



Media and Information Literacy Policies in Hungary¹

Nóra Schleicher

PhD, Budapest Metropolitan University of Applied Sciences
Budapest Nagy Lajos Király Street 1–9. H-1148.
n Schleicher@met.hu

Györgyi Rétfalvi

PhD, Budapest Metropolitan University of Applied Sciences
Budapest Nagy Lajos Király Street 1–9. H-1148.
gretfalvi@met.hu

„When we talk about freedom of expression, media and information, we must realize that media and information literacy is a key competence in a rapidly evolving communicative society. Media and information literate citizens are a prerequisite to the vigour of inclusive knowledge societies.”
(Carlsson 2013: 8)

Abstract. This report is produced as part of the ANR Translit and COST IS0906 Transforming Audiences, Transforming Societies project hosted by the University of Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris. The project examines media and information literacy policies and education in 29 European countries following preset dimensions. The country report about Hungary offers a short historical background of media education, looks at the legal framework of media literacy education, and presents data on the content and form of media education, on funding, and on evaluation mechanisms. It also discusses the main concepts and values guiding MIL² policies in Hungary and offers some recommendations for the improvement of the field.

Keywords: media literacy, policies, Europe, Hungary

-
- 1 This country report about Hungary is a shortened and revised version of the one prepared for an ANR Translit project about media and information literacy policies in 29 European countries (<http://ppemi.ens-cachan.fr/doku.php>).
 - 2 There is not one universally accepted definition of Media and Information Literacy (MIL). For a collection of definitions, see Grizzle and Calvo (2013).

Historical Background

Media education has always been influenced by political, economic, and cultural conditions. Hungary is a post-socialist country – before the change of the regime in 1989–1990, media education was influenced by the socialist political and economic conditions and it focused exclusively on high culture.

Six periods of the Hungarian media education can be identified. (Five periods were identified by Imre Szíjártó (Szíjártó, 2001) and the last period was added by the authors of this report.) In the following, we will summarize Imre Szíjártó's description of the history of Hungarian media education.

We may thus divide Hungarian film, and later motion picture and media education, into six periods. The first one started in 1957 with the foundation of the first film clubs, and lasted until 1965, when the Central Curriculum decreed film to be part of required education in high schools. The second period is defined by the Curriculum of 1965, lasting until 1978, when the new Central Curriculum was issued. From 1965 till 1978, motion picture education appeared under the name of “film aesthetics” and was taught within the frame of Hungarian language and literature. Basically, media education was focused on art movies as part of high culture. No one prepared the teachers for this field of education. Soon it became clear that the education system was not prepared for that task. From the majority of schools, film aesthetics education disappeared or became formal (like offering two screenings per year). The teachers were overburdened and were not sufficiently trained.

The third period lasted from 1978 to 1980: during this time, the curriculum began to lose its legitimacy, causing film education to come to a complete halt. The fourth period lasted from the 80s until 1995, characterized by the use of alternative, local devices and experiments working parallel with the decentralization of education. During the 80s, media education became a victim of the legitimacy crisis of the socialist system: certain objectives were included in the curriculum and in the teaching materials, but in the majority of schools these provisions were not complied with. From the 80s on, film aesthetics education became optional.

The fifth period is characterized by the introduction of the national frame curriculum of public education, which gave *Motion picture and media* a place under the subject of “Arts”, along with visual arts, music, and drama/dance. The public education law modified in 1996 expanded the space of those involved with schools (Szíjártó, 2002).

In 1996, after 10 years of preparation, the ‘Moving Image Programme’ was accepted to aid the implementation of the new subject, titled ‘Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education’, into the new National Curriculum. The aim of creative media pedagogy was to improve visual-language reading and

writing skills as a vehicle for understanding the media and the world of images surrounding us. Media education had already had a long history within the aesthetic and semiotic tradition and was now combined with aspects of sociology and civic education. Teacher training started in 1994 (Szíjártó, 2002).

In the 4th and 5th periods of media education in Hungary, media literacy and digital literacy (as part of computer literacy or information science) were taught separately. The link between media education and art education was strong.

The 6th period started during the era of the third conservative legislation after the change of the regime which came into power in 2010. A new educational reform was launched and with it a new National Curriculum was passed in 2013. The new curriculum is centralized, not goal- but subject-oriented; the organization of the material is characterized by building from the qualities of each subject; the material applied to every school and every student excludes individuality and differentiation. Moving picture and media education, according to the new curriculum, aims at cultivating basic media knowledge and it explains the role of the media in society and offers the basics of media literacy. The National Curriculum considers it important that children learn about the value of audiovisual works, especially of the European and Hungarian cinema, that they should be able to consciously choose media content and critically consume advertising and other commercial content. It emphasizes the importance of data security, data consciousness, knowledge about how to avoid addiction, and other hazards.

Media education is also presented as a tool to address the contemporary ethical and moral crisis. In this period, in addition to media literacy, digital literacy became the focus of media education. Basics of computer literacy are taught within the framework of an independent subject called information science.

Links with the European Union

Hungary has been a member state of the European Union since 2004. On the level of documents, there is a great emphasis given to media and digital literacy in Hungary. This is partly due to the European Union's recommendations and expectations in these areas. "Hungary is very committed to media literacy projects in school education and in research, but there are not many informal media-literacy-related programmes or initiatives outside school. Hungary is very committed to co-operating with other countries and EU-programmes, but they prefer to participate rather than initiate media literacy projects." – claims the 2007 country report about media literacy in Hungary (European Commission, 2007).

With the *SULINET-program* (School-net Programme), Hungary participates in the European school-net programme. The key reason was: "Bridging the digital gap in society and establishing a framework for ICT-based education at all levels" (Sulinet).

There are also some projects on media literacy supported by the EU in Hungary. The projects IVEN and CIVICWEB are examples of that. Hungary is part of the Idea Video Exchange Network (IVEN). IVEN's Mission Statement is: "To sustain a culture of creative and unique stories produced by youth from around the world and build on our professional relationships through meeting and making personal connections."

A second example is the project CIVICWEB: with Young People, the Internet and Civic Participation from the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media, Institute of Education (LKL), University of London (IoE). IVEN7 is still on. CIVICWEB (Children, Youth and Media Centre, UK) was a 3-year project that began in September 2006, funded by the European Union under Framework 6, Priority 7 – *Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society*. This project focused "specifically on the range of youth-oriented civic and political sites now emerging on the web and the potential of other Internet-based civic activities for youth. In Hungary, a good climate has been developed for ML research and co-operation with ML Projects from other countries has been promoted. But there is a lack of ML initiated by Hungarian institutions themselves, ML projects for minorities and family enrolment" (European Commission, 2007).

Comments and Remarks

There is a colourful history of media education in Hungary involving many changes. The new National Curriculum was launched in 2013. It is hard to evaluate the efficiency of its operation during this short period. However, there are visible intentions to centralize, homogenize media education as well as the whole education system and content, which narrows down the possibilities and colourfulness in education. We find it somewhat problematic that media education focuses again on high culture media products, European and Hungarian cinema creations, and critical consumption of other media contents. It does not take into account the real tendencies of popular culture, which are in the focus of students' interests. There is also an open question related to textbooks, as the new reform wants to homogenize not only the curricula but the textbooks too. On the other hand, the intention to narrow the gap between media literacy and digital literacy can be a very positive change, just as the recommended changes in the method of teaching media education with its emphasis on discussions and debates.

Legal Policy Framework

In Hungary, there are two major areas regulated by the force of law that have an impact on media education. The first area is public education and the second one is the media system.

Among the legal documents regulating media education, the most important one is the *National Curriculum* (Nemzeti Alaptanterv). A new version was passed by the government in 2012 (110/2012 Government Decree) (Magyar Közlöny, 2011) and was published on 4 June 2012(66). A related document specifying in detail the objectives outlined in the National Curriculum, the so-called *Frame Curriculum* (Kerettanterv) appeared as a ministerial decree 51/2012 of the Ministry of Human Resources. It came into force on the 1st of September 2013 in years 1, 5, and 9 of the public education system. The Ministry of Human Resources is responsible for the shaping of school education from nursery to university. Within the Ministry, there are a number of specialist departments, including the Ministry of State for Education.

The *National Curriculum* provides a general guideline of the purpose and function of education. It defines a number of educational goals and a number of key competences. Among the educational goals, we can find the explicitly stated goal of educating children to become media literate. Media awareness is the actual word used. The goal, according to the document, is to make pupils responsible participants of a global and mediated public sphere, who understand the language of the old and new media. Furthermore, the document claims that media literacy education develops an interpretive and critical attitude, it is activity-centred, and thus it prepares for a participatory culture of democracy and for a conscious and value-centred life. According to the National Curriculum, pupils should become familiar with the functioning of the media, the relationship between media and society, and they should become able to differentiate between real and virtual experience, public and intimate interaction, and the legal and ethical importance of these differences.

The same document also defines a number of key competences the educational system has to develop in the pupils, in line with the EU recommendation (2006/962/EK) on key competences needed for lifelong learning. These include the key competence: digital literacy, defined as: the confident, critical, and ethical use of the content available through information and communication technology (ICT) within social relations, work, communication, and free time. It includes the skills of identifying, retracing, evaluating, storing and producing, presenting and exchanging information, digital content production as well as sharing- and communication-based co-operation on the Internet.

Some of the other key competencies outlined in the National Curriculum also require in some of their elements skills related to media, computer, information, or digital literacy. These are: communication in the mother tongue; aesthetic-artistic consciousness and expressiveness; social and civic competencies; effective, independent learning. These links are explicitly stated in the Frame Curriculum.

The second major area having an impact on media education is the media system. The most important legal documents in this area are Act CIV of 2010 on the

Freedom of the Press and the Fundamental Rules of Media Content (consolidated version effective from 1 August 2013), of which Article 10 states that:

“All persons shall have the right to receive proper information on public affairs at local, national and European level, as well as on any event bearing relevance to the citizens of Hungary and the members of the Hungarian nation. The media system as a whole shall have the task to provide authentic, rapid and accurate information on these affairs and events.”³ The second, much longer law is: Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Media (consolidated version effective from 1 August 2013), of which a number of articles address the issue of media education. These are the following:

Article 5

It states that “The right to information and the right to be informed of those living within the territory of Hungary and of the members of the Hungarian nation and, in connection with this, the development and strengthening of publicity in the democratic society are fundamental constitutional interests.” It also addresses the question of the protection of children and minors by assigning the task of overseeing a programme-rating system according to age to the Media Council of the National Media and Info-communication Authority.

Article 83

It describes the objectives of Public Media Services. It includes the objective to “(2) c. promote[s] acquisition and development of knowledge and skills needed for media literacy through its programmes and through other activities outside the scope of media services.”

The National Council for Communication and Information technology is a counselling and advisory body to the Government which provides opinion on:

Article 121

This concerns the programme for building an information society and strategic decisions concerning the promotion of information culture and information society. Among the responsibilities of the Media Council of the National Media and Info-communication Authority, the law lists the responsibility to:

Article 132

“k) undertake a pioneering role in developing media literacy and media awareness in Hungary and, in this context, co-ordinate the activities of other state actors in the area of media literacy, assist the Government in drafting its upcoming interim report to the European Union on the subject matter;”

Article 138

The Institute for Media Studies of the Media Council is an independent entity of the Authority, assisting the operation of the Media Council and pursuing independent scientific activity. The Institute’s tasks shall be as follows:

3 The English version is available at: <http://www.hunmedialaw.org>.

“Support the operation of the Media Council by way of performing research and analysis; conduct social science research connected to the media.”

As we could see, the law assigns a number of tasks related to media literacy education to the media regulatory body and to the public media. The Ministry of National Development is responsible for the development of info-communication in Hungary. There is an independent specialist department of info-communication led by a Minister of State for Info-communication. They are also responsible for a third important document, which is: *The Digital Renewal Action Plan* (kormany.hu).

Links with the European Union

In the *National Curriculum*, there is a reference to key competences defined by the EU; so, we can presume that digital literacy appeared in the *Curriculum* following EU guidelines describing key competences. The *Digital Renewal Action Plan* also appears in the context of EU's digital plan as being part of the *Strategic Plan of Action for the Renewal of Digital Europe 2020*.

The 2010 law on the media was severely criticized by EU bodies for its presumed restriction of the freedom of media. As a result, a number of changes have been introduced into the law, what is still strongly criticized by Hungarian opposition for allowing for a biased public media and a one-sided, pro-government regulatory body.

Comments and Remarks

There are two ministries – the Ministry of Human Resources and, within it, the Ministry of State for Education and the Ministry of National Development and, within it, the Ministry of State for Info-communication – responsible for media education in Hungary. We could not find signs of formalized co-operation between the ministries relating to the question of media education. The main responsibility for media education is carried by the Ministry of Human Resources through its regulation of the formal education in Hungary. A much smaller responsibility for media education is assigned to the public broadcasting system and to the Media Council (the media regulatory body).

The importance of media awareness, media literacy, and digital literacy is emphasized in the above described legal documents; however, the terms and their differences are not very explicitly defined. There seems to be an overlap between media and digital literacy, however, digital literacy seems to include computer and information literacy, while media literacy sometimes designates something separate and sometimes includes digital literacy. The *Digital Renewal Action Plan* basically defines digital literacy as a technical skill, and emphasizes the importance of access and user skills.

Capacity Building: Teacher Training

Teacher training in media education started in the 1990s with the introduction of the new subject “Culture of the moving image and media education” in the National Curriculum. “The first initial teacher-training course was launched within the Aesthetics Department of a major Hungarian university (ELTE, Budapest) in 1994/95. It could serve as a model for the future [of] media pedagogy training. The number of hours of courses varied between 60 and 120. Most of the courses were offered by educational institutions, some of them linked to a university or a college or further training organization operating under a higher education institution” (Szíjártó, 1998).

“Training programmes at the large number of independent, largely autonomous institutions are run without any sort of regular central outcome assessment or other control mechanism. It is doubtful whether the entire range of institutions – which are incomparably distant from each other in terms of mission, infrastructure and human resources – will be capable of offering teacher training programmes meeting the same requirements.” – writes Andrea Kárpáti (2009) about the situation before 2009.

“Film literacy is included in initial teacher training as well as in-service professional training. Moving Image Culture and Media Knowledge is offered at BA and MA levels, for which limited bursaries schemes are available. There are also shorter certificated postgraduate courses. Limited funds are made available to schools towards teachers’ postgraduate study.” – reported László Hartai (European Commission, 2012) about film literacy teacher trainings in 2012. By that year, the shorter teacher training courses had practically died out.

By 2013, the situation has changed significantly. Presently, there are four universities offering degrees in teaching media. Since 2013, the university education of teachers in Hungary is not carried out any more within the Bologna system of BA and MA structure but is done within a 4+1-year programme at the universities. Students can choose from 50 full-time and 10 part-time courses. The number of alternative courses is basically this high because these are double major university courses. Students can only take media education together with another major, which can be: Hungarian Literature and Grammar, History, Art, Music, PE, Foreign Language and Culture, Geography or Information Science.

The 100-credit media, film, and communication teacher training is based on an 18-credit basic training, where students are given an introduction to the theories of communication, media, film, and visual culture. The introductory training contains the various fields of communication, media, and film history, genres, and methods of analysis, among others. The course includes a practical module, which prepares students for various types of media content preparation.

Since 2013, all students studying to become teachers in primary high or secondary education need to take double majors.

Capacity Building: The Curriculum

The educational content of the formal school system (K12) is regulated by the force of law in the following official documents: National Curriculum, Frame Curriculum. Based on these documents, the schools need to create their own syllabi. Individual schools can only decide on their own discretion on the content of 10 percent of the total teaching time.

National Curriculum

The National Curriculum is the most general document which provides a general guideline of the purpose and function of education. It defines a number of key areas and educational goals as well as key competences the educational system has to develop. Among the 12 areas of development, it specifies media awareness; among the 9 key competencies, it names digital literacy.

Some of the other key competencies outlined also require in some of their elements skills related to media, computer, information, or digital literacy. These are: communication in the mother tongue; aesthetic-artistic consciousness and expressiveness; social and civic competencies; effective, independent learning.

Frame Curriculum

The general guidelines of the national curriculum are translated into more specific teaching objectives in a second document called frame curriculum, which also specifies the actual content of all subjects, the number of teaching hours assigned for each topic within the subjects, as well as potential links to contents of other subjects. In the case of media education, the links lead to: mother tongue education, history, philosophy, visual education, and information science.

Throughout the first 4-year period (primary low; junior school), media education takes place within the framework of the subject visual education, traditionally called drawing. According to the curriculum, media education in this period is centred on children's own experience of media, the difference between different media texts, and some attention is paid to safe and creative Internet use as well. Media education thus starts at an early age; however, the fact that it is not done in the framework of a separate subject weakens its effectiveness.

Information science, on the other hand, is a separate subject, it appears in the 4th year of primary low, as an optional subject (schools decide whether to offer it or not).

Topics within the subject include: computer use, interaction through computers, preparing documents, basic applications for drawing, music, animation, data processing, sources of information, basic algorithms, and models, tools of information communication, searching for information, e-book use, information society, netiquette, and library use.

In the second 4-year period (primary high; middle school), the situation remains more or less the same with information science becoming a compulsory subject, while media education continues to be taught within the framework of visual education.

The now compulsory information science subject offers competencies related to computer use (word processing, e-mail, search engines, databases, tables, presentations, creation of multimedia material, Internet safety, library use, problem solving, algorithms, and programming.)

In academic secondary education (gymnasium), in the first two years (grades 9–10), media studies (called: culture of the moving image and media education; the Hungarian name of the subject is: *Mozgóképkultúra és médiaismeret*) becomes a separate subject which has the status: “compulsory optional”, meaning that schools can choose whether to offer this subject or the subject: drama/dance. In the last two years (grades 11–12), schools can choose whether to offer media studies as a separate subject from the available study hours assigned to arts education in general (including music, drama/dance, visual culture, and media studies) or include media education in the general framework of Arts in a smaller number of hours or not to teach media studies at all.

The emphasis of the subject is on visual and film literacy and, to a lesser extent, on digital literacy. It is stated that the subject should encourage an independent and critical attitude of media consumption as well as creativity and active participation.

The content of the subject includes: understanding the language of the moving image, short media history, the public sphere, the social role of the media, specificities of web-based text, and Web 2.0.

Information science is a compulsory subject in the first two years (grades 9–10). Its main aim is to improve digital literacy. Content includes: use of information science tools, software use, problem-solving with information technology, information communication, information society, and library use.

In professional secondary education, media studies (culture of the moving image and media knowledge) as a separate subject appears for one year, in year 10, as an optional choice from the Arts subject group.

Information science is compulsory for one year: in the first year (9th grade).

For vocational training, there is neither media studies nor information science as separate subjects. Media literacy is taught within mother-tongue education. The *Curriculum* for vocational schools emphasizes the pupils’ existing familiarity

with visual and web-based images and Web 2.0 applications and suggests that texts in general might be better approached through this familiar medium.

Comments and Remarks

There is an ambiguity present in the above described system of media and information education. There are very detailed syllabi of media studies for each age-group which include all important aspects of media literacy, and the concept is introduced at a very early age. This suggests that a great importance is assigned to this area. However, the fact that media studies is either taught within the framework of another subject (visual education) or offered only as an optional course taught in maximum 1 hour per week weakens the importance of the area. It is entirely possible to go through the formal education system without any explicit media education. The situation of the area is even weaker in professional and vocational secondary education.

Visual education, the host subject, has its own, more traditional and also extensive syllabus; thus we can presume that teachers under a lot of time pressure may choose the easier way of neglecting the new and perhaps less familiar content for the sake of the older, more traditional, and more familiar content. The extensive scope of the subject “Culture of the Moving Image and Media Knowledge” paired with the low number of teaching hours (and coupled with big classes and a tradition of frontal style of teaching) probably makes it difficult to encourage students’ active participation, action-based learning, creative participation, and own media material production. A more passive, concept- and information-based approach is a more probable scenario in most schools.

We have no exact up-to-date data on how many of the schools opt to offer media education as a separate subject or on what is actually happening within the classrooms. A 2009 research on media literacy showed that in about 2/3 of the examined schools media education was taught as a separate subject while in the rest of the schools it was integrated within other subjects. The latter was mostly the case in primary schools where media education was taught in approximately half an hour per week, while in secondary schools media education was mostly taught as a separate subject in one hour per week on average. The same research also showed that out of the 111 teachers in the sample 37 had university degree in media education and a further 34, though had other degrees, took a further education course (120 hours) in media education. The observation of teaching showed that teachers mostly dealt with the codes of the moving image, with the history of the press, and with understanding media texts in their classes. The least attention was paid to conscious and critical media use (Herczog, Racsco, 2013).

Information science has a stronger position as it has been a compulsory subject for a couple of years both in primary and secondary education, with the important

exception of vocational training. It has a strong technical focus not designed to support critical media reception, while creative media production is supported to a limited extent.

Capacity Building: Teaching/Training Materials

As Hungarian media education (in the form of film education) started in the 60s, there is a huge tradition behind the teaching and training materials. Over the past forty years, the course content has continuously evolved. Continuous renewal was necessary because in the field of media communication more professional and pedagogical paradigm shifts took place in this period, and the content providers of the subject made great efforts to follow these changes (Sziájtó, 2008). “Three generations of high-school textbooks have been published during the Hungarian history of motion picture and media education. We are also familiar with other textbooks written for elementary school students” (Sziájtó, 2002: 68).

The first books for the four grades of high-school students (grades 9–12) were published by István Bölcs between 1966 and 1969. The title of the books are: *Film Aesthetics I–IV*. (*Filmesztétika* 1, 2, 3, 4.). The books only deal with art films from a normative perspective – says Hartai (2012).

The second book appeared in 1979, written by Pál Honffy and titled: *Filmről, televízióról középiskolásoknak* (About Film and Television for High-School Students). This book also deals with the aesthetic functions of film. It focuses on the aesthetic role of the art movies from a non-normative point of view – according to László Hartai (2012). Honffy has also published other textbooks: one for the elementary school children: *Moziban, képernyő előtt* (1991) (In the Cinema, before the Screen), one as a teachers’ handbook for teaching film aesthetics: *Útmutató a ‘Filmről, televízióról középiskolásoknak’ című kézikönyv iskolai felhasználásához* (Guide for Teaching. About Film and Television for High-School Students) (1979), two textbooks on film analysis for high-school students, together with another author, Vera Gyürey: *A mozgó fénykép* (1984) (The Moving Image), *Chaplintól Mihalkovig* (From Chaplin to Mihalkov) (1988), and several books in the topic for the wider audience.

The third generation of books appeared after 1996. The market became colorful with several alternative books. And there is also a shift from film and aesthetics towards media as a whole, the media landscape, and the social background of media.

Books from this phase: Edit Boda: *Médiakalauz I–IV* (Media Guide I–IV) (for grades 1–10, published in 1997), József Csákvári – Judit Malinák: *Mozgóképkultúra és médiaismeret. A tömegmédia nyelve és társadalmi háttere* (Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education. The Language and Social Background of Mass Media) – published in 1998 for grades 11–12.

There are also some books which are available only online:

Gábor Gelencsér: *A város és a mozgóképek* (The City and the Moving Picture) for grades 9–12 (available in Hungarian at: <http://www.c3.hu/~mediaokt/gelencser-0.htm>); János Horvát: *A televízió és az üzlet, televíziós műsortípusok, a televíziós személyiség* (Television and Business, Genres in Television, the Professional Communicator at Television), for grades 9–12 (available in Hungarian at: <http://www.c3.hu/~mediaokt/johorvat-1.htm>); György Báron: *A történetmesélés története* (The Story of Storytelling) for grades 9–12 (available in Hungarian at: <http://www.c3.hu/~mediaokt/baron-0.htm>). A reader edited by Gábor Gelencsér is also available in Hungarian, online at the Hungarian Electronic Library: <http://mek.niif.hu/00100/00125/00125.pdf>.

The textbooks for teachers are the following:

László Hartai: *Mozgóképkultúra és médiaismeret. Tanári kézikönyv a mozgóképkultúra és médiaismeret tanításához* (Teachers' Book for Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education), Korona Kiadó, 1998.

Imre Szíjártó: *A mozgóképkultúra és médiaismeret tanításának módszertana* (Methodology of Teaching Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education), Pedellus Kiadó, 2008.

“At the moment, students in high school in general use the László Hartai – Klára Muhi textbook entitled *Motion Picture Culture and Media Knowledge for Ages 12–18* (Hartai–Muhi, 1998). The textbook goes beyond the requirements of the NAT [National Curriculum] and was written for grades 7–12. It contains material to be studied in a module form” (Szíjártó, 2002).

For the 5th–8th grades of the elementary schools, another book from Pál Honffy was published in 2004. The title of the book is: *Képek, mozgóképek, hangosképek, Médiaismeret kezdőknek* (Pictures, Moving Pictures, Audio Pictures – Media Studies for Beginners).

Since 2013, there has been a clear tendency to centralize not only the education but also the textbook market. There is an effort to reduce the available textbooks to only one or maximum two textbooks per subject, which should be used by all high-school students in every high school. The choice/approval of the books is the task of the Ministry – the process is presently under way.

Capacity Building: Funding

Media education in Hungary is primarily done within the state education system. Thus, it is financed by the state from the budget available for public education. No exact data on the amount spent on media education was found. Some funding presumably comes through the Media Council (the media regulatory body) and the public media (both state-financed) as it is their legal responsibility to

participate in media education. However, their participation is very limited. For the few civil society projects, funding can come from different sources; however, their funding is usually uncertain and limited. They can also apply for funding to the National Civil Fund (Nemzeti Civil Alapprogram). The private sector does not visibly participate in media education in Hungary.

Evaluation Mechanisms (Inside and Outside School)

According to the Emedus report on Hungary, “In Hungary, there are no tools to measure media literacy competencies in general. For subjects like ‘Culture of the Moving Image and Media’ and ‘Information Science,’ pupils receive an annual grade for their performance. The evaluation platform called eLEMÉR allows schools to give self-assessment: the platform measures how ICTs are present in learning, teaching, school management and infrastructure as an indicator of the progress of schools in new technologies” (Emedus, 2014).

A 2008–2009 EU-funded research (Herczog, Racsko, 2013) including 27 countries – Hungary among them – studied the level of media literacy in the 14–18 years age group. The research employed both quantitative and qualitative methods and, besides comparing pupils who took the subject “Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education” with those who did not, it also looked at the actual practice of media education within schools by interviewing teachers and observing the educational process in class hours.

The Digital Renewal Action Plan 2010–2014 lists a number of indicators to measure the success of the implementation of the Plan. These include indicators relating to the level of digital literacy of the population. The plan aims at increasing broadband Internet penetration from 19.7% to 25% and decreasing digital illiteracy from 36% to 24% by 2014. It also aims at increasing computer/Internet availability and use at schools and the amount of digital teaching material and teacher training for increasing the digital literacy of teachers.

We can conclude that evaluation mechanisms are in place with regard to digital literacy but not in place, at least not in a developed form, with regard to media literacy. The Hungarian public was shocked by the results of the 2012 PISA report on performance in digital reading and task-oriented navigation. Hungarian high-school students are on the 29th place among the 34 countries participating in the research.⁴

4 http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/education/students-computers-and-learning_9789264239555-en#page85

Main Concepts and Legitimizing Values

The public formal education system is the most important actor providing media education in Hungary. Its activity is regulated in the National Curriculum and in the Frame Curriculum.

The main paradigm of media education is that of transmission/representation. The importance of an interpretive and critical understanding of varying media texts with a special emphasis on visual images are repeatedly emphasized in these documents. On the level of documents, active, ethical participation is also emphasized, but its actual presence in classrooms is dubious due to reasons outlined before. The values legitimizing media education in these documents are (participatory) democracy, valuable and safe life, and self-expression. The skills and competencies mentioned include critical thinking, visual literacy, computer literacy, problem solving, independent learning, and civic competencies.

The improvement of digital literacy is in the focus of the Digital Renewal Action Plan. The primary legitimizing value in this document is competitiveness. Digital illiteracy is presented as a major obstacle in this respect; its decrease would lead to material gains on the personal and more importantly on the industrial, national, and European level. Within the discourse of competitiveness, the question of unequal chances regarding access and skills also appears, suggesting that disadvantaged people (communities, regions) should be given help to overcome this problem in order to increase their, and thus the country's, competitiveness. The importance of technical, operational skills as well as access to broadband and mobile Internet and software are emphasized.

Civil society initiatives seem to address a perceived lack in formal education and at state level. They emphasize the value of open communication, democracy, and participation and look at media education as a tool to improve civic competencies and democratic participation, on the one hand, and address the problem of disadvantaged people by empowering them with the help of media, on the other hand.

The discourse of prevention is also present in the official documents as well as in public debates. The previous moral panic on the issue of media violence in television seems to be giving place to the new moral panic on the dangers Internet and social media pose to children.

General Appreciation and Recommendations

On the level of documents, there is a great emphasis given to media and digital literacy in Hungary. This is partly due to the European Union's recommendations and expectations in these areas. There is an independent subject for media

education with a detailed syllabus addressing all important aspects and an independent subject for information science also including extensive material. However, in reality, media education (due to its optional status) is not strongly present in the Hungarian educational system.

Digital literacy is given more emphasis, information science, although its effectiveness is criticized, is more firmly present both in the curriculum of formal education and also outside the school system in adult education. The very detailed Digital Renewal Action Plan containing clear goals and indicators also suggests stronger state commitment in this area. Thus, access and the acquisition of technical, operational skills receive greater support, while critical understanding and creative use of old and new media, and with it active citizenship – though present in the legal documents –, might get less emphasis in actual practice due to lack of time and resources.

Civil society in general is quite weak in Hungary. Though they are present with some good initiatives regarding media education, these are limited both in scope and time. The presence of profit-oriented organizations in this area is even less visible.

The Hungarian situation in the last few years can be characterized by radical and often controversial changes taking place in many areas including the media system and the education system. New laws and regulations have drastically changed the media and educational landscape of the country and both areas have become highly politicized and stand in the centre of debate within the Hungarian public sphere. With the 2010 media law, the debate has spread to EU levels as well.

As a results of our research, we have concluded that Hungarian media and digital literacy education needs to put more emphasis on critical, active media use to improve responsible citizenship. It should teach not only critical media consumption but also creative multimedia material production. Taking into consideration pupils' real interests would be useful: social media sites and popular culture should have stronger presence within media education.

References

- Carlsson, Ulla. 2013. Preface. In: Grizzle, Alton–Torras Calvo, Maria-Carme (eds), *Media and Information Literacy. Policy and Strategy Guidelines*. Paris: UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225606e.pdf> [accessed on: 26 November 2015].
- Country Profile: Hungary V4.0 Study on the Current Trends and Approaches to Media Literacy in Europe, 2007, European Commission. <http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-content/media-literacy/studies/hungary.pdf> [accessed on: 28 September 2015].

- Emedus report on Hungary. 2014. <http://www.eumedus.com/images/PDF/HUNGARYD.pdf> [accessed on: 27 September 2015].
- European Schoolnet 2012. Survey of Schools: ICT in Education. Country Profile: Hungary, Brussels. <https://ec.europa.eu/digitalagenda/sites/digitalagenda/files/Hungary%20country%20profile.pdf> [accessed on 28 September 2015].
- Grizzle, Alton–Torras Calvo, Maria-Carme (eds), *Media and Information Literacy. Policy and Strategy Guidelines* Paris: UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225606e.pdf> [accessed on: 26 November 2015].
- Hartai, L. 1999. Média és filmoktatás Angliában és Skóciában. *Új Pedagógiai Szemle* 6.
- Hungary in Film Literacy. In: *Screening Literacy Europe Country Profiles*. European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/studies/literacy-country-profiles_en.pdf [accessed on: 27 September 2015].
- Herczog, Cs.–Racsko, R. 2013. Hol tart a hazai médiaoktatás? A tizenévesek médiaműveltségének empirikus vizsgálata a tudatos médiahasználat és kritikus médiafogyasztás vonatkozásában. In: *Oktatás-Informatika* 1–2. <http://www.oktatas-informatika.hu/2012/07/herczog-csilla-racsko-reka-hol-tart-a-hazaimediaoktatasa-tizenevesek-mediamuveltsagenek-empirikus-vizsgalata-a-tudatosmediahasznalat-es-kritikus-mediafogyasztas-vonatkozasaban/> [accessed on: 29 September 2015].
- Hungarian Moving Image and Media Education Association. 1996. <http://www.c3.hu/~mediaokt/angol.htm> [accessed on: 6 October 2015].
- Jakab, Gy.–Varga, A. 2009. A modultantárgyak helyzetéről egy felmérés kapcsán. OFI. <http://www.ofi.hu/tudastar/tanitas-tanulas/modultantargyak> [accessed on: 29 September 2015].
- Kárpáti, A. 2009. Teacher Training and Professional Development. In: Fazekas, K.–Köllő, J.–Varga, J. (eds), *For the Renewal of Public Education in Hungary*. Budapest: Ecostat. <http://econ.core.hu/file/download/greenbook/chapter8.pdf> [accessed on: 29 September 2015].
- Koltai, T. 2009. Médiaműveltség, média-írástudás, digitális írástudás. *Médiakutató* – winter ed. http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2009_04_tel_08_mediamuveltsseg_digitalis_irastudas [accessed on: 29 September 2015].
- Main Results from the PISA 2012 Computer-Based Assessments. In: OECD, 2015, *Students, Computers and Learning Making the Connection*. 81–103 OECD Publishing. http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/education/students-computers-and-learning_9789264239555-en [accessed on: 13 October 2015].
- Nagy, K. 2012. *A demokrácia szövege: médiaszabadság és médiatudatosság*. HVG 10/12. <http://mertek.hvg.hu/2012/10/12/a-demokracia-szovete-mediaszabadsag-es-mediatudatossag/> [accessed on: 29 September 2015].

- PISA Report. 2012. <http://www.oecd.org/edu/students-computers-and-learning-9789264239555-en.htm> [accessed on: 7 October 2015].
- Szíjártó, I. 1998. Tanártovábbképzés a mozgóképkultúra és médiaismeret oktatásához: egy rendszer kiépülése. OFI. <http://www.ofi.hu/tudastar/tanartovabbkepzes> [accessed on 29 September 2015].
2001. A média tantárgy a magyar közoktatásban. *Médiakutató* – winter ed. http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2001_04_tel/08_media_tantargy_a_magyar_kozoktatásban/ [accessed on: 29 September 2015].
2002. Hungary: Motion Picture and Media Education in Hungary. In: Hart, A.–Süss, D. (eds), *Media Education in 12 European Countries A Comparative Study of Teaching Media in Mother-Tongue Education in Secondary Schools*. Research report from the Euromedia Project. <http://e-collection.library.ethz.ch/eserv/eth:25953/eth-25953-01.pdf> [accessed on: 29 September 2015].
- 2008a. Elektronikus tananyagok a mozgókép és médiaoktatásban. In: *Agria Média 2008 és ICI-8 Információtechnikai és Oktatástechnológiai Konferencia és Kiállítás*. http://videotorium.hu/hu/recordings/details/2409,Elektronikus_tananyagok_a_mozgokep_es_mediaoktatásban [accessed on: 29 September 2015].
- 2008b. *Mozgóképkultúra és médiaismeret tanításának módszertana*. Debrecen: Pedellus Tankönyvkiadó.

Laws, Regulations, and Action Plans

- Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education National Curriculum (Nemzeti Alaptanterv). *Magyar Közlöny* on 4 June 2012/66.
- Frame Curriculum (Kerettanterv) – Ministerial Decree 51/2012 of the Ministry of Human Resources. *Magyar Közlöny* 2011/162.
- Act CIV of 2010 on the Freedom of the Press and the Fundamental Rules of Media Content.
<http://www.hunmedialaw.org>.
- Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Media.
<http://www.hunmedialaw.org>.
- The Digital Renewal Action Plan (Digitális Megújulás Cselekvési Terv).
http://www.kormany.hu/download/7/0d/30000/Digitalis_MeguJulas_Cselekvesi_Tervull.pdf.
- <http://www.emagyarország.hu/ehungary-program>.
<http://mle.org.hu/english/>.