

10 MEDIA LITERACY COMPETENCES



mediawijzer.net

MEDIA LITERACY IS:

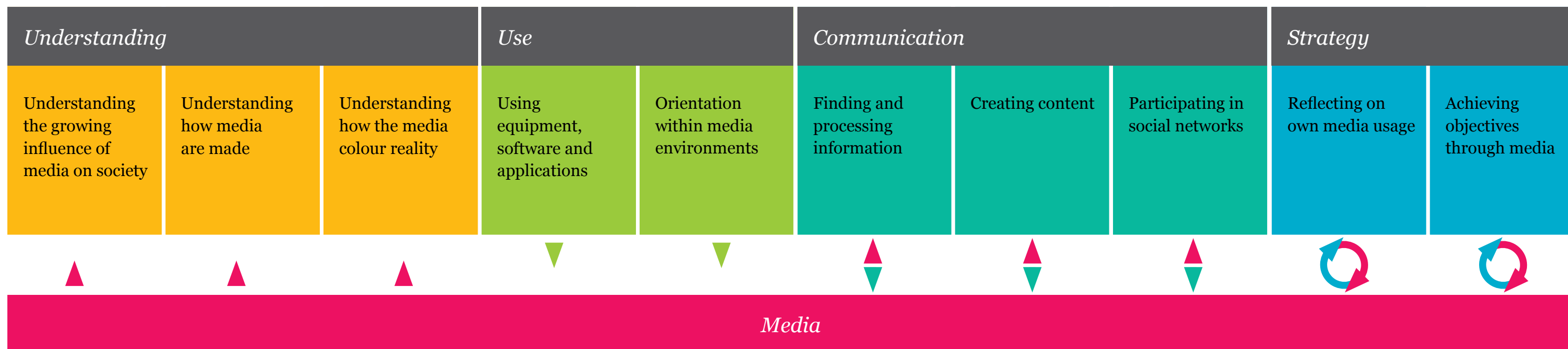


The set of competences you need to be able to actively and mindfully participate in the media society. Mediawijzer.net has consulted a range of experts to determine which competences these might be.

The model has therefore been set up as open and dynamic, and every year minor or indeed major changes will be made. The result is one overarching model comprising ten media literacy competences.

It provides clarity about media literacy and a point of departure for media literacy initiatives.

The division and description of the ten competences are based on the report 'Measuring Media Literacy', 2011, EYE a.o. and on the latest insights of the experts consulted. However, developments in the media move along swiftly, and this model will have to adjust to them to remain up-to-date and relevant.



Un

UNDERSTANDING

Un1.

UNDERSTANDING THE GROWING INFLUENCE OF MEDIA ON SOCIETY



Media, old and new, play an ever more important role in our lives. We are connected with computers, tablets, smartphones, television, radio, newspapers, game consoles and mp3-players almost round the clock.

That means that in our daily lives we are increasingly impacted by media. We read the Daily Mirror on the subway, we have more online friends than offline, we spend our working day reading and sending emails, we jog listening to downloaded music and we worry about disasters and revolutions in countries we have never been to. This process of a broad range of media penetrating our world more deeply is the ever growing influence of media on society. Media literacy starts with an awareness of this process and of its effects. We don't know yet what those effects will be, what we should welcome

and what we should oppose. What we do know, is that the increasing presence of media in society is being debated from barbers' shops to universities, and from Internet forums to TV talkshows.

Media literacy is experiencing, thinking about and discussing the trends and consequences of the distinguishing sign of our times: the growing influence of media on society.



Un2.

UNDERSTANDING HOW MEDIA ARE MADE

Much media content comes to us fully formed. Newspapers, movies and commercials are 'finished' when you get to see them. The final form involves technical, economic and strategic decisions. Being media-literate means understanding how the media you consume take shape.

Media producers aim their messages at target groups. Television channels adapt their programmes to viewing figures. Magazine publishers focus on particular subjects, language and designs to appeal to selected target audiences. CNN focuses on world news, MSN on Lady Gaga's new shoes. Being media-literate means understanding how target group choices affect media formats and content. Media have their own formats, codes and conventions. Feature films run 90 minutes, and gradually build up to grand finale. Documentaries are half as long, more thoughtful

and present many different views. The front page of every newspaper anywhere has a headline in bold and a dramatic photograph below it. In talent shows, the backdrop is always brilliant blue. Being media-literate means understanding the internal logic of different media, and how it affects the messages that are being transmitted. For example, 'Afghanistan' has a very different meaning in the format of a news broadcast than in a shooter game.



Un3.

UNDERSTANDING HOW THE MEDIA COLOUR REALITY

The media always present reality from a particular perspective. This perspective often stands out, like in product commercials or a documentary exposing injustice.

But it can also be subconscious or hidden. The NRC reports different news than De Telegraaf; PowNed has a different editorial slant than VPRO. There are also clearly differences in the norms and values portrayed in your average American sitcom and those in many Dutch feature films. Finally, the media also play a key part in 'manufacturing conformity' (Chomsky). They confirm dominant ideas (like the superiority of the Western world) and tend to gloss over exclusion and oppression. Being media-literate means understanding how they re-present reality in order to be able to make qualified judgements.



vpro

CNN



BBC

RADIO 538



De Telegraaf
De nummer 1 in nieuws!

The New York Times

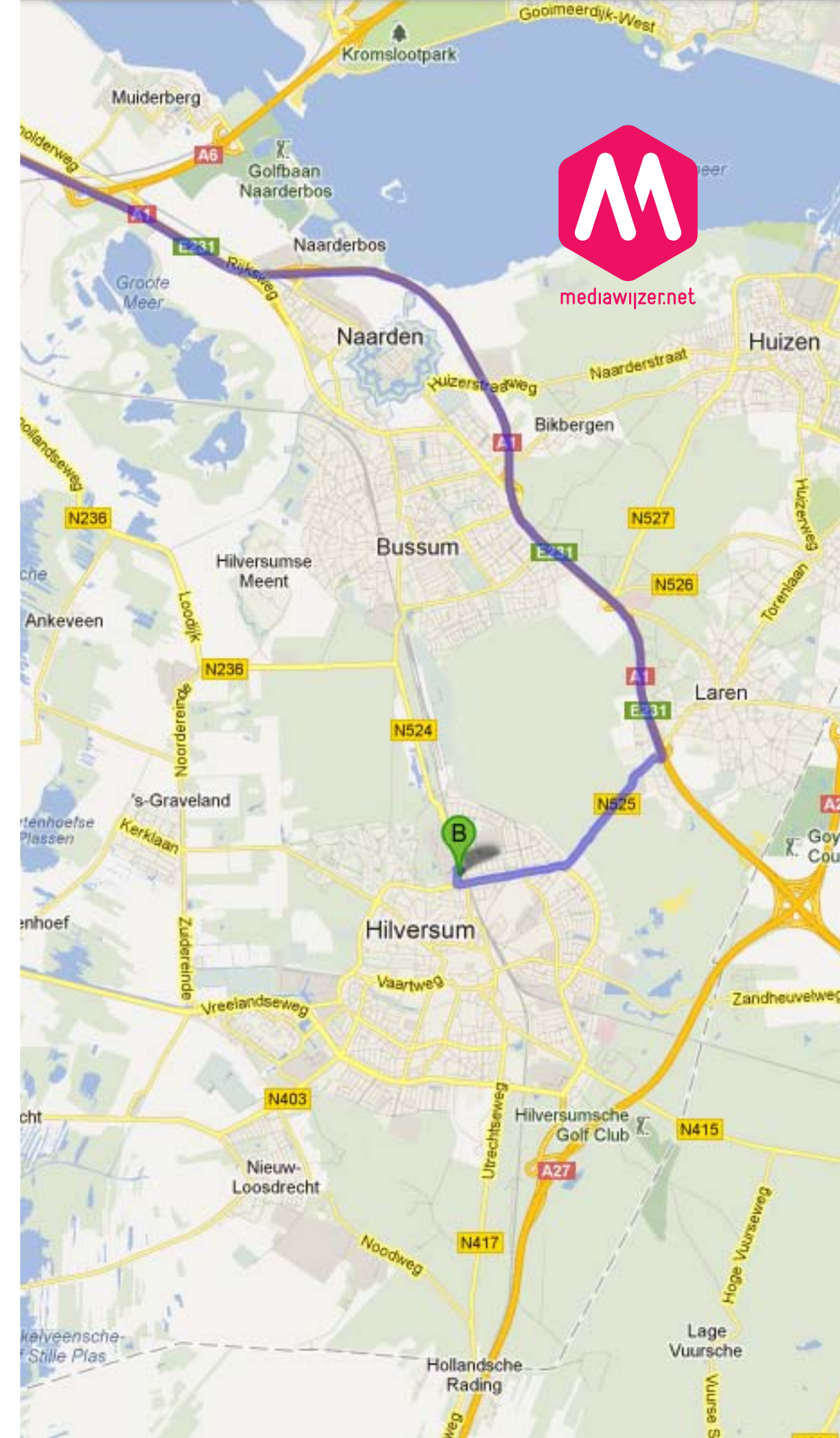
Us

USE

Us1. USING EQUIPMENT, SOFTWARE AND APPLICATIONS

Active participation in the media society starts with the technical skills to use media. They range from simple tasks like using a mouse or opening attachments to more difficult skills like setting up Internet on your mobile phone or making a Prezi to highly complex skills like video editing or building websites.

Being technically skilled also means being able to limit user risks. Media-literate people buy protective covers for their smartphones, choose secure passwords, use secure browsing and install anti-theft apps on their tablets. But it also refers to an attitude to media. To be media-literate is to be open to using new media, but also not to become a slave to them. It is to actively explore new applications and technologies, but not to succumb to every other hype; it is being able to switch off your phone now and then.



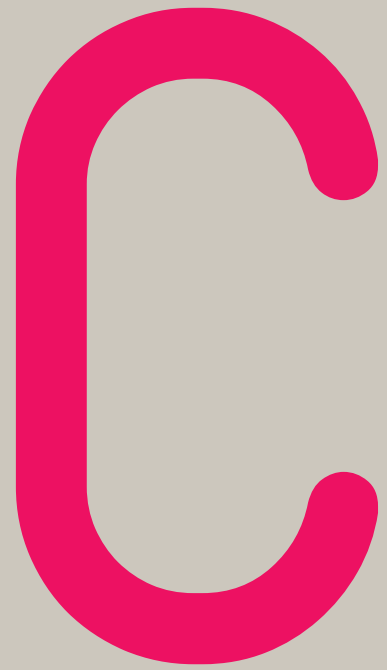
Us2. ORIENTATION WITHIN MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS

Media are ever more pervasive in our lives. What used to be a beach is now a place where you check in for your flight, upload pictures and get out when your rainfall radar warns you. We also spend more and more time in environments that are entirely online or virtual, like Facebook and Second Life.

On average, many employees spend four hours of their working day online. Being media-literate is to be savvy about media environments. Initially, you try to find your way in defined environments: playing a game to the finish, finding the information you are looking for on a website, and navigating through your mobile's menus. Next, it is about understanding the relationships of media applications. For example, if you have a Windows PC, it helps to know that you can cut and paste a



table made in Word into a PowerPoint presentation. And finally, it is about choosing between media applications. When do you use your mobile and when is it easier to open your laptop? When do you follow news developments on TV and when on Twitter? When do you use Google and when is it better to go to the library? When do you post a message on Facebook and when on LinkedIn? Media-literate people explore the possibilities and develop the skills to move optimally within media environments.



COMMUNICATION

C1.

FINDING AND PROCESSING INFORMATION

We are deluged by information in our present-day information society. Public and commercial media channels broadcast 24/7. Three million newspapers are printed every day. Uncountable books are loaned from libraries every year.

The figures of the information supply on the Internet are even more astronomical. If you printed out all the information on Wikipedia, it would make a pile 500 metres high. The number of Internet pages available through Google is over one billion. Next to the passive information supply, we also get information through RSS feeds, services like Nu.nl, Summify and Scoop.it, and social networks like Twitter and LinkedIn. Being media-wise means being able to find what you are looking for, selecting what you need, and determining how reliable the information is. And next to effective search strategies, you need skills to store, reuse

and share information. There are more and more tools for that, including social bookmarking tools like StumbleUpon and Pinterest. Being media-wise means being able to make optimum use of relevant information by storing it sensibly and sharing it with others.



C2. CREATING CONTENT

The present media society is a 2.0 society. Citizens have evolved from consumers to prosumers. We don't just watch TV passively, but react to what we see on Twitter. We don't just go to the movies, but also put our own videos on YouTube. We learn about the world not from books and encyclopaedias, but also write about it in blogs and contribute to Wikipedia.

But also for people who do not actively create content it is vital to be able to communicate effectively. If you are looking for work, it makes sense to create an attractive LinkedIn profile. Ambitious clubs have solid websites and a presence on social networks. And you can't give presentations these days without modern presentation tools. We share our holiday experiences with friends and relatives in a holiday blog, with pictures.

The present media society demands new communication and presentation skills from its citizens. You have to know how to reach your target audience and what media are most suitable to get your message across. It is also important to design your message attractively, because our media society is a visual society, in which a picture paints a thousand words. Being media-literate means being able to create functional and appealing content to best get your message across to your target audience.



C3.

PARTICIPATING IN SOCIAL NETWORKS



The present media society is a network society. We are in contact with another 24/7 through email, smartphones, online games and social media. And we join in online communities through networks like Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, World of Warcraft and Second Life.

Within these networks, essential work is achieved by co-creation. If you are excluded from these networks, you may well miss out. Fully participating in the media society therefore means being able to participate optimally in social networks.

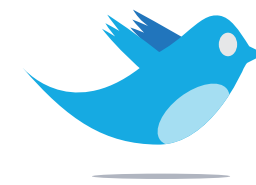
This requires new skills in various areas. First of all you must learn the do's and don'ts, the norms and values of an online community and adapt your behaviour accordingly. This is not the same as conforming, because media-literate people can be

open and flexible, but also authentic and obstinate where needed. In real terms, this means knowing the conventions, knowing what to say when, and how to make and keep friends - or indeed defriend people - in different social media environments. Knowing etiquette also means being able to avoid unwanted communications. Social media not only bring connections and cooperation, but also misuse and abuse. Media-literate people know when other people are out of line and can put a stop to it effectively.

Understanding how social networks work is also vital: How do you get people together to create things in collaboration? How do you get a discussion out of a rut? How do you get yourself seen and heard?

What is important to share? How can you follow and support other people? Reciprocity and altruism

define media-literate social media participants, because taking part in social networks also means acting with the benefits of others in mind. Of course, media-literate people pursue their own goals, but they also respect the interests of other people and of the community as a whole.





STRATEGY

S1.

REFLECTING ON OWN MEDIA USAGE

Understanding, Use and Communication are ultimately just conditional for the last competence group: Strategy. As the word suggests, basically 'media' are always a means to realise personal, social, professional or societal goals.

To make optimum use of the possibilities offered by media, you must be able to reflect on all aspects your own media use. First of all, on the impact of passive media consumption on personal well-being: what do you watch, read and listen to? What actually influences you? What do you shut out (and what do you miss)? And how does this impact your lifestyle and - ultimately - your happiness? Then there is the effects of your own active media usage. How media savvy are you? What do you do with media (and what do you do too little or too much)? Where, how, with whom and about what do you

communicate with others through media (and what do you keep to yourself, or from someone)? And how does that impact your life?

Media literacy is understanding your own media usage so that you can make sound choices to optimise your own media actions.



S2.

ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES THROUGH MEDIA

In the present media society it is virtually impossible to achieve personal, social, professional or societal goals without using media in some way.

Completing a course, building a career, spending your spare time, buying a dream home, the best holiday of your life, making friends, finding a partner, supporting a political party, promoting a cause, following the Pope, living a healthy life, being happy: in all these things media play a part.

In many cases media are indispensable, like for finding your dream home, dream job or dream partner on Funda, Monsterboard of Lexa, or find information on health and happiness. Often, media fulfil an urgent need, like calling 112, a satnav that gets you to your meeting on time, sharing professional experiences with colleagues

in a LinkedIn group, or Whatsapp'ing with your sweetheart who is abroad. Sometimes media come into play after the fact, like in letting others share in a wonderful holiday, successful shopping therapy or inspirational seminar. And sometimes media aren't needed at all. That is what media literacy is: being able to resist temptation, avoid tripe, see through lists, ignore hypes, resist brainwashing techniques, cherish slowness and find the off-switch.

Being media-literate means realising your own objectives based on an informed assessment of the possibilities (and limitations) of media, using media effectively for your own ends. The unique, personal way in which you do that ultimately defines your digital identity.



10 MEDIA LITERACY COMPETENCES



Experts consulted:

Bamber Delver
Frank Evers
Liesbeth Hop
Daniel Lechner
John Leek
Justine Pardoen
Remco Pijpers
Maaike Toonen
Geerle van der Wijk

EXPLANATION OF THE MODEL



competence groups

competences

a competence has three components: knowledge, skills and attitude;
so all the media literacy competences involve knowledge, skills and attitude.

