



Second Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations
Istanbul, Turkey, 6-7 April, 2009
Working Session 8

Citizenship for the Information Society: Media Education and Civic Participation
Tuesday, 7 April, 09:00- 10:30

Organized by AoC in collaboration with
IAMCR (International Association for Media and Communication Research)
UNESCO-Information for All Programme
(AMIC) Asian Media Information and Communication Centre

Background

Educators around the world have been championing Media Literacy Education for well over two decades, but in most countries policy-makers shaping national education programs have just recently become aware of the need for Media Literacy.

A truly democratic political system depends on the active participation of its citizens. Active and – most importantly – informed citizens. Media Literacy is one of the principal new tools that provide citizens with the skills they need to make sense of the sometimes overwhelming flow of daily media and, in particular, new media and information disseminated through new communication technologies. These forces are reshaping traditional values while transforming them into contemporary new ways of understanding life, society, and culture. Many educators have identified Media Literacy Education a key tool to combat stereotypes and promote intercultural understanding.

Organization of this Working Session

The session would be structured first by each panelist briefly describing the national Media Education plans currently implemented, as formal education, in the countries (maximum 10 minutes each), followed by a Q&A session with the participants. The participants' questions would be geared towards identifying challenges and opportunities towards including Media Literacy Education in educational programs in countries from different economic and cultural backgrounds in regions around the world.

Objectives of this Working Session

The session will be an opportunity to discuss existing education policies being developed around the world that include Media Education and Media Literacy as part of their core curriculum. The working session will also provide an opportunity to reflect on what challenges are emerging from the new media environment (the Information Society) and its effects on youth, education, civic participation and democracy.

The new AoC-UNESCO publication *Mapping Media Education Policies in the World: Visions, Programmes and Challenges*, published in collaboration with Grupo Comunicar, will be presented during the session. With this working session and the new publication, the Alliance of Civilizations - in partnership with all the contributors- would like to infuse dynamism to the process which aims to include Media Education and Media Literacy in educational curricula across the world.