

Date: 9 March 2017

Country: Serbia



The Media Diversity Institute Western Balkans participated at the [Consultation on National Media and Information \(MIL\) Policies and Strategies in Serbia](#)

The conference, held on 9 March in Belgrade, gathered multiple stakeholders to discuss Media and Information Literacy (MIL) in Serbia, to initiate the process of creating specific policy recommendations on integrating MIL in the formal, non-formal and informal education system and look for innovative and sustainable approaches to MIL.

The conference was organised by Media Education Center together with 3 relevant ministries and with the support of National Commission for UNESCO of the Republic of Serbia. Representatives of the Serbian government and the EU Delegation in Serbia expressed their support for further development and promotion of MIL, highlighting its importance for development of democratic societies and active citizenship.

Three topics were particularly addressed at the conference: the role of media, self-regulatory

bodies and information intermediaries, MIL as an education strategy in terms of development of critical thinking and the role of civil society in fostering MIL.

MDI representative Ivana Jelaca who moderated the discussion about the role of civil society, said that the civil society is particularly important because it can be the link between other stakeholders such as media, formal education institutions, government and citizens.

“We are currently exposed to constant changes which impose need for quick and efficient solutions and engagement of different stakeholders. We learnt about the post-truth era, alternative facts and fake news, but it seems that we have even fake media literacy. Since the new challenges are constantly imposed, we need efficient mechanisms and joint efforts to achieve results,” said Jelaca.

The civil society panel devoted a substantial attention to methods to engage audience and transfer the knowledge to different target groups. Although many MIL programmes target youth, adults are also recognised as an important target group equally demanding in terms of the approach. Some of the participants highlighted the potential of intergenerational learning.

It was recognised by the participants that there is a gap between the digital skills and the media and information literacy skills – young people tend to have relatively well developed digital skills; more needs to be done in terms of the critical evaluation of information and meaningful and responsible usage and creation of contents.

The role of media is essential, as stressed out by many participants, especially of public service broadcaster that has the potential to reach those who are not online but still need MIL skills to be able to make an informed decision and meaningfully contribute to decision making processes. Participants have also discussed the ways to include citizens in watchdogging the media and report their wrongdoing.

The conference was organised as part of EU-UNESCO funded project “ [Building trust in media in South East Europe and Turkey](#)

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