
The Youth Media Literacy Declaration

Preamble

In the contemporary digital environment, young people are increasingly exposed to vast amounts of contradictory information, contested media narratives and ever-evolving new media platforms and technologies. While digital media can offer unprecedented opportunities for learning, participation, and communication, at the same time they present challenges, including the spread of misinformation & disinformation, manipulation of public discourse and the growing influence of extremist, authoritarian narratives and hate speech. Recently, the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its use to generate text, audio/visual content and ideas show potential benefits for education, lifelong learning, innovation and access to information, but also questions the foundations of information integrity and human creativity.

These developments pose serious risks to democratic values, social cohesion, and young people's ability to participate meaningfully in public life. Without the necessary skills to critically analyse and assess credible information and the reliability of media, youth become prone to manipulation, polarization and radicalism.

In accordance with the principles enshrined in seminal previous declarations, such as the 1982 Grünewald Declaration on Media Education, the 2014 Paris Declaration on Media and Information Literacy, the 2020 Seoul Declaration on Media and Information Literacy for Everyone, and especially the 2024 Amman Declaration on Strengthening Media and Information Literacy, also considering the aforementioned challenges to youth media literacy posed by the new technologies, AI, social media proliferation, as well as democratic backsliding and the rise of authoritarianism and extremism in Europe and beyond;

and bearing in mind the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the findings of the 2026 WEF Global Risks Report, and the latest EU policies on media literacy and artificial intelligence,

the undersigned commit to advancing, advocating for and promoting youth media literacy and critical thinking through their networks and activities, guided by the following principles.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Media Literacy and Critical Thinking as Key Competences

We recognise media literacy and critical thinking as fundamental skills for young people in the 21st century and support their promotion through both formal and non-formal education.

2. Empowering Young People

Young people should be supported not only as consumers of information, but also as active creators of responsible and ethical media content.

3. Responsible Use of Digital Technologies

Digital technologies, including social media and artificial intelligence, should be used in ways that promote transparency, responsibility, ethical principles and respect for democratic values.

4. Cooperation Across Sectors

Strengthening youth media literacy requires cooperation between youth organisations, educators, media professionals, civil society, public institutions and private sector actors.

5. Building Resilient Societies

By strengthening media literacy and critical thinking among young people, we contribute to more informed citizens, healthier public debate and democratic societies more resilient to the advancing authoritarian and extremist influences and narratives.

Invitation to Join

We invite youth and civil society organisations in particular, as well as educational and training institutions and media actors across Europe, to reaffirm their commitment to strengthening youth media literacy and critical thinking by endorsing this declaration.