csp-serbia.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> According to Media Sustainability Index objective score for Serbia in freedom of speech was 2.00 (2012), 2.03 (2013), 2.06 (2014), 1.94 (2015), 1.89 (2016). See more at <https://www.irex.org/resource/media-sustainabilityindex-msi>. According to World Press Freedom Index Serbia was in 54<sup>th</sup> place in 2014 (with the score 25.05), 67<sup>th</sup> place in 2015 (27.66) and 59<sup>th</sup> place in 2016 (27.60). See more at <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>.

<sup>8</sup> To read more about analysis of the implementation of the Media Strategy (2012-2016) in Serbia, see: Stojković, M & Milanović, J (2016) „Medijska reforma nakon pet godina od usvajanja medijske strategije: presek stanja i preporuke za budućnost“.

MIL could serve as a tool for continuous intercultural dialog (Carlson & Hope Culver, 2013). Other important actors in delivering MIL to general public, such as memory institutions (museums, libraries and archives) have already initiated projects that contribute to the development of knowledge-based society. Policy and strategic framework offered here could assist in supporting and strengthening their initiatives.

Faced with global realities of fake news emerging mainly through social media by different information providers (individual and institutional) and in the abundance of information in which it is sometimes difficult to locate trustworthy sources of information, requirements for new competencies have been raised also for the citizens as users of media and ICT. In the environment with countless communicators, MIL skills, knowledge and attitudes available to all citizens assist in everyday negotiation of the rules of communication that nurture tolerance, democratic dialog and the respect of the rights of others. Rising MIL competencies for all citizens assist in building trust in media and all other contemporary information sources (individual and institutional) which provide political stability, cultural wealth and economic growth. Research in the digital environment indicate the different types of violations of freedom of expression, frauds and the different forms of pressure: presenting untruths, insults, humiliation, threats and endangering safety, etc. “The attacks and pressures against journalists and individuals because of blogs, comments, or other forms of online expression results in anxiety not only to journalists and media organizations, but also to the broader online community, which today makes 60% of the Serbian population. Therefore, it appears that the citizens do not feel empowered and protected in the digital environment, which reduces the potential application of new technologies” (Share Fondacija 2016: 16)<sup>9</sup>. Women with the opinion are particularly vulnerable online. “It seems that violence experienced by many other women in the ‘real’ world has simply moved into the cyberspace without changing its basic nature.” (Antonijević, 2016: 10). On the other side, MIL programmes for youth are mostly focused on their protection in digital environment and less on their civic participation in matters that concern them and they are interested in. Since the civic participation is essential element of democratic life, development of MIL competences should be seen as complementary to the development of civic competences and civic engagement.

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<sup>9</sup> More about the situation in the media and the journalism profession in Serbia can be seen in: Stojković i Milanović, 2016; FOND ZA OTVORENO DRUŠTVO, 2015; Savet za borbu protiv korupcije, 2015; Lansner R, 2013; Matić, 2012; Milivojević (ur.) 2011; Milivojević i dr., 2012; Milojević i Ugrinić, 2011; Radojković, 2011.

Building trust in media is achieved when:

- a) People acquire MIL competencies
- b) Use these competencies to engage with media and demand quality
- c) Defend free, independent and pluralistic media in Serbia

## **IV. An Overview of MIL in Serbia**

As many recent comparative research results show, in South East Europe (SEE) and Balkan region particularly Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is insufficiently developed area, with small differences between countries<sup>10</sup>. In Serbia, like in some other SEE countries, some element of MIL are present in some parts of the legal framework and education curricula, but in practice, it is mostly fostered by the initiatives of the NGO sector (Turčilo & Tajić, 2015; Kanižaj & Car, 2015; Matović & Milin Perković, 2015; Frau Meigs at all, forthcoming 2017).

### **IV.1. POLICY ACTION - MIL IN RELEVANT POLICIES AND OTHER STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS**

#### **IV.1.a. MIL in Media policy**

Media literacy as a term entered for the first time official government policy document in the *Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia until 2016*, commonly referred as the Media Strategy, specifically in Paragraphs 6 and 9<sup>11</sup>. “This was one important step in the process of European integration and an important element of the political criteria which was noted in the *Commission Opinion on Serbia's application for*

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<sup>10</sup> See Annex II for more information on MIL in SEE and Balkans.

<sup>11</sup> New Media strategy is currently being developed and UNESCO and project partners of “Building trust in media in SEE and Turkey” are actively participating in this consultation process. Specifically, recommendations on Media and Information Literacy regarding the new Media Strategy have been drafted at the conference SpeakUp! Follow-up – Going towards contemporary media policy (“U susret savremenoj medijskoj politici”) held on November 17-18<sup>th</sup> in Belgrade, Serbia and organized by TACSO P2P Program, EU and Media Department of OSCE in Serbia, with the support of the EU Delegation in Serbia.

*membership of the European Union*<sup>12</sup>. In the new set of media laws, adopted in 2014 media literacy have been recognized as an important issue of a public interest<sup>13</sup>. The process of consultations for the development of new Media Strategy in 2016, led by OSCE in Serbia, had a comprehensive debate about the importance of stronger MIL inclusion. Within the framework of continuing consultations on the recommendations for a new media strategy in Serbia, on 10 February 2017 recommendations on media literacy prepared for the Media Strategy were unanimously adopted. They included: 1) inter-sectoral and inter-organizational cooperation; 2) innovating and creative projects for digitally literate generation for evolving occupations; 3) media literacy projects for digital natives, that will bridge the gap between their advanced computer literacy skills and insufficient media literacy competences; 4) media education projects for all target groups including media and educational professionals as a life-long learning process; 5) greater support for the audience research projects and those engaged in the public advocacy for media literacy. Participants suggested establishment of a fund for PhD students that would provide support for media literacy researches within doctoral theses; 6) creation of a portal with all information about the actors, activities and materials in the field of media literacy (tutorials, research results, textbooks, scientific papers and books, schedule of seminars, summer schools and camps.

#### **IV.1.b. MIL in Education policy**

The *Education Development Strategy in the Republic of Serbia until 2020* (adopted in 2012) is focused on the development of eight competences<sup>14</sup> and a lifelong learning, where media education and *media literacy* are implicitly assumed as an outcome. The strategy highlights the significance of the *information literacy*, stressing the role of the school libraries as study areas and resource centers for implementation of media literacy. This Strategy also presents the

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<sup>12</sup> With paragraph 12, Ministry of Culture committed to permanently support the research in the field of media literacy and media values and encourage the development of content related to media literacy.” (Matović & Milin Perković, 2014: 9).

<sup>13</sup> In the Paragraph II, Article 15 of the Law on Public Information and Media (2014). In the Paragraph II, Article 7 of the Law on Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) (2014) media literacy is only mentioned as one of the objectives of PSB relating to the public interest. Media literacy is not mentioned in the Law on electronic media (2014).

<sup>14</sup> European Union and the European Commission defined eight competences as a set of necessary ‘knowledge, skills and attitudes’ for life in a knowledge-based society are: communicating in a mother tongue, communicating in a foreign language, mathematical, scientific and technological competence, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression. See more at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:c11090>.

reality of the current schooling system, faced with many challenges: students are coming out of schools without sufficiently developed basic competencies that are crucial for the continuation of education and better management of own private and public life (Education Development Strategy in the RS until 2020, 2012: 33).

One year after the adoption of the Education Strategy, both media and information literacy were identified by the National Education Council of the Republic of Serbia as two of eight different literacies important in new media environment<sup>15</sup>.

Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development started in 2017 an important consultation process which is completed by adoption of the *Digital competence framework - Teacher for the digital age*. Digital competence framework is created in order to support teachers in the education system in Serbia in the process of integrating ICT and digital content into their teaching practice<sup>16</sup>. Nevertheless, Serbia does not have a single formulation of MIL nor explicit MIL policy.

#### **IV.1.c. MIL in Information policy**

Strong emphasis on the Information and Communication technologies (ICT) was given through the Digital agenda for Serbia. Specifically, the *Strategy of Development of Information Society in the Republic of Serbia until 2020* (adopted in 2010). The Strategy prioritizes implementation of ICT in educational programs, development of digital teaching materials and outlines, as one of the goals, a need for development of ‘knowledge and skills related to ICT’, which will respond to the demands of ICT driven society. The Action Plan adopted in 2013 planned development of new and improvement of existing services of Serbian digital library and promotion of digital literacy through competitions<sup>17</sup>. In June 2016, at the proposal of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, *The Decree on safety and protection of children in the use of ICT* was adopted and *The National Contact Center for Child Security on the Internet* (BIT) is established<sup>18</sup>.

The Law on the Library and Information Service (2011) highlights in Article 2 the importance of libraries as a “service of general interest” that “provide the conditions for the

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<sup>15</sup> *Information literacy* is placed at the center and surrounded by basic literacy, functional literacy, social literacy, visual literacy, media literacy, computer literacy and digital literacy (*Guidelines for improving the role of information and communication technologies in education*, 2013). *The Law on the Foundations of the Education*

*System* (2013) in Article 4 also implies MIL skills, through highlighting the need for developing “abilities of children and students to find, analyse, utilize and communicate information, while skilfully and effectively using information and communication technologies (...) to resolve problems, establish links between different segments of knowledge and skills and apply them”. In Article 43 of *The Law on Adult Education* (2013) media literacy is recognized as one of the important competencies of adults. In the Article 21 of *The Law on Elementary Education* (2013) cultural, media, technical, information and computer literacy, necessary for the continuing education and active involvement in the modern society are seen as one of the main objectives of primary education and pedagogy.

<sup>16</sup> See more at [http://www.mpn.gov.rs/okvir-digitalnih-kompetencija-nastavnik-za-digitalno-doba/..](http://www.mpn.gov.rs/okvir-digitalnih-kompetencija-nastavnik-za-digitalno-doba/)

<sup>17</sup> According to the Action Plan during 2013, the “Click Safely” Safer Internet Centre was founded and *Guidelines for improving the role of information and communication technologies in education* were adopted. Recommendations addressed: inclusion of media literacy in the objectives of education, educational outcomes and standards of educational achievement; uprising digital, media, information and informatics literacy among students and teachers; the use of ICT and Web 2.0 technologies in classrooms and promotion of the role of libraries and librarians in the process of integrating ICT into the education system. (Nacionalni prosvetni savet RS, 2013). *The Law on Information Security* was adopted in January 2016.

<sup>18</sup> More about activities of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication see in Annex IV. realisation of the rights of the people to freedom of expression and to acquire and utilise knowledge”. Law addresses development of librarian networks, international cooperation and digitalisation of library and information materials and resources, but it addresses nowhere the function of developing information literacy. Since, such initiatives exist, albeit sporadically, they surely open the space for designing policy directions.

#### **IV.1.d. MIL in other related policies**

Strategies relating to the raising of equality and empowerment of specific social groups in Serbia take into account the important role of the media. *The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020* confirm the disadvantaged position of women in different areas of social and political life, among which is the media. MIL is not explicitly included in this Strategy, but it is implicitly recognized through measures that are offered in public, media and educational sector. *Strategy for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (2013-2018)* highlights necessity for building the culture of tolerance and respect toward members of vulnerable social groups. *National Youth Strategy 2015-2025* stresses the importance of equal access to ICT and of the development of digital and informatics literacy. It also sets objectives in order to improve position of youth in society, and particularly *in* and *with* the media. With the establishment of youth offices (Kancelarije za mlade) throughout the country, local Action plans for youth present an opportunity to involve youth into projects that are related to MIL.

#### **IV.2. OTHER ACTIONS:**

## MIL IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF DIFFERENT ACTORS

### IV.2.a. MIL in formal education

On the faculty level, *Media literacy* was introduced in 2005 as an optional course at The Teacher Training Faculty, University of Belgrade. Today, about 130 different study programmes include courses in the fields of media education or education for media in universities, faculties and colleges in Serbia. All of them could be divided in two groups. First group of programmes are aimed for students in the fields of arts, applied arts, media and new media technologies. The second group of programmes are developed for future education experts and teachers. In this second group, today there are 22 different courses that focus on information and media literacy and children`s interaction with the media. Most of them are optional, no matter at what educational level are offered (BA, MA or PhD) and three are mandatory<sup>16</sup>.

Professional development and training of teachers, professional associates and directors are regulated by the Article 129 of *Law on the Basis of the Education System*. Teachers have the obligation of attending professional development courses, which provides for opportunities in MIL Education.

The official *Catalogue of programmes for continuous teachers` and educators` development* for the period 2016-2018<sup>17</sup> has so far 18 seminars specifically related to MIL while 158 seminars are focused on ICT (Information and Communications Technologies). Among them majority (140 seminars) address media and ICT usage in class and schoolwork in general, while there is a gap for digital and information literacy and development of critical thinking skills<sup>21</sup>. Most of these courses or seminars are held by accredited<sup>18</sup> civil society

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<sup>16</sup> There are *three mandatory* subjects concerning media education: *Education for Media* (at the Teacher Education Faculty in Belgrade, mandatory for future school teachers), *The Role of Media in Children`s Education* (International University in Novi Pazar, mandatory for preschool teachers) and *Media Education* (Faculty of Philosophy in Niš, mandatory in the department of Sociology). See more details in Annex III.

<sup>17</sup> The survey was conducted for the purpose of this document; the analysis of the Catalogue for the previous period is available in Matović & Milin Perković, 2014. <sup>21</sup> See more details in Annex III.

<sup>18</sup> These seminars and courses are accredited by the *Institute for the Improvement of Education*, established by the Republic of Serbia in 2004 with the purpose to monitor, secure and improve the quality and development of educational system. This institute prepares database (<http://www.zuov.rs/>) of accredited programmes for professional development of teachers (kindergarten, elementary school and high school). All interested actors and organisations may submit their applications for accreditation.

organizations, professional associations and regional centres for professional development of educators.

At the elementary and secondary schools level MIL related issues are only incorporated within optional course Civic Education and only encompass students that opted for this subject as opposed to the Religious education. Specifically, modules on MIL are present in the fourth grade of high school. These classes are mainly focused on news media and news literacy, and delivered more explicitly to students at the final years of both educational cycles. Partnerships have been established in the past with CSOs (Gradjanske inicijative) and universities that trained teachers on media literacy. Some issues related to MIL or media literacy specifically exist in the mother tongue classes. Digital literacy is meant to be delivered within the primary school course Technical and Informatics' Education (mandatory), with another optional course being Informatics and Computer sciences.

#### **IV.2.b. MIL and the role of different actors**

There are a lot of “top-down” and “bottom-up” different initiatives related to MIL in Serbia. Still, most of them were one-year projects initiated by CSOs and funded by relevant ministries, European or international donors. This document will address just some of them in order to illustrate policy recommendations and main strategic directions.

#### **Actions from the government**

Among governmental actors, several MIL related initiatives were important in shaping favorable environment for MIL development on national level. Former Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society started in 2009 a campaign for improving children's online safety and rising awareness among children, youth, their parents and educators. Within this campaign child-friendly site *kliknibezbedno.rs* was launched. In 2010 it started project *Digital Schools*<sup>19</sup> which included equipping of computer equipment and software of 1,144 primary schools 69 orphanages and boarding homes, and over 2,800 school facilities<sup>20</sup>. The Ministry of Youth and Sport started in 2013 National Campaign against the hate speech on the Internet (*No Hate Speech*) launched in the context of a global campaign of

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.digitalnaskola.rs/>

<sup>20</sup> See more about project “digital schools” and other governmental initiatives in Annex IV.

the Council of Europe. This campaign was carried in cooperation with eight youth organizations from civil society.

Besides regular activities and distribution of resources to finance projects in media and media literacy, Ministry of Culture and Information started in September 2016 the pilot campaign “If You Have Something to Say – Say It” which includes activities related to education of secondary school students selected to participate and their teachers about media literacy.

### **Regulatory and Self-regulatory bodies**

Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media (REM) regulates electronic media, the field of broadcasting media, defines criteria to media, monitors their work and warns broadcasters if they do not abide by the law and the general legally binding instructions. At the initiative of UNICEF and the Association of Journalists of Serbia (UNS), REM established criteria for content rating, which includes a media literacy campaign<sup>21</sup>. In March 2015 REM adopted bylaw *The Regulations of Protection of Minors in a Converged Media Environment*.

The Press Council as an independent, self-regulatory body is established for monitoring the observance of the Journalist’s Code of Ethics. Aside from addressing breaches of the Code, its mandate is to raise public awareness about violations of the journalistic code of ethics in the news media and to actively work on issues such as freedom of information, freedom of expression, discrimination in the media coverage etc. According to “Monitoring report of the observance of the Journalist’s Code of Ethics in daily newspapers from March the 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2016”, in 5477 articles at least one item of the Code was violated. There has been a drastic increase in the number of Code violations compared with previous year data (3219 news articles in 2015). The most frequent violations of the Code are related to the truthfulness of reporting, journalistic attention and the privacy of the persons being reported<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> The whole campaign is visible at <http://www.tvoznake.rs/>, while media literacy campaign is visible at [www.recinam.rs](http://www.recinam.rs). <sup>26</sup> See more in „Izveštaj o monitoringu poštovanja Kodeksa novinara Srbije u dnevnim listovima u periodu od 01. marta do 31. decembra 2016. godine“ at: <http://www.savetzastampu.rs/doc/monitoring-2016/izvestaj-omonitoringu-postovanja-kodeksa-novinara-srbije-u-dnevnim-stampanim-medijima-mart-decembar-2016.pdf>.

## **Information intermediaries**

Libraries, as well as other memory institutions like museums and archives are traditional and thus natural environment for the development of information literacy. One of the major steps in promotion of media and information literacy was the conference “Media and Information literacy in knowledge society and libraries” organized by the Serbian Library Association in October 2014 which brought together diverse experts and librarians.

Institute for cultural development (*Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvitka*) before more than 30 years has launched the projects *Atlas of Culture of Serbia* visual encyclopedia of culture. With the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia and long-term cooperation with cultural institutions, Institute also started the project *Geocultural map of Serbia* - electronic database of cultural institutions. Since 2001 Institute is continuously developing information system e-Culture<sup>22</sup> that represents the most comprehensive database of cultural institutions in Serbia.

## **CSO sector**

CSOs had a leading role in ‘bottom-up’ approach to MIL development. Their main role is connecting different stakeholders (researchers, governmental institutions, other CSOs, schools etc.) with the aim of raising awareness and various MIL related issues and MIL capacities. One of the most important contribution of CSOs in promotion of MIL are their research initiatives and cooperation with academy and researchers in the country. These various researches on important media related topics helped MIL to become visible in public and, in that way, encouraged its improvement. CSOs and their donors in SEE have a key role in fostering the cooperation and wider discussion about media literacy as well as in providing teaching resources, knowledges and skills related to MIL<sup>23</sup>.

When it comes to professional associations, they are very active in MIL related projects in different ways. As an example of joint initiative certainly is the *Campaign for Media Literacy* – a fifteen-month project to strengthen and support the democratization of Serbian society by promoting media literacy and independent and accountable journalism implemented by the

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<sup>22</sup> <http://e-kultura.net/o-projektu/>

<sup>23</sup> For more about the role of CSOs, their projects and research findings, see Annex IV.

Media Coalition<sup>24</sup> and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Within the campaign, in January 2014 *Online Resource Center* ([www.medijskapismenost.net](http://www.medijskapismenost.net)) was opened with plenty of materials for educators, parents and caregivers, high school students and journalists<sup>25</sup>.

### **Private sector**

When it comes to private sector, in most of SEE countries, the most active companies in private sector are computer software companies which provide educational tools in digital literacy for different age groups. In Serbia, publishing house CLIO is an exception and an example of good practice because, for almost a decade, it implements the project *Internet - Transforming School Libraries* in high schools in Serbia. Here students with their teachers provide multimedia contents based on the books they read from CLIO's Multimedia library. Also, CLIO's Multimedia library is one of a kind in the country. Private media companies are generally not involved in MIL in Serbia.

## **V. Suggested National MIL Policy Statements that should guide strategic development**

Results of policy analysis show that Serbia has taken important steps in developing MIL competencies. However, it is also evident that current strategies do not ensure MIL for all people. Mechanisms for engagement of different actors need to be strengthened, using the resources that already exist, but also by creating and developing new ones. In designing future MIL policies and strategies, it is necessary to emphasize the relevance of issues concerning gender equality, discrimination and youth participation. Below are suggestions of what policy and strategy statements could be considered in MIL policy.

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<sup>24</sup> Media coalition is an informal partnership between five media associations in Serbia: three journalists' associations, Association of Local Independent Media (Local Press) and the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM). The Coalition was formed to advocate for the adoption and implementation of Serbia's Media Strategy, to increase the independence of the media, and to protect it from undue pressure. See more at: <https://serbia.usembassy.gov/news/2014/12-15-media-coalition-and-usaid-put-media-literacy-infocus.html>.

<sup>25</sup> This campaign included research on media literacy among high school students, teachers of Civic Education, journalists and journalism students as well as workshops, public events, webinars (available online), three educational brochures and ethical guidelines *Code of Ethics of Online Journalism* for journalists working online. See more about this project in Annex IV.

- **MIL provides essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that assist** in the protection and the encouragement of further development of democratic values, economic development and nation building.
- **Multi-stakeholder approach** facilitates consensus between various stakeholders on the vision of MIL development, key values and beliefs (personal, social and economic benefits of MIL) that enable further partnerships in delivering knowledge and organizing resources in order to achieve common MIL objectives and overcome existing and future challenges.
- MIL programmes should **take into account the already existing and emerging media and information technologies** that citizens can fully benefit from the media and technology they already use in order to informed responsibly and actively participate in their societies and cultures.
- MIL programmes should provide **knowledge, attitudes and skills to all citizens** to critically use and engage with media and other information providers as a part of a life-long learning process and within the framework formal, informal and non-formal education.
- MIL programmes should support development of the **open knowledge societies** including reformed libraries, diverse media which are free from external and internal influences, freedom of expression, freedom of information as well as open development (i.e. development characterized by accountability and transparency) and the benefits of human rights.
- MIL programmes should promote **social inclusion** and aim to reduce all kinds of the ‘digital gap’, ‘knowledge gap’ and ‘participation gap’ by providing opportunities for participation for those who are deprived and marginalized.
- MIL programmes should promote **gender equality** and women’s empowerment and to assist in the reduction of any kind of discrimination.

- MIL programmes should identify the **economic benefits** and expert development of skills, knowledge and attitudes related to media and information that can lead to new job opportunities and the development of existing and new industries.
- MIL programmes should promote **cultural dialogue** through and with media and information technologies by facilitating mutual understanding, through passing on tradition and cultures in new ways and through recognizing new cultural practices.

## VI. Framework for National MIL Strategies in Serbia<sup>26</sup>

### Goal 1:

#### POLICY HARMONIZATION FOR MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERATE CITIZENS

##### Strategies/objectives:

- **Review of existing and development of new policy and strategy** for systemic and systematic approach to MIL - with clear formulations, learning outcomes, values, desirable development directions, actions, the role of different actors and guidelines.
- **Harmonization of media literacy and information literacy as a composite concept (MIL)**. That also include balancing between ICT skills, information literacy and media literacy, so that one does not develop at the expense of another, as now is the case with ICT skills;
- **Setting of specific mechanisms for necessary multi-stakeholder approach** is associated with the encouragement of various co-operations between different stakeholders in order to make all needed MIL competencies (and programmes) available to all social categories within formal, non-formal and informal education context.
- **Designing the action plan and accompanying financial plan** with clear mechanisms that will provide support for: 1) *researches on MIL*, as they are the key for providing information on citizens' communication needs; 2) *increasing the number of trainers, educators and librarians* with ability to teach MIL in primary, secondary, schools and in higher education institutions; 3) Integration of MIL in primary, secondary and higher levels of education as competencies for all; 4) sustainability and further development of projects that are recognized as *examples of good practice*; 5) *new innovative projects* on MIL across the country. - Establishing support through a **network of MIL practitioners and teachers** as well as organizations at the community, national and international levels to encourage collaboration and continued upgrading of competencies in informal learning context.
- **Setting MIL indicators as well as monitoring and evaluation instruments** to assess progressive integration of MIL. Indicators should include environmental factors (policy

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<sup>26</sup> For a more detailed explanation and justification of the strategic proposals, see Annex V.

framework, media system, educational system, ICT sector and access to information) and individual MIL competencies.

- **The appointment of responsible organisations to lead** implementation of the MIL strategy objectives, development of indicators, national research, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

Key Stakeholders: Ministries of education, culture, technology, youth; teacher training institutions; schools, universities and research institutions, CSOs, professional associations, community organizations, citizen groups, cultural institutions, libraries, memory institutions, private sector, etc.

## Goal 2:

### **HARMONIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF FORMAL EDUCATION SECTOR WITH MIL OBJECTIVES**

Strategies/objectives:

- **Review primary, secondary school, and higher education curricula** to accommodate MIL as a mandatory topic/subject.
- **Increase the number and/or visibility of MIL related courses in all academic years and levels of higher education** (BA, MA, PhD) for future teachers and educational experts. - Introducing MIL related courses **for future teachers of specific school subjects** e.g. history, geography, biology, sociology etc. that will empower teachers to improve their lessons in accordance with the needs of students.
- Identify and train if necessary **experts that can lead the process of curriculum adaptation**. -Developing of the **Pilot MIL Curriculum and Guidelines** for professionals, including teachers. Demonstrate that MIL can enhance new methods of teaching and learning inside the classroom, while creating a bridge with the everyday life outside of classroom.
- Identify existing and develop new suitable **textbooks and other teaching material**, both printed and online.
- Integrate MIL into schools' **extra-curricular activities** to complement formal classroom settings (MIL clubs, school journals, school radio, etc.)
- **Development of school libraries** (pre-school, elementary school, high school, faculty libraries) as crucial places for knowledge accumulation, research and analysis of all available information and media forms.

- Introduce MIL **cross-curricula**, through different subjects and with different thematic focus like gender equality, discrimination, stereotypes, minorities' rights, children's rights, etc.
- Introduce **new media** into classroom especially those that young people use most - social media (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, etc.).
- Conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Key Stakeholders: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development; Institute for the Improvement of Education; Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation; faculties; CSOs; memory institutions; professional associations; media professionals and media experts; research institutions and faculties; schools, private sector, etc.

### Goal 3:

#### RAISING AWARENESS AMONG POLICY MAKERS AND RESEARCHERS

Strategies/objectives:

- Enable **continued public debates on MIL**.
- Support to **seminars, conferences and meetings**, on national and local level, that bring together MIL experts and stakeholders with the aim to strengthen dialogue and gain insights from various points of view and various practices.
- Encourage and **set-up grants for longitudinal research on MIL**.
- **MIL trainings for policy makers**.

Key Stakeholders: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development; Ministry of Culture and Information; Institute for the Improvement of Education; Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications; PBS; CSOs; memory institutions; professional associations; media professionals and media experts; research institutions and faculties; cultural institutions; private sector, etc.

### Goal 4:

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MIL FOR ADULTS IN NON-FORMAL AND CONTINUING EDUCATION CONTEXT

Strategies/objectives:

- **Review and/or reformulate current policy guidelines.**
- Integrate **MIL within adult literacy programme** and continuing study programmes.
- **Encourage of all other currently invisible but interested stakeholders** that represent interests of different social groups, who are outside of the formal education system, to engage in MIL related projects e.g. local cultural organizations, student parliaments, especially associations of parents, pensioners, different ethnic and religious minorities, persons with disabilities, single parents, consumers etc. Current research results show that target groups of MIL related projects are more often children, youth and educators, than all other social groups or general public.
- **Strengthen the role of public libraries and other memory institutions** as crucial for delivering MIL to general public.
- Set up **civic associations of media public/users**, media watch groups, etc.

*Key Stakeholders:* Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development; Ministry of Culture and Information; Institute for the Improvement of Education; Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications; Ministry of Health; PBS; CSOs; memory institutions; professional associations; civic associations; regulatory and self-regulatory institutions; schools; cultural institutions; private sector, etc.

## **Goal 5:**

### **ENGAGING DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS IN MIL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **5.1. ENHANCE MIL AWARENESS AMONGST MEDIA AND INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS**

*Strategies/objectives:*

- Establish **mechanisms** and efficient information feedback system for fostering MIL **in media sphere and with media outlets** and self-regulatory bodies for building trust in media. - Support small and local media outlets to develop **cooperation with local schools and cultural centres** on MIL projects. Such cooperation would help small local media to survive, on the one side and schools/cultural institutions to obtain media professionals, journalists particularly, as valuable educators in their MIL projects, on the other.
- **As a part of their corporate social accountability** media industry could organize with schools the Week with the media (or news media/journalists specifically) and in connection

to the Global MIL Week organized by UNESCO and partners, and encouraged to provide programmes on various topics relevant for media users: meaning of the media content labelling system, effects of violence in media, effects of stereotypes on different basis, children's rights and the media, positive examples of advertising etc.

- **Media to make efforts to explain their workings to the public** and raise transparency of their operations.
- **Raise awareness in the media professions about the benefits of MIL.**

Key Stakeholders: media organizations/ information providers; media professionals; regulatory and self-regulatory institutions; PBS; CSOs; civic associations; Ombudsman; schools.

## 5.2. DEVELOPMENT OF MIL RESOURCE BASE

Strategies/objectives:

- **Improving position of memory institutions** (libraries, museums, archives etc.) as an information, and specifically knowledge, providers and assistants in life-long learning for all citizens, especially marginalized groups.
- Translate information literacy research and theory into **practical trainings and developing educational tools** for youth leaders, teachers and educators, parents and caregivers.
- **Trainings for librarians** on creating opportunities with other stakeholders for women/ girls, children and youth to express themselves and have their rights respected.
- **Interconnection of libraries** at the local, national level and international level to become main source of information on MIL, offline and online.
- Strategic cooperation between libraries, media and technological intermediaries.

Key Stakeholders: libraries; museums; archives; universities and research institutions; training institutions; CSOs; schools, etc.

## 5.3. MIL FOR EMPOWERMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Strategies/Objectives:

- **Research on impact of current media practice at children's health**, drug abuse, violence, democracy values, participation, etc.

- **Collaboration of media industry, libraries and children and youth sector.** The current situation shows that the media (especially private media) do not pay attention on the youngest audience: their representation in media content and the effects it has on children and youth.
- Respond to the need for **mechanism to engage parents and caregivers in MIL projects** since they are children's first role models and important educators in critical thinking, media and information evaluation as well as in privacy protection online, protection of a harmful content and responsible use of digital media and social networks.
- Respond to the need for **mechanisms to engage children who are currently excluded** from MIL projects: children in foster cares and orphanages as well as children (and their parents) - members of various minority social groups.
- Provide a **protective environment** in which children can make choices as media consumers that promote their development to their full potentials.

Key Stakeholders: Ministry of Youth and Sport; Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development; Ministry of Culture and Information; CSOs; private sector; professional associations; civic associations, cultural institutions; local governmental institutions, social service institutions; etc.

#### **5.4. MIL FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

Strategies/Objectives:

- Establishing mechanisms for **sustainable cooperation** with CSOs, media professionals, information intermediaries, and schools in MIL projects related to gender equality, violence against girls and women, representation of gender in various media content, examples of good practice etc.
- Establishing mechanisms to provide **MIL programmes with focus on gender to a wider public and different social groups.** As results of many researches show, women are invisible in the media, and when they are visible, they are portrayed stereotypically as the violence against the women.

Key Stakeholders: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development; Ministry of Culture and Information; Ministry of Youth and Sport; schools; CSOs; professional

associations; media professionals; faculties and research institutions; Ombudsman; private sector; libraries, media industry; etc.

## **5.5. MIL AGAINST DISCRIMINATION ON ANY GROUNDS**

### Strategies/Objectives:

- Various actors in CSOs, research institutions, faculties, journalists' associations already provide important insights about the practice in the field. Cooperation of these actors, on any specific topic, should be fostered as well as their cooperation with schools, school employees, parents and students in order to provide democratic attitudes and tools in making knowledgebased societies. Cooperation of CSOs and schools or other social actors could provide and already provide important MIL materials for all.

Key Stakeholders: Ministry of education, science and technological development; Ministry of culture and information; Ministry of youth and sport; governmental and non-governmental institutions; CSOs; minorities; schools; libraries and other memory institutions; professional associations; media professionals; faculties and research institutions; Ombudsman; private sector; media industry; education centres; general public..

## **5.6. MIL FOR OTHER IMPORTANT STAKEHOLDERS (Organizations and associations with specific local and thematic focus)**

### Strategies/Objectives:

- **Inform them about trends and directions in the media** and in emerging technology and, where possible, to encourage them to contribute actively in forming such trends and directions through participation in research/focus groups.
- Empower them as media users to be aware of the **feedback mechanism** with regulatory and self-regulatory bodies and procedures laid down for comment and complaints on media content.

Key Stakeholders: Ministries of Education, Science and Technological development; Ministry of Health, principals of secondary and primary schools, parents and teachers associations, school and public libraries, CSOs, etc.

## **I. Road Map to Adopt National Policies and Strategies in Serbia in 5-7 years. Sustainable MIL development:**

**Basic assessment of MIL programmes and related policies at national level**



**Debate with a wide audience of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders on national priorities that MIL programmes will support (through events such as national consultations with stakeholder groups before and after policy and strategy formulation) – ongoing.**



**Preparation of MIL policies and strategies or an adapted/tailored version of them through an iterative approach has already started. This is followed with the design of concrete interventions.**



**Preparation of Position Paper.**



**More debates on MIL policies and strategy development, taking into account the specific national context**



**Implement MIL policy and strategies while ensuring on-going monitoring and evaluation of the process.**



**Undertake comprehensive national assessment of the impact of the MIL policies and strategies implemented, on individuals and the country as a whole.**



**Document and share the experiences gained with wider society.**

Annexes provide more detail information about the topics represented in the Background document on National MIL Policies and Strategies in Serbia. Brief theoretical background and the research on MIL related policies and practice in the country is provided by researcher and MIL expert Marijana Matović. The country review offered in the Background document and described in more detail Annexes III, IV and V is based on national report “Media and Information Literacy Policies in Serbia, 2013” (Matović & Milin Perković, 2014)<sup>27</sup> and secondary analysis of other available research results and data on policies, practices and literacies related to MIL.

## **ANNEX I CONCEPTUALIZATION OF MIL**

Basic MIL competences could be divided in two specific outcome categories.

- *Information literacy* relates to one’s ability to: 1) define and articulate his/her need for information; 2) locate and access information; 3) use information critically; 4) organize information; 5) ethically use information; 6) communicate information; 7) use ICT skills for information processing.
- *Media literacy* involves competences related to one’s: 1) understanding of the role and functions of the media in democratic societies as well as 2) conditions under which the media can fulfill their role. It also includes ability to 3) critically evaluate media content having in mind media role and functions; 4) engage with media for self-expression, democratic participation and cultural dialogue; 5) acquire and use skills (including ICT) needed for production of UGC (Grizzle & Torras Clavo, 2013: 50).

UNESCO’s strategic and policy framework on MIL, bring together six key approaches that should be kept in mind when designing favorable MIL context: 1) convergence - a joined-up

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<sup>27</sup> Country report was part of the project “Media and Information Literacy Policies in Europe”, ANR TRANSLIT and COST “Transforming Audiences/Transforming Societies”, 2013. The report is available at [http://ppemi.enscachan.fr/data/media/colloque140528/rapports/SERBIA\\_2014.pdf](http://ppemi.enscachan.fr/data/media/colloque140528/rapports/SERBIA_2014.pdf). All country reports are available at <http://ppemi.ens-cachan.fr/doku.php>.

approach; 2) rights based approach; 3) a shift from focus on protectionism to empowerment; 4) a knowledge societies based approach; 5) a culture and linguistic diversity approach; and 6) a gender-based approach. Most of them are already included in basic strategic and policy documents in Serbia and this document will show how they could be incorporated into offered MIL strategy and policy framework.

Human rights based approach places citizens, their competences and participation, at the center of MIL policies and strategy. MIL empowers children and youth to enjoy their communication and participation rights responsibly<sup>28</sup>. It gives *children, parents and teachers* knowledges about media and information providers, skills to weigh risks and opportunities and use them critically. It empowers *minorities* to nourish and communicate their cultural identities. MIL also empowers *majorities* to nourish their cultural heritage while providing social and cultural diversity at the same time (Carlsson & Hope Culver, 2013). *Gender* development approach to MIL addresses issues of gender-based inequalities in communication area such as access to information, ownership, roles in communication and decision-making processes, representation and stereotypes, violence issues, etc. (IAMCR, 2014). Assisting in the development of sensitivity towards “others” MIL serves as engaging civic education “tool”.

MIL is complementary with the regulation system in media and digital environment. Whereas protection policies are urgent and necessary in digital environment (especially in areas such as data and privacy protection, reducing cyber-crime and cyber violence, eradication of child-pornography) they are not enough. For citizenship in digital age, MIL offers knowledges and skills that provide informed and responsible use of information and media sources as well as information and media content.

MIL assists in ensuring the free flow of information and the creation of knowledge-based communities. Knowledge is seen as a tool in the fight against poverty, exclusion and inequality. Knowledge societies are societies of shared knowledge (UNESCO, 2005). They are open for the exchange of information, ideas, values through various institutions and communication channels, while respecting privacy protection policies and intellectual rights policies. MIL is important in distinguishing between “useful” and “useless” information in citizen participation,

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<sup>28</sup> UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. sets the framework for communication and participation rights of which every child (every person under 18 years old) is the owner and gives them right to speak in their own name ” in all matters affecting the child (...)in accordance with the age and maturity of the child” (UN CRC, 1989, article 12). These are: right *to be heard* (Article 12), *to expression* (Article 13), *to freedom of thought, conscience and religion* (Article 14), *freedom of association and of peaceful assembly* (Article 15), *to privacy* (Article 16) and *access to appropriate information* (Article 17), (Milanović, 2010: 92-93).

decision-making processes as well as in gaining access to the labour market, education, health services, cultural institutions, etc.

## **ANNEX II BRIEF REVIEW OF MIL IN THE SEE AND BALKANS**

In South East Europe (SEE) Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is an underdeveloped area. Recent comparative researches (Car et al, 2014; Kožul, 2016; Frau-Meigs et al 2017<sup>29</sup>) show that EU and its policies have particular role in fostering media freedoms and MIL competences in these countries. CSOs took a leading role in promoting MIL “bottom up”. They are active in different ways, usually in raising the awareness about the importance of MIL and its aspects, connecting various stakeholders. “Most of them have unsatisfactory funds and work with limited finances or on voluntary basis; they are often focused on a particular media, issue or aspect of MIL s” (Matović, Juraite & Gutierrez, forthcoming in 2017). Higher education and research institutions are also very active in the MIL, as leaders or as partners (researchers or consultants) of the CSOs and other institutions. When it comes to formal education the importance of implementation of MIL in school curricula is an emerging trend in countries that “previously only had a tradition in film literacy. In these countries, MIL is recognized as a tool for democratization and an agent for soft change. But, MIL programmes for citizens in general are very rare, especially for elderly people.” (Costa, Car, & Papadimitriou, 2017). The most recent regional research on media literacy<sup>30</sup> (SEENPM, 2016) shows that the education systems in all researched countries are not keeping up with the changes and technology advance of the media industry. Media literacy is mentioned in policy documents but is not approached in a systematic manner as integral part of the education and knowledge for the general public. (SEENPM, 2016). While in some SEE countries the notion of MIL is present in some parts of

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<sup>29</sup> Forthcoming Publication (2017) “Public policies in media and information literacy in Europe “Frau-Meigs, Flores Michel & Velez (eds.) is the result of comparative research of country reports (28) on MIL policies in Europe, conducted in the year 2013 within the framework of ANR TRANSLIT and COST “Transforming Audiences/Transforming Societies”.

<sup>30</sup> This research has been conducted by the EU-funded Project "Partnership in Southeast Europe for the Development of the Media" in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The research has been conducted specifically on media literacy, and not media and information literacy.

the legal framework and education curricula, it is mostly fostered by the initiatives of the NGO sector (Turčilo & Tajić, 2015; Kanižaj & Car, 2015).

## ANNEX III MIL IN FORMAL EDUCATION

### 1. MIL at the faculties

As it is stated in the country report on MIL policies in Serbia (2014) state university faculties for teachers' education have introduced mandatory subjects dealing with mass communications and optional subjects in the fields of film and television culture since 1994/1995. *Media literacy* was introduced in 2005 as an optional course at The Teacher Training Faculty, University of Belgrade. About 130 study programmes include courses in the fields of media education or education for media in universities, faculties and colleges in Serbia. All of them can be divided into two groups. The first group are those developed for education of students in the fields of arts, applied arts, media and new media technologies<sup>31</sup>. The second consists of study programmes developed for future education experts and teachers<sup>37</sup> where majority of these courses are dealing with implementation of education technologies and ICT or audio-visual technologies and media in the school curricula<sup>32</sup>. There are also different courses that are not strictly focused on media, but media issues are part of the lectures. In 2013, only 15 programmes offered courses directly or explicitly related to critical studies of media or media literacy; 11 of those on state, and 4 on private faculties (the number of courses

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<sup>31</sup> As stated, this country report did not include: a) faculties that include courses and study programmes in computer sciences, ICT and programming; b) faculties of arts, including studies in film, music and visual arts, where media are incorporated both in terms of production and analysis; c) faculties dedicated to education of media professionals and journalists, where media production and understanding is also included in the curricula. These usually offer a number of courses that involve media creation and/or analysis and are important for media education on many levels, being that they produce experts that could become crucial actors in the development of media education awareness and policies. (Matović & Milin Perković, 2014: 15). <sup>37</sup> Faculties for future teachers, psychologists and pedagogues.

<sup>32</sup> Desk-research conducted for the purpose of this document shows that: Informatics in education, ICT in education, ICT in preschool education is the focus of 46 different courses offered in all study programmes on all teachers training faculties and schools, 16 of those are mandatory.

themselves is smaller, because a single course is often offered on several study programmes). Of these, only three (3) have mandatory courses related to media education in this context<sup>33</sup> (Matović & Milin Perković, 2014: 15).

## **2. MIL in continuous education for teachers and educators**

The official *Catalogue of programmes for continuous teachers` and educators` development*, (available at <http://katalog2016.zuov.rs/>), valid from 2016 to 2018<sup>34</sup> presents a total of 961 seminars for professional training, separated into different subject fields. Of those, 158 seminars are focused on ICT (Information and Communications Technologies), including various computer skills and media and information literacies development. These can be roughly divided into two groups.

The first consists of 140 seminars that address media and ICT usage in class and schoolwork in general. These include seminars teaching particular software application usage that help in teachers` everyday work and stress advantages of use of different media and technologies in classroom. Only a couple of those introduce Facebook and blogging as new teaching tools. However, they are mostly aimed at aiding teachers and educators in innovating the ways of presenting lectures and therefore mostly emphasize innovation, facilitating work and improving technical skills as their goals of introducing ICT and multimedia in class.

Another group consists of a relatively small number of seminars – 18 - concerning MIL. There are four (4) that stress importance of the role of libraries in management of new media and information literacies, two (2) about reading media and media literacy development, one aimed at the process of digital school newspaper making and three (3) about introducing film as a tool for class innovation and development of citizen values critical thinking. Also there are six (6) seminars are about Internet safety and violence, while two (2) approach new media technologies more broadly, referring to importance of both digital and information literacies. Inclusive education and individual education plan (IEP) is the topic of 74 seminars, while 21 seminars focus on human rights, youth participation, interculturality and gender equality.

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<sup>33</sup> See more about MIL in faculty programmes in Serbia at Matović & Milin Perković, 2014: 14-17.

<sup>34</sup> This desk-research is conducted for the purposes of this document; the analysis of the *Catalogue* for the previous period is available at Matović & Milin Perković, 2014.

### **3. MIL in elementary and secondary schools**

Within the formal education, “there is a tendency for implementation of media literacy knowledge and skills ‘across the curriculum’” (Matović & Milin Perković, 2014: 17). Media literacy has been a part of educational plan and program ever since 2005 as a part of three teaching units within Civic Education and mother tongue. *Civic Education* includes thematic classes that introduce the media education more explicitly (e.g. news literacy), at the end of primary education cycle. Since it is optional - offered as an alternative to *Religious Education*, students are not required to attend. Subjects related to media issues are focused mostly on strengthening critical thinking. Computer literacy is covered in Computer Science subjects. On the level of first to fourth grade, there is an optional subject *From Toy to Computer*, but it is up to the teachers’ interests and there is no information on the number of children that have chosen this subject. This subject is optional with two others in the group: *Ecology* and *National Tradition* and many teachers choose to do the latter.

Teaching resources and materials are provided by NGO and private sector, mostly as a result from specific project activities that included schools and educators. The National Education Council adopted the *Indicators for monitoring education in Serbia* (2011), but since there is no official media education strategy, systemic and systematic programme in Serbia, there are no indicators for it monitoring it.

## **ANNEX IV THE ROLE OF DIFFERENT ACTORS IN MIL**

### **1. Government initiatives in MIL**

Former Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society named the year 2009 as the year of the protection of children on the Internet and started a campaign for improving children’s online safety and rising awareness among children, youth, their parents and educators. Project was supported by the Ministry of Education and the Special department for high-tech crime of the Serbian Ministry of Interior. Within the project, child-friendly site *Click Safely* (Kliknibezbedno.rs) was launched. It provide needed information about online protection and responsible participation in the Internet communication. The Ministry of

Telecommunications in 2010 started project *Digital Schools*<sup>35</sup> which included equipping of computer equipment and software of 1,144 primary schools 69 orphanages and boarding homes, and over 2,800 school facilities. Since 2010, there is also competition named “Digital class“ for teachers, school teachers and subject teachers of primary schools who use ICT in teaching in a creative way. The aim of the competition is to encourage effective and diverse use of ICT in the teaching process. In the 2015/2016 cycle, 51 submitted works were selected for the award (from 383 applied): 17 in maths and computer science, 17 in social science, arts and sport and 17 in natural sciences.

*The Research on the use of ICT in schools in Serbia* showed that „System support in schools does not exist, but is conditioned by donations from local governments, occasional projects, collegial solidarity, support from parents and assist students. Due to unfavorable economic circumstances, planned approach to the procurement of equipment, software and digital materials lacking in most schools“ (Džigurski et al, 2013: 12). Teachers assessed that the maintaining equipment and keeping records on the state of the equipment is "the weakest link in the chain". This report draws attention to the role of libraries in schools which is still mainly traditional and refers to record-keeping and distribution of books. There is a lack of modern IT, ICT and MIL literature while digital teaching materials created by teachers are not systematically archived. „Equipment of schools with ICT is very different and varies in relation to the profile and size of the school, the level of economic development of the municipality where it is located, participation in development projects, the willingness of staff and parents to invest in the equipment, etc. This situation prevents the methodological approach to the procurement of equipment, software and digital materials, as well as equalized application of ICT in teaching (...) Important problems are related to competence for the use of existing equipment, its accuracy and availability for use in the teaching of all subjects. Digital / computer cabinets exist in all schools, but are not fully utilized.“ (Džigurski et al, 2013: 17).

The Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication also implements the program of connecting all primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Serbia to the Academic Network of Serbia (AMRES). Schools get stable, secure and free internet access, active protection and online support, as well as the ability to use international electronic education services. Compared to a commercial internet connection, the advantage of this connectivity, besides availability of the free internet, is the ability to block sites with harmful and

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.digitalnaskola.rs/>.

inappropriate content and all other unwanted sites. With this project, previously installed digital cabinets get their full functionality and further development of ICT infrastructure in schools in Serbia is enabled. The Ministry also implemented the project of extending the number of Eduroam access points in higher education and scientific institutions in 50 cities in Serbia, which now has over 180. Eduroam provides its users in a total of 82 countries with free access to secure internet at over 19,500 locations within the university, research institutes, schools, libraries, but also in public spaces such as airports, railway stations, etc.

In accordance with the *Decree on the Safety and Protection of Children in the Use of Information-Communication Technologies*, which was adopted by the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications adopted in June 2016, the *National Contact Center for Internet Security - BIT* was established. Through this center, the Ministry is conducting counseling for children, parents, students and teachers, as well as all other citizens, about the benefits and risks of using the Internet and the safe use of new technologies. Receiving reports of harmful, inappropriate and illegal content and behaviour on the Internet, i.e. reporting threats to the rights and interests of the child is made possible. Other relevant institutions and services are involved in the processing of these reports, depending on whether illicit content and behaviour violate the mental or physical integrity of the child (violence, intimidation, abduction, pornography, etc.), constitute a violation of rights, welfare, general integrity of the child, or pose a risk of creating dependence on using the Internet. The Ministry performs Child Safety Education on the Internet also by organizing seminars, workshops, presentations and information through printed, electronic and other media.

This Ministry has also launched an *IT Caravan* - educational platform to promote useful, creative and safe use of information technologies. *IT Caravan* is a carrier of the *campaign Smart & Safe*. This campaign represents the benefits of using the Internet and new technologies in education, business and communications, but also the dangers arising from their improper and unimportant use. First *IT Caravan* included primary school students. It was organized in the period from 20 April to 3 June 2016, and was dedicated to Nikola Tesla ta the 160th anniversary of his birth. There were 5000 schoolchildren attending school presentations, while thousands of citizens saw the promotion of this project at city squares. Fifteen cities was on the road map. Cities with the largest number of young people ages of 10 to 19 compared to the total population. These are: Novi Pazar, Leskovac, Vranje, Kruševac, Kraljevo, Jagodina, Požarevac, Smederevo, Vršac, Zrenjanin, Kikinda, Subotica, Sremska Mitrovica, Šabac and Loznica. The *IT Caravan* in 2017 promotes robotics and programming, encouraging young

people to develop digital skills through gaming and entertainment, as well as with knowledge of protection from risky situations on the Internet.

Ministry of Culture and Information is implementing the strategy of public information system development, which stipulates a possibility to introduce media literacy projects into the education system. “The Republic of Serbia shall encourage the development of media literacy by developing the citizens’ individual capacities to use, understand and critically evaluate the various aspects of media outlets and media content, as well as their social skills to competently use information and communication services” (advisor in the Ministry of Culture and Information cited in SEENPM, 2016). In project funding plan, media literacy is one of the criteria specifically for the co-funding projects that contribute to the development of media literacy. Through this mechanism, the Ministry financially supported mainly one-year projects of CSOs, local media and some youth and student organizations.

Pilot campaign “If You Have Something to Say – Say It” (“Ako imaš šta da kažeš – reci”) initiated by the Ministry of Culture and Information is focused on media literacy designed for high school students in Serbia and funded by the EU within project *Strengthening Media Freedom*. Creative solutions are based on conclusions stemming from direct discussions with high school students and their assessment of media culture and media literacy levels among their peers<sup>36</sup>. The web-site [www.recinam.rs](http://www.recinam.rs) opened within this campaign will serve as a rallying point for individual and group proposals on media literacy to students and their teachers who are interested in this topic. Three high schools from Belgrade, Sremski Karlovci and Paraćin took part in this campaign. By making proposals about improving the quality of school newspaper, producing a video about school and advancing technical quality of the school’s web-site, the three schools made their way to the partnership with campaign creators.

## **2. Regulatory and self-regulatory bodies in Serbia in relation to MIL**

After an extensive analysis of television programs implemented by the Department for monitoring and analysis (Služba za nadzor i analizu REM, 2013; UNS & UNICEF Serbia, 2013), in March 2015 REM adopted bylaw "The Regulations of Protection of Minors in a Converged Media Environment". Content rating system is based on self-regulation and the previous extensive research results showed that Serbian national televisions, to a large extent,

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<sup>36</sup> <http://europa.rs/media-literacy-campaign-in-serbian-schools/?lang=en>

have not respected the protection of minors which was guaranteed by the previous Law on Broadcasting. As a regulatory body, REM suggested a strategy for developing radio and audiovisual media services. There is a one paragraph about media literacy and the ways for approaching to media's contents. This strategy gives REM new competence and obligations. One of the obligations is analysing media market, analysing the needs of the media consumers, supporting media and journalistic professionalism as well as media employee's education.

The Press Council as an independent, self-regulatory body is established for monitoring the observance of the Journalist's Code of Ethics, solving complaints made by individuals and institutions related to media content. It brings together publishers, owners of print and online media, news agencies and media professionals. It is authorized to mediate between aggrieved individuals, institutions and editorial staff, and to pronounce public warnings in cases when ethical standards defined in the Journalist's Code of Ethics are violated. The Press Council is engaged in the education of media professional to act in accordance with the Journalist's Code of Ethics. The *Press Complaints Commission* consists of representatives of the Media Association, Local Press, Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia and the Serbian Association of Journalists and civil society.

### **3. MIL and Libraries**

One of the most demanding changes that Serbian libraries will be facing consists of implementing information literacy (IL), i.e. citizens that are prepared for lifelong learning in a world that is overloaded with information (Stokić & Vučković, 2010: 1). Web 2.0 services puts libraries and librarians in front of new challenges. In promoting existing services to younger population, librarians' job is to educate and inform students while they are still at school, before their enrolment to the University. From the end of 2009, the University Library started short courses for graduating high school students on how to search the electronic catalogue and on how to use e-services. (Filipi Matutinović, 2012: 84).

Academic librarians must have good and up-to-date library skills to be able to help faculty and research institution members as well as students in their intellectual work. As part of the activities of the Serbian Academic Library Association (SALA), librarians from the University Library „Svetozar Markovic“ conducted series of courses concerning Internet services, Electronic journals and databases, Citation indexes and bibliometric indicators. Every year on the General Assembly of Serbian Academic Library Association, academic librarians are

informed about new electronic resources and a plan of courses approved for the next year. In the period 2004-2011, more than 70 courses and workshops with more than 1300 attendants were held for SALA members. The courses included all types of electronic resources available in Serbia, authors' rights protection, citation indexing, and bibliometric evaluation (Filipi Matutinović, 2012: 79).

National Library in Kruševac in 2013 organized trainings for librarians, with international information literacy trainer Mr. Albert Berkhost<sup>37</sup>. In October 2014, Library Society in Serbia organized International scientific conference "Media and Information Literacy in the knowledge society and libraries". The aim of this conference was to enhance the quality of services and active participation in enabling media and information literacy to library users. As one of the outcomes of this conference, Serbia's Library Society published conference proceedings "Media and Information Literacy in the Knowledge Society and Libraries" (Crnogorac, 2016).

#### **4. MIL and CSOs in Serbia**

In Serbia, CSOs had a leading role in promoting MIL 'bottom-up'. In their projects, they connect different stakeholders with the aim of raising awareness and various MIL capacities mainly of children, youth and their teachers. "The main problem is that these projects participate only in selected number of schools, which deepens the differences between children (and their educators) in different schools" (Matović & Milin Perković, 2014: 21).

Most MIL programmes are focused on youth (15+) and their educators. Other categories of society are generally not included in them. Exception is The Novi Sad School of Journalism, as it provides media education to students with disabilities within the project "A Day in Your Shoes". *The Novi Sad School of Journalism* (NSSJ) is a leading non-governmental organization in the SEE region whose mission is increasing the professional standards of journalists and advocating media literacy for all. In 2006, it was among the first CSOs that provided professional development seminar "Journalism Workshop – Media literacy" for teachers and professors, accredited by the Institute for Advancement of Education and Upbringing, Republic of Serbia (from 2006). This school has its own library with over 2,000 titles in the field of media literacy and literacy for democracy, which is available to all project participants,

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<sup>37</sup> <http://www.bibliotekaplus.rs/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Krusevac-Izvestaj.pdf>

especially educators who come to the certified trainings in NSSJ. It also provides trainings and materials on minority languages.

Comparative analysis “Youth and Media” conducted in 2013 showed that most *youth organizations* in the region have never delivered trainings on propaganda identification and challenging. The highest share was noted in Serbia (79.3%) and the lowest in Montenegro (66.8%). Most youth organizations in the region *have never* delivered programmes aimed at explaining and deconstructing biased speech (76.5% in Serbia), trainings for youth journalists (72.4% in Serbia), trainings for youth on media monitoring and analysis (77% in Serbia) or trainings for youth on media uses (62.1% in Serbia), (Bozinoska & Bozovik, 2013: 34-36).

This research noted that “on regional level, 46.4% of youth rarely or sometimes *fear to comment* on websites. Level of fear among youth is *increased in cases of political commentaries*. Thus, 41.4% of youth rarely feel comfortable to publish their political views. In addition, 27.6% of them often or always feel uncomfortable to publish their political views.” (Bozinoska & Bozovik, 2013: 34). According to the research about activism and information gathering of youth in Serbia 91% of young people use Internet on daily basis, 89% of them use social networks. Internet is the main source for informing about every issue. Also, majority (88% ) of them do not leave comments on topics related to youth. This research showed that 73% of young people think that the media do not provide sufficient attention to young people.

(Ninamedia, 2016a: 39).

The study “Global Kids Online Serbia: Balancing between Opportunities and Risks: Results from the Pilot Study“ confirmed the central role ICT has in children’s lives. The age of going online is decreasing. Children prefer devices they own (mostly cell phones) because of accessibility and privacy. They use the internet primarily for communication and entertainment, and then to seek information. Skills and knowledge increase with age and the greatest difference is between children aged 9–11 and older children. Results show that every third child had some negative online experience during the previous year. Finding explicit sexual content is commonplace (two-thirds of children reported it). Among the youngest children, every third child stumbled upon explicit sexual content. Every third child has being exposed to some kind of aggression during last year. Children who spend more time online were more likely to be both aggressors and victims of aggression. (Popadić, Pavlović, Petrović, & Kuzmanović, 2016).

Recent research “Media Literacy in Niš High Schools” was carried out by the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš in cooperation with Media and Reform Center Niš and it encompassed 3688 respondents, out of which 1687 students of the final year of high school, 1206 parents and 795

teachers. Results show that more than 90% of respondents think that all population categories need media education. Regarding the media content on the Internet 47.1% of high school final year (and 45% of teachers) believes that the state should monitor and control media content on the Internet to stem the flow of negative information. Nearly half of students (and few teachers) believe that the media do not affect the formation of their attitudes on current issues, while 35.6% of them (and approximately 56% of their teachers and 45% of their parents) think that the media do have the power to change the course of events. Majority of students and teachers believe that all categories of society needs media education. However, 43.4% of students, 44.9% of parents and 45% of teachers said that they have never being involved in any media literacy program or lesson. Most of the students said that their teachers never use new media technology in classroom and do not encourage their students to use them in learning. Only 29% of students believe that schooling is modernized. “Students and their parents are of the opinion that introducing an additional course (on media literacy) already in elementary school would put a burden on students. Only teachers think that introducing media education is absolutely necessary (45.8%)”. (Media and Reform Center Nis, University of Nis, 2016:28).

## **5. MIL and professional associations**

The Media Coalition<sup>38</sup> and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have successfully completed the Campaign for Media Literacy – a fifteen-month project to strengthen and support the democratization of Serbian society by promoting media literacy and independent and accountable journalism. In January 2014, they have opened *Online Resource Center* [www.medijskapismenost.net](http://www.medijskapismenost.net) for educators, high school students and journalists. Teachers can find here resources, materials and lesson plans on topics related to media literacy for civic education. High school students can access materials on the nature and role of media in their lives. For journalists this site provide the online tools for their work. Journalists involved in this Campaign provided trainings and workshops on social media as well as public debates about the ongoing media reform. The project held 22 workshops with 211 trainees across Serbia, hosted 16 public events with more than 200 participants, created four webinars

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<sup>38</sup> Media coalition is and informal partnership between five media associations in Serbia: three journalists' associations, Association of Local Independent Media (Local Press) and the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM). The Coalition was formed to advocate for the adoption and implementation of Serbia's Media Strategy, to increase the independence of the media, and to protect it from undue pressure. See more at: <https://serbia.usembassy.gov/news/2014/12-15-media-coalition-and-usaid-put-media-literacy-in-focus.html>.

(available online), produced three educational brochures and ethical guidelines *Code of Ethics of Online Journalism* for journalists working online.

During the project, Media Coalition conducted in 2013 the research with 291 journalists, 350 journalism students, 2453 high school pupils in third and fourth grade and 133 teachers of the Civic education. The research included 58 high schools in 15 cities in Serbia. Main research findings showed that high school students think that the media have small to medium impact on them but higher impact on others (in literature, this is called: *third-person effect theory*). They also consider themselves as well informed about domestic and international events. However, the main indicator for objectivity of news was the number of media outlets that transmitted it. Results also showed that, in their own interpretation of these events, students rarely leave the frame and tone set by the mainstream media (Stamenković, 2013).

## **6. MIL and the private sector**

In most of CESEE countries, the most active companies in private sector are computer software companies, such as Microsoft and Samsung, which provide educational tools for children, parents and teachers and facilitate activities related to digital literacy for different age groups. “The global companies Microsoft and Samsung are the most mentioned among the private sector actors, followed by *no specified* Information Technology (IT) or Information and Communication Technology (ICT) companies and telecommunication companies.” (Costa, Car & Papadimitriou, forthcoming in 2017).

In Serbia, publishing house CLIO is an exception and an example of good practice because, for almost a decade, it implements the project *Internest - Transforming School Libraries* in high schools in Serbia where teachers and students make multimedia contents based on the books they read from CLIO’s Multimedia library (Matović, Juraitė & Gutiérrez, forthcoming in 2017). In 1997, it started with its Multimedia edition within which important books related to the media have been translated and opened the space for a domestic production of knowledge in this field. Other publishing houses also publish some media titles, but occasionally. For young citizens, publishing house Creative Centre publishes books for pre-school and primary school children about film and computer sciences.

## **ANNEX V JUSTIFICATION OF THE STRATEGIC PROPOSALS**

There are various activities on MIL in Serbia. CSOs, academic researchers and journalists' associations foster MIL “bottom-up” through research on various MIL related issues and trainings. The leaders within the governmental institutions in MIL projects are the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, the Ministry of Culture and Information as well as the Telecommunication sector. Together they shape and provide necessary framework for introducing MIL in all social spheres, especially educational. As the researches results presented in Annex IV show, different actors took various actions but they are still unrelated, unsystematic and unsustainable. Educational sector needs to be improved by systematic and systemic approach adjusted to different levels of education. In addition, with this amount of MIL related actors, mechanisms for sustainable cooperation is urgent. Media industry could be involved in the MIL related projects as a part of their ‘corporate social accountability’ and responsibility for their public.

Following research results in MIL policies and practice in Serbia, this document suggest defining **one comprehensive MIL Strategy** in order to provide needed **systemic and systematic approach to MIL** - with clear definitions, values, desirable development directions and the role of different actors. Following UNESCO’s approach to MIL and EU’s approach to media literacy, it highlights **a multi-stakeholder approach to MIL**. The various activities related to the MIL of different actors in Serbia, as the research results in Annexes show, need national framework that converge and is already complement to the existing regulation in media, education, telecommunication and other related sectors. The one comprehensive MIL strategy would *shift the focus* 1) from protectionism to the empowerment and participation; 2) *from* specificities of these related strategies *to* the citizens and their MIL competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) needed in the contemporary media environment, driven by the ICT; 3) *from* current various unrelated initiatives and projects *to* the provision of institutional mechanisms that will combine existing “bottom up” and “top down” approaches. It would also link theory to policy and practice setting parameters for further actions and decisions in this field. The empowerment of citizens in MIL competencies is a recommendation of every research conducted in this field, regardless of whether they have been focused on the formal, non-formal or informal learning context or on the specific issues that MIL as a composite concept unites (media literacy, information literacy, news literacy, ICT skills and digital literacy, gender, youth, the role of CSOs, the role of libraries etc.).

One comprehensive national strategy on MIL would join all already existing efforts (in policies and practice) related to MIL and provide **common national framework** for the new ones in a

changing media environment. It would set *clear consensus* of *different (governmental and non-governmental) stakeholders* on the *common vision and main directions* of MIL development in the country as well as *steps and mechanisms* needed to be taken by specific actors in order to approach MIL in systematically and systemic method.

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