

**Media and Information Literacy Policies in the Netherlands (2013)**



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## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

This report sets out the Dutch national policy on media literacy or education. In order to understand properly how media education in the Netherlands is implemented, a few matters need to be clarified at the outset. First, the term ‘media literacy’: as is explained in the report, the most conventionally-used term in the Netherlands is ‘media wisdom’. This term was introduced in 2005. Until then, the most commonly-used term had been ‘media education’. Throughout this report, the term ‘media wisdom’ is used, except when discussing policy before 2005, when the term ‘media education’ is used.

It will also become apparent throughout this report that the recommendations from the Dutch Council for Culture have largely framed governmental policy. The Council for Culture is the legal independent advisory body of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The Council gives advice, requested or unrequested, to the Ministry. Even though the recommendations of the Council are very influential, they are not binding and are therefore not formally-speaking governmental policy.

<b>1. Dimension</b>	<b>(Short) Historical background</b>
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By 1996, Dutch society had already embraced the ‘information era’. With this transformation, the media were already very present in politics, business, government and social organisations. With their many uses, the ‘information media’ and the ‘entertainment media’ had become powerful actors in society.<sup>2</sup> The Dutch government recognized the importance of these technical developments and wrote a policy document on ICT and education. The *Raad voor*

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<sup>1</sup>This report was written by Nanette Schumacher, LL.M., research intern at the Institute for Information Law (IViR), Faculty of Law, University of Amsterdam. It was supervised by Dr. Tarlach McGonagle, senior researcher, IViR. Thanks are due to Jaap Visser, Raad voor Cultuur, Nezha Bouanani, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Mary Berkhout, Mediawijzer.net and prof. dr. Nico van Eijk, Director of IViR, for very helpful discussions and to Vicky Breemen, Ph.D. candidate and Rosanne van der Waal, Information Specialist, both of IViR, for flagging useful documents and sources.

<sup>2</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 1.

*Cultuur* (Council for Culture), the independent advisory body of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, applauded this. However, it disagreed with the unilateral emphasis on the technical use of ICT in the school curriculum and therefore the focus was put on computer and digital literacy and not on information and media literacy.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, in 1996, the Council for Culture issued an unrequested recommendation on media education.<sup>4</sup>

The Council called for the introduction of media education in the school curriculum instead of just the technical use of ICT.<sup>5</sup> According to the Council, more emphasis should be put on media and information literacy. The Council did not see media education as a school subject in itself, but more as a ‘a collective name for knowledge and skills relating to the perception and selection of media information, processes of signification, assessment of the personal experience, reflection and as a result being competent in dealing with the media.’<sup>6</sup>

This Recommendation was received positively and it generated a lot of discussion, but the most important recommendation – to integrate media education into the core objectives and goals of the school curriculum – was not adopted.<sup>7</sup> The government was of the opinion that it was not its place to interfere with the school curriculum.<sup>8</sup> This meant that the initial enthusiasm for the recommendation slowly faded away and in reality little became of it.<sup>9</sup> In 2000, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science did, however, create and finance a Steering Committee and a *Platform Media-Educatie* (Platform for Media Education).<sup>10</sup> The Steering Committee focused on education and made strategic recommendations to the government on the topic. The Platform’s goal was to bundle and support existing media education initiatives via, *inter alia*, a website. In 2001 the government adopted a recommendation from the Steering Committee to finance some pilot projects. As a result, sixteen experiments were carried out in 2001 and 2002.

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<sup>3</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996.

<sup>5</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> As explained by Nezha Bouanani from the Ministry of Education Culture and Science.

<sup>9</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> In this Steering Committee, different sectors were united, from Public Service Broadcasting to educational publishers and the library sector. Anyone that engaged in media education could join the Platform. The secretariat for both Steering Committee and Platform was housed at the KPC Group.

The experiments were evaluated in 2004 by the *KPC-Groep*<sup>11</sup> (KPC-Group).<sup>12</sup> The results were disappointing. The media education projects had very limited effect and no continuity.<sup>13</sup> Most projects could not survive on their own after the period of government funding ended. Besides limited effect and lack of continuity, the practice was characterized by the lack of clear vision. The government carried out a non-committal policy towards media education, as exemplified by its reluctance to integrate media education in the school curriculum. Moreover, besides the Steering Committee and the Platform, various other initiatives also received funding from the government. According to the Council, this illustrated the clear lack of coherent vision and coherent implementation that was needed to effectively realise media education.<sup>14</sup>

These disappointing results were one of the reasons for the Council for Culture to issue a second unrequested recommendation on media education in 2005.<sup>15</sup> Another reason was the ‘mediatisation’ of society by the digitization of information and convergence of electronic devices. The ‘mediatisation’ of society means that the media started to play an increasingly influential role in a number of different areas - from how people communicate, to the subjects they discuss, to whether and how they feel connected to each other.<sup>16</sup> The media also started to play a part in the democratic institutions and ‘modern citizenship’. The government started to build on the self-reliance of citizens by means of contacting and communicating to the public via the internet.<sup>17</sup> The Council also addressed that, at the same time, these technological developments gave citizens the opportunity to withdraw themselves from the democratic process and retreat into their own digital world without having to deal with other views and opinions, either by accident or unwillingly.<sup>18</sup>

These developments led to the most important change in the creation of present-day media education policies and structures in the Netherlands: the switch from the term ‘*media-educatie*’ (media education) to the term ‘*mediawijsheid*’ (media wisdom).<sup>19</sup> The Council was of the

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<sup>11</sup> KPC Groep is a national education consultancy that focuses on improving the educational system, see [www.kpcgroep.nl](http://www.kpcgroep.nl).

<sup>12</sup> Rapportage Media-Educatie 2004, KPC-groep.

<sup>13</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 16.

<sup>14</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 16.

<sup>15</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 1-7.

<sup>17</sup> Raad voor Cultuur, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 2.; Raad voor Cultuur 2008, p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 17-21.

opinion that the term ‘media education’ focused too much on education and children. The Council stated that media wisdom should encompass everyone, not only minors. Secondly, media wisdom is about more than just education. The Council stated that to be able to fully participate in modern society, citizens should be ‘media wise’ and in areas where the media may play a part, such as health-care, politics, public housing and security (for example filling out forms on the internet).<sup>20</sup> Finally, the Council stated that media wisdom is not only about learning how to deal with the media, but more about media creation and participation in civil society.<sup>21</sup> This change in terminology was received positively and has been used ever since. However, there is still some confusion between the terms. Even though the term ‘media education’ has been replaced by the term ‘media wisdom’, ‘media education’ is still used to describe the teaching of media wisdom. In other words, media education is still a part of media wisdom; the term ‘media wisdom’ has a broader meaning. The term ‘media wisdom’ also encompasses every form of literacy, such as media literacy, information literacy, digital literacy and computer literacy.

Following this recommendation, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science issued a response in its 2006 report, *Mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij* (Media wisdom: citizenship in the information society).<sup>22</sup> The Ministry responded to the recommendations made by the Council and gave its own perspective on media wisdom. The Ministry acknowledged the importance of media wisdom, stating that the mediatization of society will lead to different relationships between citizens, between the media and citizens, between the government and citizens and between the business community and citizens. The Ministry recognized that it is important for everyone to become media wise and that the government needs to take responsibility for this.

In 2008 the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science issued new policy on media wisdom, via a letter called *Mediawijsheid* (media wisdom).<sup>23</sup> In this letter, media wisdom policy is set out, as well as plans for the creation of a media literacy expertise centre. In 2008 this media literacy expertise centre was founded with the aim of providing guidance to the Dutch public on how to become media literate (or media wise) and thus learn to participate in a multimedia

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<sup>20</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 18.

<sup>21</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005; Ingen Housz 2011, p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, *Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij* (9 October 2006), (appendix to the letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, PMC/DIR/06/36289).

<sup>23</sup> *Kamerstukken II* 2007/08, 31 434 no. 1.

society.<sup>24</sup> The centre was created around a website ([www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net)). The government specifically created a ‘new media’ product to keep up with the technological developments of the multimedia society. *Mediawijzer.net* is aimed at the general public, consisting of all citizens and media-related organisations. Target groups are children and young people, their parents and teachers.<sup>25</sup>

*Appreciation and comments:*

Media education / media wisdom has prominently featured in the Netherlands, especially regarding the two recommendations from the Council for Culture. However, media wisdom has not been integrated in the school curriculum despite the Council having recommended this twice. Also, there has not been a new policy issued on media wisdom since 2008 and with technology ever-changing, this is already outdated.

<b>2. Dimension</b>	<b>Legal policy framework</b>
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In the Netherlands, there is no legal definition of media education or any equivalent term. As explained in the short historical background, in the Netherlands *mediawijsheid* (media wisdom) is the conventionally-used term instead of media education or media literacy. This term was introduced by the Dutch Council for Culture its 2005 Recommendation. Until then the term most commonly used was media education. In its 1996 Recommendation, the Council explicitly used the term media education. It described media education as: “*learning to adequately deal with media in an environment defined by media technology*”.<sup>26</sup> In its 2005 Recommendation, however, the Council made the change in terminology. Media wisdom is defined by the Council for Culture as “*the knowledge, skills and mentality with which citizens consciously, critically and actively engage in a complex, changing and fundamentally mediated world*”.<sup>27</sup> Media wisdom therefore has a broader meaning than media education; it is not only education, but much more. Since media wisdom encompasses not only minors but every citizen in society and not only education but also other groups in society, the word does not mean the same thing for everyone in every context. For example, the skills needed by

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<sup>24</sup> Ingen Housz, 2011, p. 40-41; [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘information, then ‘over mediawijzer.net’).

<sup>25</sup> Ingen Housz, 2011, p. 40-41.

<sup>26</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 10.

<sup>27</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 18.

adults to create a website are very different from those needed by a group of children to make a documentary about their everyday lives.<sup>28</sup>

The term *mediageletterdheid* (media literacy) is associated with media wisdom, seeing as this is the term most used in the European Union (EU), but the Council for Culture stated in its recommendation in 2005 that it does not favour this term, because of its many linguistic associations.<sup>29</sup> The same applies to the other forms of literacy (computer, digital and information). The term media wisdom incorporates all forms of literacy.

### **Policy framing documents**

The recommendations by the Council for Culture have mainly framed governmental media wisdom policies. Although these recommendations are not legally binding, they have been the most influential in framing policy: the 1996 Recommendation, for putting media education on the map, and the 2005 Recommendation, for directly influencing policy. For example, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science issued an official response to the 2005 Recommendation and issued a report to announce how it would incorporate the recommendations into policy. The letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science builds further on this recommendation.<sup>30</sup> The Ministry also followed the change in terminology.

### **The Council for Culture’s 1996 Recommendation**

The 1996 Recommendation addressed the fact that until then the focus of the government concerning media education consisted of teaching children technical ways of using computers and other forms of ICT.<sup>31</sup> The Council recommended that, besides the more technical aspects of media, media education should be adopted in the school curriculum. The focus should be on a broad vision of media and their many uses (information, communication, education, entertainment). This would lead to a stronger, more integrated position of media education in the curriculum: in different courses, in examinations and in assessments.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 18.

<sup>30</sup> *Kamerstukken II 2007/08*, 31 434 no. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 3.

The Council also recommended that media education competences be introduced for primary and secondary education.<sup>33</sup> The Council itself took the first step by introducing eleven key concepts<sup>34</sup> in media education and developing competences for each concept.<sup>35</sup> The concepts include ethics, information and selection and variety and convergence. For example, a competence for ethics is the recognition that media communication brings responsibility for one’s actions in relation to other people.<sup>36</sup>

A third recommendation was to introduce media education into teacher training. The Council was of the opinion that media education in primary and secondary school starts with media education for teachers. The Council recognized that the initial task lay with the teacher training programmes. The Council stated that teachers were insufficiently trained in media and their many uses. The Council recommended that the same media competences to be introduced for media education in primary and secondary school should be used for teacher training too. It recommended examining which key concepts and their matching competences could be used for which course. For example, the key concept ‘ethics’ should be a part of the curriculum for history teachers.<sup>37</sup>

This recommendation put media education on the map in the Netherlands. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science financed projects in the school curriculum and created a Steering Committee and Platform.<sup>38</sup> However, media education was not incorporated in the school curriculum or teacher training programmes. Also, the results were disappointing. The media education products had very limited effect and no continuity.<sup>39</sup> Later, the Council would say about its 1996 Recommendation: *‘there are many players, experienced and inexperienced, but transfer of knowledge, continuity and effectiveness is hard to find.’*<sup>40</sup> The government also had a non-committal policy towards media education. So in the next years,

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<sup>33</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> 1. Complexity and meaning, 2. Time and structure, 3. Media representation (freely translated by the author), 4. Variety and convergence, 5. Information and selection, 6. Individualization and interaction, 7. Cultural context and internalization, 8. Socio-ideological and historical and social context, 9. Economical and legal context, 10. Esthetics, 11. Ethics.

<sup>35</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 16-24.

<sup>36</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 24.

<sup>37</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 16.

<sup>40</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 27.



the focus remained on teaching children and teachers the technical ways of using computers and other forms of ICT.<sup>41</sup>

### **The Council for Culture’s 2005 Recommendation**

Because of these disappointing results and ongoing technical and social developments, such as the ‘mediatisation’ of society by the digitization of information and convergence of electronic devices, the Council for Culture issued a second recommendation in 2005 called *Mediawijsheid: de ontwikkeling van nieuw burgerschap* (media wisdom: the development of new citizenship).<sup>42</sup>

The 2005 Recommendation has been very important in framing media education policies.<sup>43</sup> As stated above, one of the recommendations was to change the term ‘media education’ to ‘media wisdom’. The goal was to broaden the meaning of the term. Media education focused too much on children and young people; adults need to acquire media wisdom as well. Participation in civil society and media creation were also set as new goals. Citizens need to be able to create media and thus participate in a multimedia society. As stated above, the term has been well-received and has been used in the Netherlands ever since. The Council also recommended that its perspective on media wisdom be incorporated into a clear and coherent governmental policy vision.<sup>44</sup>

Next, the Council stated that the development of a media wisdom policy requires input from different governmental departments. The Council therefore recommended that the direct responsibility for media wisdom should lie with the Minister of Education, Culture and Science, who should ensure co-operation between that department and other departments within the government.<sup>45</sup>

The Council also insisted that promoting media literacy should be given a prominent place on the very broad, (ICT) innovation agenda, owing to the importance of the subject.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> For example, Van der Neut a.o. 2003 and Schoonenboom a.o. 2003.

<sup>42</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Schulz & Chin-A-Fat, 2012, p. 17; Raad voor Cultuur 2013, p. 16.

<sup>44</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 31.

<sup>45</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 31-32.

<sup>46</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 32.

The Council found it important to share knowledge about media wisdom. It recommended the creation of a central knowledge and expertise centre to prevent any further fragmentation by connecting every project and organization in the field of media wisdom.<sup>47</sup>

Next, as in its 1996 Recommendation, the Council stressed the important role of media wisdom in the school curriculum. Since its earlier call for the introduction of media wisdom into the school curriculum had been unsuccessful, the Council instead recommended embedding of media wisdom in the school curriculum by educating and appointing ‘Media Coaches’.<sup>48</sup> These Media Coaches help to strengthen the media wisdom of minors. Media Coaches work in (school) libraries, media centres, media organisations, government, etc. They are responsible for initiating media projects. Such projects include coaching students in developing media skills, drafting a media protocol (internet and mobile telephony), dealing with media-related problems, organising parent-teacher meetings and theme weeks and coordinating incoming teaching materials.

Unlike the same proposal in its 1996 Recommendation, this time the advice was adopted. In 2006, the National Academy for Media & Society (*de Nationale Academie voor Media & Maatschappij*)<sup>49</sup> appointed a special task force to develop the curriculum for the National Media Coach Training Programme (*Nationale Opleiding MediaCoach*). Since then, the programme has taken flight and it is now supported by the European Commission through the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme. Today, there are over 950 certified National Media Coaches.<sup>50</sup>

The Council also recommended that institutions operating in the field of media should be aware of and incorporate the Council’s perspective on media wisdom. Public libraries play an important role in promoting the media wisdom of citizens.<sup>51</sup> The library system’s goal is to ensure that all citizens have access to a pluralistic offer of reliable information as a basis for reading (reading and literature), learning (education and development) and information (knowledge and information).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Advies Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 24.

<sup>48</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p.32-33.

<sup>49</sup> The National Academy for Media & Society is an official educational institute, [www.mediaenmaatschappij.nl](http://www.mediaenmaatschappij.nl)

<sup>50</sup> [www.nomc.nl](http://www.nomc.nl) (search for ‘de opleiding’).

<sup>51</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 33.

<sup>52</sup> [www.siob.nl](http://www.siob.nl) (search for ‘over SIOB’); Sectorinstituut Openbare Bibliotheken 2014, p. 26-35.

Finally, the Council recommended that media wisdom should be a structural part of media policy. It should be formulated as a task for public service broadcasting (in the Netherlands, the *publieke omroep*) and it should be included in the performance agreements<sup>53</sup> concluded with the government. Public service broadcasters are required to broadcast exemplary content and direct their products in a way that strengthens media wisdom for its viewers, users or consumers.<sup>54</sup>

### **Response from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2006<sup>55</sup>**

The response of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science acknowledged the importance of media wisdom and addressed, one by one, the recommendations made by the Council for Culture. Taking the recommendations into account, the Ministry subsequently outlined its current media wisdom policy and set out plans for the future.<sup>56</sup> However, concrete, long-term policy on media wisdom is not specified in the report.

#### *Government and media wisdom*

The Council had recommended that the government should feel responsible for media wisdom and that the direct responsibility should lie with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The Ministry stated that since there are a lot of initiatives in the area of media wisdom already carried out in different departments (the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports and the Ministry of Security and Justice), it was not necessary to develop an inter-departmental structure, with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as the coordinator.<sup>57</sup>

#### *Innovation*

The Council recommended that media wisdom should be given a prominent place on the innovation agenda. The Ministry stated that the innovation agenda in the Netherlands was

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<sup>53</sup> Under article 2.22 of the Dutch *Mediawet*, the Dutch public service broadcaster needs to lay out its goals and objectives for the coming 5 years with regard to programming and different audiences they want to reach. This is called a performance agreement. The agreement is between the Dutch public service broadcaster and the Minister for Education, Culture and Science.

<sup>54</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 33.

<sup>55</sup> Editorial note: In this section, sentences which give the author’s evaluation have been italicized to distinguish them from the text describing the content of the Ministry’s response.

<sup>56</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p.3.

<sup>57</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p. 5.

focusing more and more on the importance of education and development and that media wisdom is a part of this.<sup>58</sup>

#### *Sharing knowledge via different networks*

The Ministry agreed with the Council that knowledge on media wisdom should be shared, preferably in collaboration with different networks and professionals. The Ministry created an interactive website [www.mediawijsheid.org](http://www.mediawijsheid.org) ([www.mediawisdom.org](http://www.mediawisdom.org)) for professionals and other parties to share ideas on media wisdom.<sup>59</sup> *This website was the predecessor of the current Mediawijzer.net.*

#### *Culture*

The Ministry agreed that media wisdom should be incorporated more in cultural institutions. It stated that this should be addressed in future policies on culture.<sup>60</sup>

#### *Libraries*

The Council stated that the role of libraries should be more structured, because of their important role in the development of media wisdom. The Ministry agreed and stated that the *Vereniging Openbare Bibliotheken, VOB* (the association of public libraries) is already working on this. The *VOB* promotes new initiatives on media wisdom and it seeks to work together with different organisations to share and combine knowledge.<sup>61</sup> *This eventually happened with the founding of Mediawijzer.net: the Sector Instituut Openbare Bibliotheken (SIOB, the Union of the Dutch public libraries) became one of its founding partners.*

#### *Media*

The Council recommended that public service broadcasting should be given the specific task of promoting media wisdom. The Ministry agreed that public service broadcasters have an educational task, but did not give them the specific task of promoting media wisdom.<sup>62</sup> The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science did attempt to create a code of conduct for safe

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<sup>58</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p. 6.

<sup>59</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p. 8.

<sup>61</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p 8-9.

<sup>62</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p. 9-10.

media content for public broadcasting services in 2009,<sup>63</sup> but as of yet, this code has not been finalized or adopted. The idea never really took flight.

### *Education*

In this report, the Ministry reiterated that it chooses to give schools room to include media wisdom in their curriculum, without making it mandatory to do so. Schools are legally obliged to teach children about active citizenship and social integration, and media wisdom could be a part of this, but it is up to the schools whether and how they do this.<sup>64</sup>

Also, the Ministry did not consider that there was any reason to stimulate the appointment of Media Coaches to help embed media wisdom in the school curriculum. Although the Ministry was not against educating and hiring Media Coaches, it was of the opinion that personnel is the school’s own responsibility. It is up to individual schools whether or not to hire a Media Coach.

### **Government vision on media wisdom, 2008**

The letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is the most recent statement of the government’s vision on media wisdom and media wisdom education. As stated above, the plans for a network organisation and expertise centre were laid out. The letter also addressed the roles of parents, the government and media organisations, stating that these parties have a certain social responsibility to promote the positive effects of (new) media and prevent negative effects.<sup>65</sup> The government was of the opinion that its tasks in media wisdom were the following:

- supporting citizens to be aware and critical in their use of media, with help from the expertise centre, *Mediawijzer.net*;
- ensuring quality and variety in media content that is available for everyone, to be implemented by, *inter alia*, public service broadcasting;
- encouraging self-regulation by media organisations - the government can give financial and legal support via, for example, *Kijkwijzer*<sup>66</sup>;
- Stimulating research on the role and influence of the media.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *Kamerstukken II* 2008/09, 31876, no. 5.

<sup>64</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p. 11-15.

<sup>65</sup> *Kamerstukken II* 2007/08, 31 434 no. 1.

<sup>66</sup> For more information about *Kijkwijzer*, see below, ‘Other government founded/funded organisations’

### Other legal documents

Although the Netherlands does not have legislation specifically regarding media wisdom, the *Mediawet* (Dutch media legislation) does address it indirectly. For example, the Dutch public service media are legally required, under Article 2.1 of the *Mediawet*, to offer content through different kinds of media, including the internet, to the entire Dutch population. Article 2.1, *Mediawet*, also requires public service media to offer content in the areas of information, culture, education and entertainment.

There is also a relevant article in the Dutch Penal Code: Article 240a punishes anyone (with a maximum imprisonment for a year or a fine of maximum € 19,500) who provides, shows or offers an image, object or data carrier that contains a harmful image for people under sixteen, to a person under sixteen. This means, broadcasting content suitable for 16 years or older before 22:00 is a punishable offence.<sup>68</sup> *Kijkwijzer*, the Dutch television and film classification system, decides what content is suitable for what age.<sup>69</sup>

There are no official mechanisms facilitating inter-ministerial relations on media wisdom. There is also no clear authority to oversee media wisdom. The Department of *media, letteren en bibliotheken* (media, literacy and libraries) within the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science deals actively with media wisdom, but it does not oversee every aspect of media wisdom. Since media wisdom is such a broad concept, the government does not think it should lie within just one department. Other Ministries are also engaged in certain aspects of media wisdom, such as the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Ministry of Security and Justice.

No one is singly responsible for reporting on media wisdom to the European Union, but Mary Berkhout, programme manager for *Mediawijzer.net*, represents the Netherlands in the European Media Literacy Expert Group. The tasks of the Expert Group are to examine the current place of media literacy in schools in all EU countries and to explore its possible inclusion in formal education (having due regard for the principle of subsidiarity).

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<sup>67</sup> *Kamerstukken II* 2007/08, 31 434 no. 1; Westerink 2011, p. 16.

<sup>68</sup> [www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl) (search for ‘kijkwijzer’)

<sup>69</sup> [www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl)

### **Links to social actors**

The government has many formal links to social actors. The biggest organisations are discussed below:

#### **Mediawijzer.net**

The state-funded media literacy expertise centre *Mediawijzer.net* is the largest actor involved in media wisdom.<sup>70</sup> As mentioned, it is a network organisation consisting of different partners with their own expertise in media education and media creation.<sup>71</sup> The programme was founded in 2008 and will run until 2014. In 2014 the programme will be evaluated by the government and it will be determined if it will be continued and in what capacity.

The founding partners of *Mediawijzer.net* were appointed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. They are:

- the founders of the *Digivaardig-Digibewust* (digitally skilled and digitally aware) programme. The *Digivaardig-Digibewust* programme focuses on enhancing digital skills and awareness of different target groups. This will contribute to strengthening the information society and the Dutch knowledge economy. The Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation (currently named the Ministry of Economic Affairs) is a co-founder and is responsible for funding and policy. The programme is run by ECP (Electronic Commerce Platform), the platform for the information society<sup>72</sup>;

- the *Sector Instituut Openbare Bibliotheken* (SIOB, the Union of the Dutch public libraries). The Union of Dutch Public Libraries is responsible for the national management of the library system. The library system’s goal is to ensure that all citizens have access to a pluralistic offer of reliable information as a basis for reading (reading and literature), learning (education and development) and information (knowledge and information). The SIOB promotes coherence, connectivity and efficiency within the public library system as a whole and develops and initiates policy and innovation within the sector<sup>73</sup>;

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<sup>70</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net)

<sup>71</sup> Ingen Housz 2011, p. 40.

<sup>72</sup> Bak a.o. 2011.

<sup>73</sup> [www.siob.nl](http://www.siob.nl) (search for ‘over siob’).

- the NPS Teleac RVU (NTR). The NTR is one of the national public broadcasting companies that focuses on information, education and culture. Youth and diversity are its special focus areas<sup>74</sup>;

- *Kennisnet* (public ICT support organisation for primary, secondary and vocational education) *Kennisnet* is an organisation involved in ICT-education in the Dutch school system. *Kennisnet* provides insights into the hallmarks of successful ICT applications and shares this knowledge, these experiences and good practices with the schools<sup>75</sup>. *For a full description of this organisation, see ‘other government founded/funded organisations’*;

- the *Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid* (Dutch Institute for Sound and Vision) The Dutch Institute for Sound and Vision is the national archive which preserves the audiovisual heritage.<sup>76</sup> The institute has an education department. This department is responsible for the development of attractive educational, cross-media services and products for all ages and school levels, enriching lessons and increasing the media wisdom of students.<sup>77</sup>

Besides these founding partners, *Mediawijzer.net* currently comprises more than 800 partners. Many of them engage in media literacy activities, for example libraries, NGO’s and universities.<sup>78</sup> In the Netherlands, there are many initiatives on media wisdom. The *Mediawijzer.net* programme especially focuses on promoting cohesion between existing initiatives and collaboration.<sup>79</sup>

*Mediawijzer.net* has a Steering Committee, consisting of members of the board and representatives of the five founding partners. *Kennisnet* has been assigned the task of coordinator by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Besides this, every founding partner has been given a portfolio of activities:

- *NTR*: Broadcasters and media

- *ECP*: Research

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<sup>74</sup> [www.ntr.nl](http://www.ntr.nl) (search for ‘over ntr’).

<sup>75</sup> [www.kennisnet.nl](http://www.kennisnet.nl) (search for ‘over ons’); Kennisnet meerjarenplan 2013, p. 1.

<sup>76</sup> Ingen Housz 2011, p. 40-41; [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘information, then ‘over mediawijzer.net’).

<sup>77</sup> [www.beeldengeluid.nl](http://www.beeldengeluid.nl) (search for ‘over beeld en geluid’ and then ‘onderwijs’).

<sup>78</sup> Ingen Housz 2011, p. 40-41; [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘information, then ‘over mediawijzer.net’).

<sup>79</sup> Ingen Housz 2011, p. 41.



- *Beeld en Geluid*: Central location function and communication

- *SIOB*: Libraries

- *Kennisnet*: online environments and websites

Besides the Steering Committee, *Mediawijzer.net* has a Core Group. This Core Group is responsible for the implementation of the activities of the centre. The group meets 12 times a year and consists of a representative of each founding partner and the programme manager of *Mediawijzer.net*. The activities of the centre are partly carried out by the organization itself, partly by network partners and partly by hired experts and companies.

*Mediawijzer.net* also has a Programme Board. The task of the Programme Board is to give requested and unrequested advice to the Steering Committee. Recommendations to the Steering Committee are about desirable aspects or emphases in the programming of activities of *Mediawijzer.net*.

As mentioned, the mission of *Mediawijzer.net* is to provide the Dutch population with guidance on how to become ‘media wise’ and thus learn to participate in a multimedia society.<sup>80</sup> *Mediawijzer.net* stresses the importance of raising young people’s awareness of the influences of media content on its users. *Mediawijzer.net* focuses on teaching young people about the potential of modern media applications for the management of daily life. Another goal is to support the activities of children, young people, their parents and schools in the information society.<sup>81</sup>

Furthermore, *Mediawijzer.net* offers an annual promotion fund. As explained above, part of the mission of *Mediawijzer.net* is promote media wisdom initiatives by connecting different network partners. Every year network partners of *Mediawijzer.net* can enter their ideas for projects to promote media wisdom. These projects should promote cooperation and synergy, which is why each project needs to be executed by at least three different network partners. In 2013, *Mediawijzer.net* had € 200.000,- at its disposal to fund the different projects.

The designation of *Mediawijzer.net* is a little unclear: *Mediawijzer.net* is a programme created by the government. However, the government is not responsible for the content, activities or

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<sup>80</sup> Ingen Housz 2011, p. 40-41; [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘information, then ‘over mediawijzer.net’).

<sup>81</sup> Ingen Housz 2011, p. 40-41

resources. The government is only the creator and source of funding of the programme. The founding partners are all public organisations, but a lot of the content is created by private organisations. Thus, *Mediawijzer.net* relies heavily on cooperation between the public and private sectors.

### **Other government founded/funded organisations**

#### **Mediasmarties**

*Mediasmarties* is an independent non-commercial organisation commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. *Mediasmarties* is a website for parents, guardians, children, grandparents, educators, people working in childcare, schools and centres for youth and family. The website offers a list of ‘child media’ appropriate according to the age a child. The website gives information about the content and appropriateness of media products such as: television programmes, movies, online games, video games, apps and websites for children between the ages of 1, 5 and 11.<sup>82</sup>

#### **Kennisnet**

*Kennisnet*<sup>83</sup> is an organisation involved in ICT-education in the Dutch school system. It is subsidised by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and by other private sector partners. *Kennisnet* provides insight into the hallmarks of successful ICT applications and shares this knowledge, these experiences and good practices with the schools. Also, *Kennisnet* enhances innovations in the schools by exploring new technological developments and translating this so that the schools know how to make use of this.<sup>84</sup>

The oversight body for *Kennisnet* is *De Raad van Toezicht* (supervisory board). The Supervisory Board is concerned with the approval of annual plans, budgets and reports. The Supervisory Board also helps the board to develop a strategic policy. The Supervisory Board consists of eleven members and meets about six times a year.<sup>85</sup>

#### **NICAM (Kijkwijzer)**

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<sup>82</sup> [www.mediasmarties.nl](http://www.mediasmarties.nl) (search for ‘over Mediasmarties’)

<sup>83</sup> [www.kennisnet.nl](http://www.kennisnet.nl)

<sup>84</sup> [www.kennisnet.nl](http://www.kennisnet.nl) (search for ‘over ons’); *Kennisnet meerjarenplan 2013*, p. 1.

<sup>85</sup> [www.kennisnet.nl](http://www.kennisnet.nl) (search for ‘over ons’ then ‘Raad van Toezicht’)

The *NICAM* (*Nederlands Instituut voor de Classificatie van Audiovisuele Media*)<sup>86</sup> is the Dutch Institute for the Classification of Audiovisual Media. The institute was founded in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Ministry of Security and Justice. The *NICAM* created a classification system to give parents a guide as to what age the content of a television programme or a movie may be harmful for children: *Kijkwijzer*. This classification system first gives an age indication: all ages, 6 years old, 9 years old, 12 years old and 16 years old. Next, there are the icons that give the reason for the advice: violence, fear, sex, discrimination, drugs and alcohol abuse and foul language.<sup>87</sup>

 = Niet schadelijk/Alle Leeftijden (not harmful/suitable for all ages)	 = Geweld (violence)
 = Mogelijk schadelijk tot 6 jaar (possibly harmful until 6 years old)	 = Angst (fear)
 = Mogelijk schadelijk tot 9 jaar (possibly harmful until 9 years old)	 = Seks (sex)
 = Mogelijk schadelijk tot 12 jaar (possibly harmful until 12 years old)	 = Discriminatie (discrimination)
 = Mogelijk schadelijk tot 16 jaar (possibly harmful until 16 years old)	 = Drugs- en alcoholmisbruik (drugs and alcohol abuse)
	 = Grof Taalgebruik (foul language)

The *Kijkwijzer* classification system applies to most audiovisual products, such as television programmes, films shown in cinemas and films on dvd. An exception is made for the news and live programmes, because these programmes cannot be classified beforehand. Games are

<sup>86</sup> [www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl) (search for ‘organisatie’)

<sup>87</sup> [www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl) (search for ‘kijkwijzer’)

also not included in this classification system. The Netherlands use *PEGI* (Pan European Game Information) as a classification system for games.<sup>88</sup>

The *NICAM* describes itself as an independent institution that serves as a national self-regulatory body within the audiovisual sector. The *NICAM* examines compliance with the rules by relevant parties and the perception and use of *Kijkwijzer* by the consumer. The *NICAM* itself is, in turn, overseen by the *Commissariaat voor de Media* (Dutch Media Authority). The Dutch Media Authority periodically examines and evaluates the self-regulation.<sup>89</sup> This meta-supervision focuses on both the quality of the classifications and the criteria that the institution uses to determine whether a classification is valid, reliable, stable, consistent and accurate.

### **Digibewust**

Lastly, there is an organisation called *Digibewust* (Digitally Aware).<sup>90</sup> *Digibewust* promotes the safe and responsible use of the internet and computers, mobile phones and other digital products. *Digibewust* provides useful information about an array of subjects. The subjects it covers are: online bullying, safe internet for children, phishing, safe and secure banking, cybercrime, internet scams, passwords, computer security, safe e-mailing, safe online shopping, safe entrepreneurship, safe use of mobile phones, online privacy and hacking. *Digibewust* is part of a programme called *Digivaardig & Digiveilig* (Digitally Aware & Digitally Safe) which is a collaboration between the government, businesses and civil society organisations. The programme is supported by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the European Commission and multiple businesses (such as KPN, UPC, IBM and Ziggo<sup>91</sup>).<sup>92</sup>

### *Appreciation and comments:*

The change in terminology is a positive one because media wisdom has a broader meaning than media education. It is important that it not only encompasses the education of children and young people, but all members of society. In order to be able to fully participate in society, all citizens need to become media wise. The change is also positive because it causes less

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<sup>88</sup>The Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) age rating system was established to help European parents make informed decisions on buying computer games. It was launched in spring 2003 and replaced a number of national age rating systems with a single system now used throughout most of Europe, [www.pegi.info](http://www.pegi.info).

<sup>89</sup>[www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl) (search for ‘organisatie’)

<sup>90</sup>[www.digibewust.nl](http://www.digibewust.nl)

<sup>91</sup>KPN, UPC and Ziggo are all telecommunication companies. IBM is a multinational technology and consulting company.

<sup>92</sup>[www.digibewust.nl](http://www.digibewust.nl) (search for ‘over digibewust’)

confusion about what the many different forms of literacy entail. The Council for Culture does not favour the term media literacy because of its many linguistic associations. The same can be said about digital literacy, information literacy, etc. With media wisdom as the conventionally-used term, the Netherlands largely avoids problems with the many definitions and linguistic associations of the different literacies.

<b>3.1 Dimension</b>	<b>Capacity-building: teacher training</b>
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### **Teachers**

Official media wisdom policy does not mention teacher training - either in the response to the Council for Culture’s 2005 Recommendation or in the Ministry’s 2008 Letter on media wisdom.

The Council for Culture’s 1996 Recommendation addresses teacher training in detail, for every school level. As stated above, this recommendation consists mainly of introducing media education in schools. The Council introduced eleven key concepts in media education and developed competences for each concept.<sup>93</sup> The key concepts, with matching competences, also apply to teacher training. The Council recommends examining which key concepts and matching competences can be used for which course. For example, the key concept ‘ethics’ should be a part of the curriculum for history teachers.<sup>94</sup>

The Council for Culture’s 2005 Recommendation also stresses the important role of media wisdom in the school curriculum. The Council stated that it is essential that ‘media wisdom’ should be an essential part of the curriculum; *“how else will they be able to guide their future students?”*<sup>95</sup> The recommendation does not specify for which school level. The recommendation is formulated in general terms, so one can deduce that when the recommendation states that ‘media wisdom’ should be an essential part of the curriculum for teacher training students, this applies to every school level.

However, since the recommendations are not binding and are not, formally-speaking, policy, official media wisdom policy does not address the issue of teacher training.

<sup>93</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 16-24.

<sup>94</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 1996, p. 3.

<sup>95</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 26-27.

Media wisdom and instruction in media wisdom are therefore not part of the regular curriculum in teacher training, either in primary or high school. However, there is a separate teacher training course on media wisdom education: the National training for Media Coach.<sup>96</sup> This training course is not compulsory for teachers or even stimulated by the government.<sup>97</sup> The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is of the opinion that it is up to the school to appoint Media Coaches and that there is therefore no reason to stimulate the appointment Media Coaches to help embed media wisdom in the school curriculum.

The national training for Media Coach is a post-bachelor or master training and it is aimed at people who work in or would like to work in primary or high schools, libraries, youth care or assistance or the government. Media coaches are responsible for initiating media projects such as coaching students in their development of media skills, involving students in creating media policies and organising theme weeks.<sup>98</sup>

The Media Coach training course is not solely meant for teachers, but it is very beneficial for teachers. It is an optional three-month course with ten sessions of 3.5 hours. Every three months, a new course starts. The training course concludes with an exam, consisting of a theoretical part and a practical part. Upon the successful completion of the exam, students are awarded the official National Media Coach certificate.<sup>99</sup>

## Students

Currently, media wisdom or learning to become ‘media wise’ is not part of the standard curriculum in schools, either in primary or secondary school. As already mentioned, the Council for Culture’s 1996 Recommendation addressed media education in detail, but this part of the recommendation was never adopted by the government.<sup>100</sup> The 2005 Recommendation again addressed the point of media wisdom in the school systems. Again, this has not been adopted by the government. It is up to the schools to teach children about media wisdom and to determine in what capacity they do so.<sup>101</sup> Or, as Neelie Kroes, the European Commissioner for the Digital Agenda, has stated: “*the Netherlands chooses to give*

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<sup>96</sup> [www.nomc.nl](http://www.nomc.nl)

<sup>97</sup> Notitie mediawijsheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p.14.

<sup>98</sup> [www.nomc.nl](http://www.nomc.nl) (search for ‘de opleiding’)

<sup>99</sup> [www.nomc.nl](http://www.nomc.nl) (search for ‘de opleiding’)

<sup>100</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 13.

<sup>101</sup> For examples of media wisdom in schools see Pijpers & Van den Bosch 2013.

*schools room to include media wisdom in their curriculum in their own way.*”<sup>102</sup> This stems from the idea that it is not the task of the government to interfere with the school curriculum.

In 2012, the *Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, KNAW* (Royal Dutch Academy of Science)<sup>103</sup> issued a recommendation about ‘digital literacy’ in high schools.<sup>104</sup> One of the recommendations in this rapport was to introduce two new compulsory subjects: ‘Information & communication’ in the lower years of high school and ‘Computer Science’ in the upper years of high school.<sup>105</sup>

The first subject should be a broad introductory subject, which covers the essential facets of digital literacy, computers and computer networks. It would cover the use and consequences of computers with special attention for the individual in relation to society and economy. Special attention would also be given to the ethical, social and legal aspects.<sup>106</sup>

The second subject would be a broad subject as well, but the description of what the subject would entail is not set out very clearly. The Academy merely states that it would vary from fundamental to applied subjects and that it would be developed in collaboration with other fields, such as history, geography, social science, economy, maths, physics and life sciences (*levenswetenschappen*).<sup>107</sup>

The idea of introducing new subjects has received mixed reactions. The Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science stated in a reaction to Parliament on this report that he did not think introducing new subjects would be a good idea. He thinks that more important results can be reached by sharpening the core goals of the school curriculum, in collaboration with media wisdom activities.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Letter to Neelie Kroes, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 2013, p. 10.

<sup>103</sup> The Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (KNAW) was founded in 1808 as an advisory body to the government, a task that it performs even now. The Academy derives its authority from its members selected on quality, outstanding scientists from a range of academic fields. KNAW is also responsible, for seventeen institutes whose research and collections are among the vanguard of Dutch science and international fame, [www.knaw.nl](http://www.knaw.nl) (search ‘de knaw’).

<sup>104</sup> Advies van de KNAW-Commissie Informatica in het voortgezet onderwijs 2012

<sup>105</sup> Advies van de KNAW-Commissie Informatica in het voortgezet onderwijs 2012 p. 21.

<sup>106</sup> Advies van de KNAW-Commissie Informatica in het voortgezet onderwijs 2012 p. 21.

<sup>107</sup> Recommendation KNAW 2012, p. 21.

<sup>108</sup> Reaction State Secretary S. Dekker on recommendation KNAW 2013.

Mary Berkhout, programme manager of *Mediawijzer.net*, stated that she thought it was a good initiative on the part of the *KNAW*, but introducing a new subject was not the right solution to the lack of media wisdom education in schools. She stated: media wisdom is a broad concept and its embedding is necessary in every school subject.<sup>109</sup> Frank Evers, programme manager for education for *Kennisnet* is happy with the attention from the *KNAW*, but agrees with Berkhout and pleads for a structural embedding of media wisdom in the entire school curriculum.<sup>110</sup>

### **General competences on media wisdom**

As stated above, the 1996 Recommendation proposed a detailed set of eleven key concepts with matching competences. These concepts and competences distinguish between different components of media education, but they have not been adopted as policy and are also very dated. Since then, however, no new competences have been put forward in policy. *Mediawijzer.net* does propose sets of competences, for children, teachers and teacher training students, but these competences are not official policy.

#### *Appreciation and comments:*

The foregoing has shown that media wisdom is not part of the standard curriculum in either teacher training courses or in schools. The government leaves it up to schools how to deal with media wisdom. This may lead to divergence in the levels of media wisdom among children and young people in the Netherlands. Some schools will feature media wisdom prominently whereas others will not and some may not even engage with it at all. Furthermore, the change in terminology in the recommendation from *KNAW* is somewhat strange. Ever since the last recommendation from the Council for Culture the term ‘media wisdom’ has been used (which encompasses digital literacy), so it is strange and confusing that *KNAW* used the term digital literacy in its recommendation.

### **Role of research institutions and other support mechanisms**

The main role of research institutions is to evaluate media wisdom and to conduct research to influence media wisdom policy. For example, the research institution *ITS* of the Radboud University Nijmegen recently conducted research commissioned by *Mediawijzer.net*, called

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<sup>109</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (article ‘Mediawijzsheid integreren in bestaande vakken’).

<sup>110</sup> [www.kennisnet.nl](http://www.kennisnet.nl) (article ‘Mediawijzsheid structureel inbedden in gehele curriculum’).



‘media wisdom in primary education; backgrounds and perceptions’.<sup>111</sup> This research will be used by *Mediawijzer.net* to develop learning resources on media wisdom in primary school.

*ITS* has conducted two other studies commissioned by *Mediawijzer.net*. In 2009 and in 2010 the research institution conducted studies called, respectively, ‘*Mediawijsheid in het basisonderwijs en het voortgezet onderwijs, verslag van onderzoek bij leraren*’ (Media wisdom in primary and secondary education, report of a study amongst teachers) and ‘*Mediawijsheid in het onderwijs 2010, verslag van onderzoek bij leraren in het primair en voortgezet onderwijs*’ (Media wisdom in education 2010, report of a study amongst teachers in primary and secondary education). These studies reflect on the media wisdom of students in primary en secondary school. It is used as a test of how media wise these students are.

*Kennisnet* also produces a yearly report on ICT and education called the ‘*Vier in balans monitor*’.<sup>112</sup> The yearly report provides insights into the latest developments of ICT and education, and describes new developments.

Lastly *Mediawijzer.net* commissioned a study to evaluate available research carried out on the subject of media wisdom from 2005 until the present.<sup>113</sup> It was carried out by *Dialogic innovatie & interactie*<sup>114</sup> and *NextValue Research*<sup>115</sup> in May 2013. The goal of the study was on the one hand to find out in what areas there are still knowledge gaps and on the other hand to show the available knowledge on the subject.<sup>116</sup>

School libraries and media centres do not have a specific role in respect of media wisdom, but the training for Media Coach is, *inter alia*, aimed at people working in school libraries or media centres. As a result school libraries en media centres often employ Media Coaches.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Walraven, Paas & Schouwenaars 2013.

<sup>112</sup> [www.kennisnet.nl](http://www.kennisnet.nl) (search for ‘onderzoek’ then ‘vier in balans’).

<sup>113</sup> Gillebaard a.o. 2013.

<sup>114</sup> *Dialogic innovatie & interactie* is an independent research and consultancy institute specialized in the areas of infrastructure, information, education and innovation, see [www.dialogic.nl](http://www.dialogic.nl).

<sup>115</sup> Next Value Research is a research institute that carries out studies for social and cultural organizations, businesses and governments. It specializes in education, new media, art and culture, charities and healthcare, see [www.nextvalue.nl](http://www.nextvalue.nl).

<sup>116</sup> Gillebaard a.o. 2013.

<sup>117</sup> [www.nomc.nl](http://www.nomc.nl)

<b>3.2 Dimension</b>	<b>Capacity-building: Teaching/training materials and other relevant content</b>
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Law and policy do not offer any teacher training resources and materials. Most of the resources are developed and made available via: [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net).

Competence models

*Mediawijzer.net* proposes competence models for teachers and for teacher training students.<sup>118</sup>

The models comprise ten different competences, categorized in four areas, namely:

Understanding

- understanding the growing influence of media on society
- understanding how media are made
- understanding how the media colour reality

Use

- using equipment software and applications
- orientation within media environments

Communication

- finding and processing information
- creating content
- participating in social networks

Strategy

- reflecting on own media usage
- achieving objectives through media

The competence models provide five levels (0 to 4, incl.) on how high a (trainee) teacher's competence is in the specific area. For example, in the area of understanding, understanding the influence of media on society holds four levels of competence. If a (trainee) teacher is at

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<sup>118</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for 'information' then 'Competence model: 10 media literacy competences').

level 0, it means that they are not aware of the influence that the media have on society, whereas level 4 means that they are able to analyse the various effects of the growing influence of media on the way of life of young people and the practice of education. They explore the latest views and topical discussions to this end.<sup>119</sup>

These competence models were created by five network partners. The partners formed a project group in 2010 to answer the questions of what media wisdom is and how someone’s level of media wisdom can be measured. The competences are a result of their collective work.<sup>120</sup> The competences can be found on the website [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net).

#### Promotion funds

As explained above, *Mediawijzer.net* also offers an annual promotion fund. The promotion fund in 2013 focused entirely on embedding media wisdom in primary education.<sup>121</sup> To this end, *Mediawijzer.net* asked its partners to develop creative solutions for three subjects:

1. learning resources on media education for teacher training students in primary education, to be used by teachers in everyday practice;
2. learning resources media wisdom for teacher training programs;
3. learning resources for teachers.

To help its network partners, *Mediawijzer.net* has had the non-profit research institute *ITS* of the Radboud University Nijmegen conduct research to establish a theoretical framework. The framework is a report containing an analysis of 26 media wisdom competences in primary education, an analysis of media wisdom in eight different teacher training programmes, a survey amongst teachers and a literature study on the different levels of development of children. Also, different experts of the *Mediawijzer.net* network and the *SLO, nationaal expertisecentrum leerplanontwikkeling* (national institute for curriculum development) helped with creating the theoretical framework.<sup>122</sup>

For 2013, *Mediawijzer.net* had € 200.000,- at its disposal to fund the different projects.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘information’ then ‘Competence levels’).

<sup>120</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘information’ and ‘Competentie Model’).

<sup>121</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘stimuleringsregeling 2013’).

<sup>122</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘stimuleringsregeling 2013’).

<sup>123</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘stimuleringsregeling 2013’).

*Appreciation and comments:*

In the absence of legal or policy provisions to provide resources or materials on media wisdom education, everything that is available is created either by teachers themselves or by the private sector. *Mediawijzer.net* sets out competences for teachers, trainee teachers and in general, but they are not formal policy.

<b>3.3 Dimension</b>	<b>Capacity-building: funding</b>
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Media wisdom is funded by the ‘Culture’ part of the budget of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and not the ‘Education’ part.<sup>124</sup> Within the budget for culture, there is a separate budget for media. The media wisdom expertise centre, *Mediawijzer.net*, falls within this budget.<sup>125</sup> In 2013 it received 2 million Euros from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

*Mediawijzer.net* operates on the basis of a four-year business plan, with a yearly application plan concerning budget. So *Mediawijzer.net* draws up a plan for the coming year and based on that plan it receives its funding. Most of the funding goes to the ‘central office’ or pavilion. The rest of the funding goes to the promotion funds and the day-to-day operation of the programme.<sup>126</sup> *Mediawijzer.net* does not publish a yearly report on its website, but all the information is available upon request from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

Other organisations, such as the NICAM (*Kijkwijzer*) and *Kennisnet* are subsidised by the government and receive contributions by other private sector partners.<sup>127</sup> The organisation *Mediasmarties* was commissioned and funded by the government, but since 2013 the funding has stopped and now *Mediasmarties* gets its funding by contributions for products and services it offers.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> [www.rijksbegroting.nl](http://www.rijksbegroting.nl) (search for ‘rijksbegrotingen’ then ‘Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap’ then ‘Artikel 15. media).

<sup>125</sup> Mediabegroting 2013, p. 11.

<sup>126</sup> As explained by Nezha Bouanani from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

<sup>127</sup> [www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl) (search for ‘organisatie’ then ‘Statuten NICAM).

<sup>128</sup> [www.mediasmarties.nl](http://www.mediasmarties.nl) (article ‘De nieuwe Mediasmarties nieuwsbrief’).

The Media Coach training programme is funded partly by the tuition fees paid by students and partly by the European Commission, via the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme.<sup>129</sup>

Since the teaching of media wisdom does not fall within the budget for Education, but in the media part of the budget for Culture, no valid comparison can be made between the proportion of the media wisdom funding and the total education system revenue.

*Kennisnet* gives detailed insights in its funding in its annual report. It shows how much money has come in in a given year and how it has been spent.<sup>130</sup> The *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)* also has a financial section in its annual report, but it is not as detailed as that of *Kennisnet*.<sup>131</sup>

*Appreciation and comments:*

The funding of media wisdom falls within the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Although *Mediawijzer.net* does not publish a yearly financial report, the information is available upon request at the Ministry. Other organisations such as *Kennisnet* and the *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)* do publish details of their finances and funding.

<b>4. Dimension</b>	<b>Role of actors (outside school system)</b>
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**Role of regulatory media authorities**

The Dutch Media Authority provides meta-supervision for only one actor, the *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)*. As explained above, the *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)* describes itself as an independent institution that serves as a national self-regulatory body within the audiovisual sector.<sup>132</sup> Other than this, the Dutch Media Authority plays no role in media wisdom.

**Role of private actors**

Besides actors that are established and/or funded by the government, numerous private sector actors are very active in the area of media wisdom. They mostly provide training or resources, either for children, young people, their parents or teachers. Here are a few examples:

<sup>129</sup> [www.nomc.nl](http://www.nomc.nl) (search for ‘De opleiding’).

<sup>130</sup> [www.kennisnet.nl](http://www.kennisnet.nl) (search for ‘over ons’ then ‘onze ambities’ then ‘jaarverslag 2012’).

<sup>131</sup> [www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl) (search for ‘organisatie’ then ‘jaarverslag 2012’).

<sup>132</sup> [www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl) (search for ‘organisatie’); [www.cvdM.nl](http://www.cvdM.nl) (search for ‘Over het CvdM’ then ‘verantwoordelijkheden’).

### *Mijn Kind Online*

*Stichting Mijn Kind Online* (Foundation My Child Online) is one of the civil society foundations involved in media wisdom. It is an expertise centre on (digital) media for children and young people.<sup>133</sup>

*Stichting Mijn Kind Online* strives to help children and young people to become media wise, by conducting research on how young people between the ages of two and 18 deal with new media and advising parents on this;<sup>134</sup> by helping professionals, especially teachers;<sup>135</sup> by stimulating the quality of digital media for children (praising media creators on what works and critiquing on what can be improved),<sup>136</sup> and by stimulating children to excel via social media.<sup>137</sup>

### *Bekijk ‘t*

A civil society organisation called *Bekijk ‘t* (which roughly translates as ‘Check it out’) offers, inter alia, a training course in media wisdom. This course teaches children and young people how they themselves can influence their online identity and privacy, they learn about the different uses of social media and they learn to judge information and news on reliability.<sup>138</sup>

### *Reactif*

*Reactif* (Reactive) is a civil society foundation that focuses on cyber bullying. The foundation confronts young people with this theme using interactive media and tries to help them understand the influence they can have in certain situations and discussions. The foundation strives to teach young people to make their own assessments in discussions, to learn from each other and to be aware of consequences.<sup>139</sup> For example, one of its projects, called ‘It’s up

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<sup>133</sup> [www.mijnkindonline.nl](http://www.mijnkindonline.nl)

<sup>134</sup> See De Haan & Pijpers 2010; Duimel a.o. 2013; Duimel, Pijpers & Borgdoff 2012.

<sup>135</sup> See Zwanenberg & Pardoën 2010; Pijpers 2012.

<sup>136</sup> Pijpers 2011; Pijpers & Marteiijn 2008.

<sup>137</sup> See [www.mijnkindonline.nl](http://www.mijnkindonline.nl) (search for ‘Zie Sociaal met media: goed doen 2.0 and ‘Lespakket met Spangas’).

<sup>138</sup> [www.bekijkt.nl](http://www.bekijkt.nl)

<sup>139</sup> [www.reactif.nl](http://www.reactif.nl) (search ‘over ons’ and ‘Stichting reactif’)

to you’, uses an interactive video in high schools as a discussion starter on how young people can be more aware of their role in cyber bullying.<sup>140</sup>

#### *S-TV Broadcast Your School*

*S-TV Broadcast Your School* started in 2009 as a media wisdom project to help schools with video-education. *S-TV Broadcast Your School* gives advice to schools and school management, it provides course modules for more efficient learning processes (learning by doing) and it provides communication formats (such as ‘the school news’).<sup>141</sup>

#### *Keii*

*Keii* is an organisation that focuses on modern education. Within the area of media wisdom, it strives to integrate media wisdom in the entire school curriculum. It guides and gives advice to schools on how to deal with social media and media wisdom. It also helps with formulating policies where new learning tools such as smartphones and tablets can play a part.<sup>142</sup>

#### Social Media Wijs

*Social Media Wijs* (Social Media Wise) is an organisation that offers training courses on social media for children, young people, parents and teachers. Furthermore, it offers seminars on social media and give advice on social media policy. The organisation specializes in education and helps schools integrate social media in the curriculum in a positive manner.<sup>143</sup>

#### **Events to promote media wisdom**

*Mediawijzer.net* organises several events a year to show the importance of media wisdom.

#### *Mediawijsheidmarkt*

The annual *Mediawijsheidmarkt* (Media wisdom market) is a market for professionals on media wisdom, network partners of *Mediawijzer.net*, policy makers of government and everyone who is interested in the subject of media wisdom. The *Mediawijsheidmarkt* is a network event and brings together different organisations to share information about their current initiatives on the subject of media wisdom.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> [www.reactif.nl](http://www.reactif.nl) (search ‘project – it’s up to you).

<sup>141</sup> [www.s-tv1.nl](http://www.s-tv1.nl) (search ‘over s-tv)

<sup>142</sup> [www.keii.nl](http://www.keii.nl) (search for ‘mediawijsheid’)

<sup>143</sup> [www.socialmediawijs.nl](http://www.socialmediawijs.nl)

<sup>144</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘activiteiten’, then ‘mediawijsheidmarkt’)

### *Expertsessies*

*Mediawijzer.net* organizes *expertsessies* (expert sessions) during the year on current gaps and issues concerning media wisdom. In these sessions, experts on certain subjects are invited to pool their knowledge. An expert session could entail a publication, an advice to policy-makers or a practical action plan. The results of these sessions are shared within the network via the online community.<sup>145</sup>

### *Media Ukkie Dagen*

Another activity is the annual campaign called *Media Ukkie Dagen* (campaign on media for the little ones). The *Media Ukkie Dagen* are ten days of media education for pre-school children. The days are filled with concrete tips, pointers and activities for parents and guardians to help their ‘media little ones’ (children from 0-6 years old) utilize any opportunities that are afforded by the media in a good and conscious way.<sup>146</sup>

### *Week van de Mediawijsheid*

The *Week van de Mediawijsheid* (Week of Media Wisdom) is a public campaign that focuses on children between the ages of 10 and 14 and their parents. The campaign focuses on helping young people to understand their use of media and reflect on this behaviour. To raise awareness for this, *Mediawijzer.net* organises several outreach activities.<sup>147</sup>

One of these activities is the *MediaMasters* (Media Masters). *MediaMasters* is a ‘media wisdom game’ for children. Children are already technically very highly skilled in media at a young age, but this game helps them to engage in media in a more critical manner by being more alert and aware. The game lasts the entire week and at the end the children are awarded the title ‘Media Master’.<sup>148</sup>

### *Appreciation and comments:*

The role of civil society and private actors is very important for media wisdom. As the above examples show, numerous organisations are involved in the promotion of media wisdom. This could perhaps be seen as a negative development insofar as it further demonstrates a lack of

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<sup>145</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘activiteiten’, then ‘expertsessies’).

<sup>146</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘activiteiten’, then ‘media ukkie dagen’).

<sup>147</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘activiteiten’, then ‘week van de mediawijsheid’).

<sup>148</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘activiteiten’, then ‘week van de mediawijsheid’).



uniformity. On the other hand, it could also be seen as a positive feature as it shows that the subject media wisdom receives wide attention in the Netherlands, from diverse angles. It is noteworthy that most of the organisations engaged in promoting media wisdom are civil society organisations. Their engagement is therefore from a social perspective as opposed to a commercial one. Another positive characteristic of the *Mediawijzer.net* programme is that it especially focuses on promoting cohesion between all these initiatives and promotes cooperation, as can be seen above. The *Mediawijsheidweek* is a great example of this.

<b>5. Dimension</b>	<b>Evaluation mechanisms (inside and outside school)</b>
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Policies on media wisdom are currently not used to test media accountability. Also, since media wisdom and the teaching thereof is not required by law, there are no legal mechanisms to ensure and measure the efficiency of media wisdom policies. The Council for Culture’s non-binding recommendations do measure the efficiency of media wisdom policies. As explained above, the 2005 Recommendation was written partly because since its previous recommendation, the policies drawn up on media wisdom had turned out to be inefficient and ineffective.

### **Evaluation**

Most media wisdom resources, programmes and actors are not evaluated by an outside organisation with the use of national or international indexes and indicators, except the *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)*. The *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)* has been evaluated on its performance by the Advisory Committee on Youth, Violence and Media in 2005.<sup>149</sup> The Committee issued the report ‘*Wijzer Kijken*’ and concluded that the classification system of the *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)* worked and was well-received. The Committee did recommend some improvements, such as: the appointment of independent members for the Board and improving quality checks on the work the *NICAM* does. However, this report is from 2005 and there has not been another evaluation report on the *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)* since. The Dutch Media Authority periodically examines and evaluates the self-regulation of the *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)*.

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<sup>149</sup> On March 1, 2005, the Secretaries of State for Health, Welfare and Sport and of Education, Culture and Science created the Committee Youth, Violence and Media. The mission of the committee was to report on whether there can be done more to prevent harmful effects of media content on young people in the Netherlands, see Van der Stoel a.o. 2005.

Some organisations provide annual reports on their performance, such as *Kennisnet*. In this report *Kennisnet* evaluates the activities they have undertaken over the past year and their impact and effect. *Kennisnet* also evaluates the internal organisation and publishes details of its finances.

The *NICAM (Kijkwijzer)* also produces an annual report, but this report is more of a summary of its activities instead of a performance review or evaluation.

*Mediawijzer.net* does not provide an annual evaluation report, but in 2010 it set out a four-year scope to evaluate media wisdom in general and more in particular to evaluate *Mediawijzer.net*.<sup>150</sup> It sets out what *Mediawijzer.net* has accomplished since 2008 and what can be done in the next four years.<sup>151</sup>

### **Target groups**

The element that sets the term ‘media wisdom’ apart from other terms, such as media education and media literacy, is the fact that media wisdom encompasses everyone, not only children and young people. This means that since this term was introduced in the Council for Culture’s 2005 Recommendation, the goal in the Netherlands has been to help every citizen become ‘media wise’. For example, *Mediawijzer.net* is aimed at the general public and media-related organisations. Also, *Digibewust* provides helpful resources for the general public, on online privacy, online hacking, phishing, etc.

Having said that, the target groups of most organisations, including *Mediawijzer.net*, are still children and young people, their parents and teachers.<sup>152</sup>

An emerging trend is what is called in the Netherlands the *Wifi-peuters* (Wifi-toddlers). Because of the advancing technology and ever-increasing use of touchscreens, the age at which children start to use appliances such as mobile phones and tablets keeps getting younger.<sup>153</sup> Today there is a new generation of Wifi-toddlers who learn to use mobile devices in everyday life at a very young age.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Mediawijzer.net 2010.

<sup>151</sup> Mediawijzer.net 2010.

<sup>152</sup> see mediawijzer.net, NICAM (Kijkwijzer), Digibewust, Kennisnet.

<sup>153</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (Article ‘5 trends in mediawijzheid’); see also Iene Miene Media 2013.

<sup>154</sup> Iene Miene Media 2013, p. 13-14.

This means a shift in target groups for professionals in the area of media wisdom. Media wisdom and its education is now still mainly focused on children from primary school on. In the future the focus should be on even younger children. *Mediawijzer.net* is a front-runner on this subject and has been organising the, above mentioned, *Media Ukkie Dagen* (Campaign for media and toddlers) since 2012, which provides parents with pointers and tips for teaching their toddlers how to deal with the (new) media.<sup>155</sup>

*Appreciation and comments:*

The media wisdom resources and programmes are not periodically evaluated by an independent organisation, but most organisations do provide self-evaluation either in the form of an annual report or in the case of *Mediawijzer.net* in the form of a four-year scope.

<b>6. Dimension</b>	<b>Main concepts and legitimizing values</b>
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**Educational paradigms**

As seen above and throughout this report, participation in a multimedia society is the main value stated in policy and the aforementioned programmes. Participation in this kind of society is reached by the dissemination of information and learning to think critically about (new) media. It is therefore not surprising that the most favoured educational paradigms seem to be transmission and participation. Here are a few good examples of transmission and participation in schools:

At the primary school the Pionier in Valkenswaard, one teacher created a news agency called ‘*De Pionier Koerier*’ (The Pioneer Courier). Every week 33 students from the sixth grade write an article about a current news subject for the *Pionier Koerier*’s website and they create a television programme. The goal is to enhance the students’ language skills and to prepare them for their future in the information society.<sup>156</sup> This is a good example of participation. These children learn to write news articles for a website and learn about how a television programme is made, this way they are actively participating in the dissemination of news.

<sup>155</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘5 trends’)

<sup>156</sup> Pijpers & Van den Bosch 2013, p. 8.

At the primary school ‘*De Windhoek*’ in Egmond-Binnen, a teacher of the fifth grade created a Twitter account on which students can pay each other compliments. The goal is to prevent cyberbullying by showing the students how nice it feels to be given a compliment.<sup>157</sup> This is a good example of participation. By paying each other compliments and understanding how that makes others feel, these children learn about the consequences of social media in a positive way.

At the primary school ‘*de Sint Jozefschool*’ in Lichtenvoorde, children in the sixth grade enter the *Nationale Jeugdkrakercompitie*, an online searching game. The goal is for children to learn how to find and evaluate information on the internet. This is in preparation for secondary school and will be useful in everyday life.<sup>158</sup> This is a good example of critical thinking. These children learn to think critically about the information they find on the internet. If they are able to critically evaluate the information online, it will help them a great deal in participating in a multi-media society.

The organisation *DROPSTUFF.nl* offers educational workshops that are used in high schools. The goal is to teach students to be critical and opinionated about media and to teach students to tell their own story through images and sound. For example, *DROPSTUFF.nl* offers a workshop on social media. They learn how to critically assess media and gives them insight into their own use of social media. In this workshop subjects such as cyberbullying, privacy, intimidation, hacking and sexuality are discussed. The workshop offers a theoretical part, where students are introduced to the subject with the help of footage and through discussions, and a practical part, where student learn by doing.<sup>159</sup> This is a final example of critical thinking and participating. The children learn to be critical and opinionated about media and they also learn to tell their own story through image and sound.

### **Favoured competences**

Many organisations are active in the area of media wisdom, but the competences and values remain roughly the same. Critical thinking and citizenship are the most favoured competences.

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<sup>157</sup> Pijpers & Van den Bosch 2013, p. 60.

<sup>158</sup> Pijpers & Van den Bosch 2013, p. 16.

<sup>159</sup> [www.dropstuff.nl](http://www.dropstuff.nl) (search for ‘educatie’)

The report and letter from the government on media wisdom indicate that critical thinking and citizenship are very important aspects of media wisdom. In its response to the Council for Culture’s 2005 Recommendation, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science recognized that active citizenship is impossible without ICT and that citizens need to understand the many uses of the media and the impact and influences that the media have.<sup>160</sup>

As seen throughout this report, *Mediawijzer.net* also promotes critical thinking and citizenship. To be media wise is to be able to participate in a multimedia society. Media wisdom is rapidly becoming a condition for modern citizenship and *Mediawijzer.net* wants to help Dutch citizens to learn how to become media wise.

Other organisations mentioned, such as *Digibewust*, *Mijn Kind Online*, *Reactiff*, *Bekijk ‘t* etc. also actively promote critical thinking.

Human rights are not (explicitly) invoked in policy and programmes on media wisdom.

*Comments:*

Since the change in terminology from media education to media wisdom, the main goal has been to help people to become media wise and thus be able to participate in the information society. It is all about citizens being able to participate in a multimedia society. It forces people to reflect on what they need to learn in order to be able to participate in society and it builds on that reflection.

However, since media wisdom is not an official part of the school curriculum, it depends on the policies of individual schools what educational paradigm they put forward. Sometimes media wisdom may be absent from a school curriculum and at other times – when it is present - its emphases may vary. Certain schools may then stress the prevention of ‘dangerous’ media content as opposed to participatory objectives.

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<sup>160</sup> Notitie mediawijshheid: burgerschap in de informatiemaatschappij 2006, p. 2-4.

<b>7. Dimension</b>	<b>General appreciation (and recommendations)</b>
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In the Netherlands, the biggest problem with implementing media wisdom is a lack of a clear coherent vision on the subject. Media wisdom initiatives and organisations are still fragmented. This can be largely attributed to the non-committal attitude of the government to the subject. It appears that when the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science created the *Mediawijzer.net* programme, the government to an extent delegated the task of further developing media wisdom to the network (partners). The last governmental media wisdom policy was issued five years ago, the same year that *Mediawijzer.net* was created.

The lack of coherent vision on media wisdom has resulted in numerous initiatives and organisations on media wisdom by private actors, with no clear authority like a Ministry or department within a Ministry responsible for it all. Although it is a positive development that the subject of media wisdom is very much alive within society, it could also be seen as a problem because these initiatives and organisations are not bound to any (national) standards of quality. This problem has already been addressed by the Council for Culture in its 2005 Recommendation, but the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science did not consider it necessary to develop an interdepartmental structure, with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as the coordinator.

The network organisation *Mediawijzer.net* has been created by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to bring all different kinds of organisations together, and quite successfully, through its many initiatives such as the expert sessions, the week of media wisdom and its promotion funds.

As this report has shown, the government has acknowledged and confirmed that learning to become media wise is an essential condition for all citizens in order to be able to participate in a multimedia society. The government does not implement media wisdom into the standard school curriculum, but leaves it up to the schools whether and how to implement media wisdom into their curriculum. There have been some very promising initiatives created by teachers and private actors as to how to implement media wisdom into the curriculum. *Mediawijzer.net* has also created detailed competence models with different levels of how to achieve and measure media wisdom. Yet, as these initiatives and the competence models are

not created/stimulated by the government or adopted as policy, although they offer useful guidelines, schools are not obliged to implement them. This could mean that while some schools may actively train their students in media wisdom, others may not.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are based on various aspects of the Netherlands’ approach to the promotion of media wisdom, as documented in the present country report. As such, they point to a set of good or best practices, which could perhaps usefully be replicated or adapted for uptake in other countries.

- 1) The use of one over-arching term to describe all the different forms of media literacy can be advantageous from a practical point of view. Different types of literacies have many different connotations and are thus a potential source of confusion. The term, ‘media wisdom’, is the conventionally-used term in the Netherlands. The use of one over-arching term does not preclude the use of more specific terms in specific circumstances, as relevant.
- 2) There are obvious organizational advantages to cross-departmental coordination of governmental activities relating to the promotion of media literacy. When various ministries are actively involved in the promotion of different aspects of media literacy, it is important for an inter-ministerial coordination/contact point to be designated, with a view to enhancing synergies and avoiding duplication of efforts.
- 3) The development of a clear and coherent governmental vision on the consolidation and promotion of media wisdom, supplemented by an action plan, can frame and catalyze the wide range of activities that pursue the goal of advancing media literacy. The development of such a vision should lead to the formulation and implementation of clear policy (goals).
- 4) It can be beneficial to build a strong, well-funded and autonomous civil-society dynamic through a network organization that promotes cohesion and collaboration between the many different existing organizations and initiatives that promote media literacy.

<b>8. Dimension</b>	<b>Good practices</b>
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Throughout the report there have been numerous examples of good practices in the area of media wisdom, especially the ones created by *Mediawijzer.net*. Below are a few more examples:

### ***3voor12***

A good practice in ‘participation in the media’ is the online popmagazine of the *VPRO* (Dutch public broadcasting service): *3voor12*.<sup>161</sup> First, because *3voor12* offers its content via the internet; *3voor12* is a website. Second, because *3voor12* also has local branches throughout the Netherlands.<sup>162</sup> These local branches are a platform for volunteers who want to report about local pop news. The *VPRO* builds the sites and provides technical support and the volunteers provide the editorial content. By providing its name and technical expertise to local volunteers, *3voor12* not only reflects on current pop culture, but facilitates other people to do this as well.<sup>163</sup>

### ***Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid (Dutch Institute for Sound and Vision)***

The educational department of the Dutch Institute for Sound and Vision is actively engaged in promoting media wisdom. It is a central objective in the institute’s overall mission. The institute develops educational, cross-media programmes, services and products which promote media wisdom among youth, young people and adults.<sup>164</sup> Here are a few examples:

#### **Project Media and Message**

In this project children are taught to look critically at the media around them: what techniques are used to influence them? They also learn that they also influence each other, for example on social media such as Facebook or Twitter. Children learn to think about how these

<sup>161</sup> [www.3voor12.vpro.nl](http://www.3voor12.vpro.nl)

<sup>162</sup> [www.3voor12.vpro.nl](http://www.3voor12.vpro.nl) (search for ‘Lokaal’)

<sup>163</sup> Raad voor Cultuur 2005, p. 23.

<sup>164</sup> [www.beeldengeluid.nl](http://www.beeldengeluid.nl) (search for ‘mediawijsheid’)



processes work and how to reflect on this. In small groups, the children try to convince each other of their own message, using different techniques they have learned.<sup>165</sup>

Project creating a television format

In this project, which started on 12 November 2013, 750 Media Information and Communication students work in teams to create a television format for the Dutch children’s channel Zapp. Students will create a programme format for children between the ages of 8 until 12 years old. Each team of students will write an advisory report, produce a promotional video and present a pitch. This is an excellent example of ‘media creation’.<sup>166</sup>

### ***The Union of the Dutch public libraries, SIOB***

As explained in the report, public libraries play an important role in promoting media wisdom. Below a few examples of projects created by the *SIOB*:

#### *De Bibliotheek op school* (The library in school)

Libraries, high schools and municipalities work together in the project *De Bibliotheek op school*. The goal is to create demonstrable improvement of quality in education. More specifically, it involves improving student outcomes in literacy, language proficiency and media wisdom. The project consists of a reading and media plan. This plan includes a strategic plan to help rebuild the school into the ideal reading and media environment for students.<sup>167</sup>

#### My Life Story

This project is developed to enhance the media wisdom among young high school students (age 12-13). It is a lesson plan in which the lives of the students are the central theme. The lessons are about knowledge, ability and reflection on information and media. The goals of My Life Story are to enable the students to learn to search for and select information and to stimulate their informed, critical and efficient use of media.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> [www.beeldengeluid.nl](http://www.beeldengeluid.nl) (search for ‘mediawijsheid’, then ‘online lesplannen mediawijsheid’ and then ‘lesplan media & message’).

<sup>166</sup> [www.mediawijzer.net](http://www.mediawijzer.net) (search for ‘nieuwe concepten zapp’).

<sup>167</sup> [www.bibliotheekopschool.nl](http://www.bibliotheekopschool.nl)

<sup>168</sup> [www.my-life-story.nl](http://www.my-life-story.nl)

<b>9. Dimension</b>	<b>References and resources</b>
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#### **Duimel a.o. 2013**

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