

Media and Information Literacy Policies in Sweden (2013)



Expert:

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Introduction

In Sweden the field of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is in a state of transition and development and is not a prioritized area of education policy. At the same time, there are many MIL related projects going on in Swedish schools with many stakeholders and actors involved. So there are signs both of stalling and of success. This is shown in a fresh report from the Swedish Media Council (Forsman 2014) where the following five sectors were mapped for MIL actors, activities and material.

- Ministries and governmental agencies
- Other public actors (libraries, public service broadcasting, the Swedish Film Institute)
- Civic society (organizations, associations, trusts)
- Private agents
- Teacher education

This study was based on web searches with the exception of the teacher education part, which was based on a survey sent out to all universities and university colleges offering Swedish and/or Civics (n 19) or Art and Design (n 6) as subject areas for upper level secondary school or high school teacher students.

A main result of the study is that there are many stakeholders and agents in the MIL field offering a variety of operations and pedagogical material. One of the prerequisites for the study was a wide definition of MIL to cover different forms of media and digital literacy. This does not mean that all the stakeholders and actors mapped in the study use MIL in their own descriptions of their activities. Actually, there is a lack of such common concepts. There is also a lack of postulated and coordinated goals, and of useful indicators of achievements made.

The part of the study that encompassed teacher education showed a variety of understandings of the area and that MIL is a weak concept within the subjects of Swedish and Civics, even though MIL related formulations are part of the curricula and learning goals for these subjects. This part of the study also showed that connotations and ideologies tend towards conceptions of a necessity to implement more ‘new technology’ to foster digital competencies. Within this framework ‘media’ is regarded as a ‘tool’ and instrument for didactics, rather than something to understand per se. The part of the survey covering Art and Design, however, showed instead a general and strong interest in MIL and a high degree of awareness of the importance of a wide variety of MIL related practices and literacies.

There seems to be a lot of variation in the MIL field, but also what one might denote as clusters of common interests.

- The first cluster of common interests concerns the digitization of schools. Two of the actors/stakeholders here are the two large teachers unions in Sweden. Another major player is the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), which is the organization that represents and advocates for local governments in Sweden and is very active in supporting implementation of one-to-one digital resources in schools (one computer/Ipad/tablet per student). There are also connections to the Commission for

Digitization, under the Ministry of Enterprise and the minister for information technology and energy. Within this cluster, terms like IT or ICT and digital competence prevail along with questions of access and efficient learning with reference to data from both the EU and OECD.

- A second and loose cluster of common interests are different organizations, associations and individuals that campaign and inform the public with teachers and parents particularly in mind about the different risks that the young are confronted with online (such as cyber bullying, digital insults, grooming and hate speech).
- A third cluster of common interests are public and private institutions and organizations that provide the resources needed for different MIL activities. This cluster includes the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media (MTM), under the administration of the Ministry of Culture, whose mandate is to ensure that persons with reading impairments can access literature and daily newspapers through media appropriate to their disability.
- The fourth ‘MIL branch’ is a cluster of organizations, associations and individual actors working with film and media education, often with some kind of relation to the Swedish Film Institute and its ‘film in schools’ project.
- The fifth cluster of common interests appears to be the one that is closest to a ‘traditional’ conceptualization of MIL. Here one finds the stakeholders and actors that use MIL as their official term. The Swedish Media Council can be said to be at the forefront of this. Featured are also *Nordicom*, which is a knowledge center for media and communication research under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers, seated at the University of Gothenburg; the Swedish Film institute (again), and The Educational Broadcasting Company (UR), which is one of the three corporations in the Swedish public service broadcasting group (together with Swedish Radio and Swedish Television). UR produces and broadcasts educational and general knowledge programs which enhance, fill out and strengthen the work of others active in education, and a substantial part of this can be related to MIL. All of the above are in one way or another related to the Ministry of Culture. Another actor with national impact that has picked up on MIL is the Swedish Library Association. MIL as a term came into use in Sweden only quite recently, a decisive moment being the translation and publication (Carlsson 2013) of the Unesco document *Media and information literacy. Curriculum for teachers* (2011), a process initiated and driven by *Nordicom*.

Forsman (2014) used MIL as the concept has been described by Unesco, to cover and describe two previously separated areas of interest and knowledge; media literacy and information literacy. MIL was further related to the ongoing digitization and mediatization of Sweden, especially in relation to education and schooling.

Figure 1: Key Outcomes/Elements of Media and Information Literacy

Information Literacy

Define and articulate information needs	Locate and access information	Assess information	Organize information	Make ethical use of information	Communicate information	Use ICT skills for information processing
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Media Literacy²

Understand the role and functions of media in democratic societies	Understand the conditions under which media can fulfil their functions	Critically evaluate media content in the light of media functions	Engage with media for self-expression and democratic participation	Review skills (including ICTs) needed to produce user-generated content
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Fig. 1. Unesco MIL concept

Unesco has been discussing media literacy since 1982 (Carlsson 2008). Now they argue that it is necessary to start using the integrative concept MIL in order to meet the ongoing digitization and convergences of technologies, content, companies and forms of media use. Unesco also stresses the relation between MIL and lifelong learning and intercultural communication, and underlines the importance of teachers in this process, which makes teacher education central for the development of MIL.

It is hard to speak of MIL without bringing in what is happening within this area in Swedish schools, from preschool to high school. Here it is important to know that the Swedish school system is much decentralized, but there are some mandatory directions given about media knowledge and the importance of ICT included in the general curriculum, as well as in the syllabuses of different subjects in school.

There are also formulations in the national directives for teacher education that especially underline ICT, but there is no ‘national MIL project’. Rather, MIL often is dependent on individual teachers “burning for MIL” and acting within time limited projects or participating in ongoing debates, that is, not having the prerequisites for long-term work around MIL questions as a given part of all teaching.

It is also important to know that the Swedish school system has been under scrutiny and much political debate in recent years, with intense discussion of ‘the decline’ of the Swedish school system, often with reference to Sweden’s negative result curve in the PISA evaluations. This has led to a flood of suggestions for quick fixes and the ‘school issue’ is one of the hottest questions in this year’s parliamentary elections (in September).

The liberal-conservative government has, during their two periods of office (2006–2014), launched several reforms meant to improve the results of Swedish schools. New curricula (Lgr.11) and a new system for grading have been implemented. There has been a quintessential change in the teacher education. All of this has meant that school authorities, schools, teachers, parents, students and the teacher education all have been much occupied with the implementation and consequences of these reforms, and within this context MIL has not been a very prioritized issue.

What comes up most is the digitization of schools and the many ‘one-to-one’ projects going on in almost all of Sweden’s 290 municipalities, the ones responsible for schooling in Sweden.

There is a Commission for Digitization, under the Ministry of Enterprise, that was formed in 2012 by the liberal-conservative government to set up a Digital Agenda for Sweden. The education system is one of 20 areas that the Commission has prioritized. In a report presented by the Commission recently (SOU 2014:13) one of the chapters discusses the digitization of schools in connection to Sweden’s OECD and PISA ratings, which means that the digitization of schools is associated with Sweden’s place in the world market, ideas of efficient learning and innovative use of new technology. To a large degree this perspective is administrative, techno-oriented and instrumental, which means that media are seen as tools rather than as objects or texts for further considerations and pedagogy.

For a long time the Ministry of Education and Research had shown little interest in MIL, their focus being on the reforms mentioned above. This is probably one of the explanations for the tardiness one finds in the MIL field. Following the report from the Commission for Digitization, the Ministry of Education and Research recently put energy into an intensification of the digitization of schools, but this is being done without noticeable cooperation with the Ministry of Culture under which the Swedish Media Council is situated. Such examples of lack of co-ordination can be seen as one of the hindrances to a fruitful development of MIL, where ICT and media and information literacy meet. Then again, there are at the same time a lot of ongoing projects with and about children, youth and media.

1. Dimension	(Short) Historical background
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A. What are the recent (1980s on) political, social, economic and cultural conditions that have created the present-day media education policies and structures?

A lot of what reasonably belongs in the answer to this wide question, about macro politics and changes in mentalities and everyday life, has already been mentioned, but some of this deserves to be repeated.

From a macro perspective one can say that the field of MIL in Sweden has been quite dominated by a neoliberal, administrative, instrumental and techno-oriented view of media as tools to achieve other goals of learning. This view has grown parallel with the digitization and computerization of society at large and schools in particular. To some degree it has replaced earlier (1980s onward) more critical, politico-economical and textual deconstructions of the media industry, media power, media ideology, etc. As already mentioned, there is a

remarkable lack of connection between the academic discourse and ongoing research about media and communication, and media as it is taught and presented to children and adolescents (persons under 18).

From a broader historical perspective, the story of Sweden since the early 1990s is quite similar to what many other countries have experienced, i.e. a long era of *neoliberalism* with strong trends of *privatization and commercialization*. This is true also for the two prevailing systems in relation to MIL, i.e. schools and the media sector. It is in relation to these systems I want to bring up some important aspects of deregulation and digitization.

Deregulation. There are two important dimensions of deregulation that have had a great impact on the way MIL has been conceptualized and comprehended. The first dimension concerns the *deregulation of Swedish schooling*. This reform was adopted in 1990/1991 by the then social democratic government. Ever since, the 290 municipalities and not the state are responsible for schooling in Sweden from preschool to high school. The role of the state through the Swedish National Agency for Education is to decide on the school law and to set goals for the national curricula of different subjects at the different stages of schooling.

Next, in 1992, the newly elected liberal-conservative government launched another paradigmatic school reform called the “free school reform”, by which private companies were allowed to organize what now is referred to as ‘independent schooling’ with taxpayer funding and mandated by the municipalities’ own agencies for education. This opening up for private actors (and risk capitalists) to enter the school system (and welfare sector at large) meant a profound change compared to the former and long-term prevailing ‘Swedish model’ founded in the 1930s with the Social Democratic Party as its strongest actor (Blomqvist & Rothstein 2000, Englund 1995, Wahlström 2002).

Today, the municipalities are the principal organizers of schools; they allocate resources (through taxes), make deals with the private operators and are supposed to make sure that students get an equal education, based on the goals set in the national curricula. One consequence of this is that it has proven more difficult for the state to directly govern what takes place on the micro level in Swedish schools. This also holds true for MIL.

The second area of deregulation that has had an impact on views and politics concerning MIL is the *deregulation of the Swedish media landscape*. This process started with the deregulation of television in 1991 followed by radio and telecom in 1993. These were fundamental changes, not only for the industry and the audiences, but also in relation to the Swedish mentality. It also had an effect on perspectives on children and media, media effects, media literacy, and the role and function of schools in relation to the media and popular culture of interest to the young.

In the wake of media deregulation, or rather re-regulation, all kinds of media regulations, governmental engagements, etc. became questioned per se. Generally speaking, what struck through was ideas of ‘the free flow of information’, the rational consumer and the magic hand of the market. (It is also not unlikely that Sweden’s entrance as an EU-member in 1995 had some impact on this.) However, this meant a shift in the whole way of looking at ‘the media’ in relation to younger generations. Since then the explosion of digital equipment for personal communication and entertainment has made it even more difficult to generate a normative or critical discourse on media that obtains general legitimacy.

Nowadays responsibility for the wellbeing of children in relation to the media primarily is laid on the parents rather than on some public function; at the same time there is a growing amount of governmental information about media harm, media use, media and information literacy. One part of this shift is the Swedish Media Council, which plays an important part in the implementation of MIL as a ‘soft information’ discourse. The predecessor to the Swedish Media Council in the 1990s was called the Council on Media Violence (an offspring of the media panic that took place in Sweden in the early 1980s around ‘video violence’). The work that the Swedish Media Council does today, with guidelines from the State and the Ministry of Culture, functions in a less condemnatory way. The ambition is to involve parents, teachers and other ‘close to children professionals’ in a dialogue, although one branch of the Swedish Media Council still works in a more normative and regulating vein with classification of films for persons under 15. This consumer advisory work has replaced the previous system of film censorship (1914–2011).

Digitization and mediatization are two interrelated processes of historical change. Digital media, mobile media, social media, media convergence, interactive media; many terms are used to attempt to grasp contemporary media developments, where the term mediatization has become influential in media research (Hjarvard 2013). This variety of terms points to three main tendencies concerning the effects of media in society at large that are historical logics of irreversible kind (cf. urbanization, globalization, individualization).

The first tendency or logic is the omnipresence of media technologies of different kinds in literally almost every situation. This is a tendency that has become even more apparent with the quick and widespread dissemination of smart phones, laptops and other mobile and personal media. This is also striking in schools, both in the sense that media technologies are used as tools for educational and administrative purposes, and through the personal media technologies that students, teachers and staff bring with them into the schools.

The second tendency of mediatization is that the media increasingly have become an independent force. Media no longer just mediate events and processes from other spheres of the society. Media also affect how these come about and get formatted. Media have also become a necessity in connecting the different spheres. Here the relation between media and the political field often is used as an example, but holds true also for schools.

The third tendency is that media logics affect how we think and interact. This also holds true for schools. For example, the ongoing discussions about rules of conduct in relation to cell phones in classrooms or in the school yard, every day, all over Sweden.

From a MIL historical perspective it seems fruitful to use the concept of mediatization also in relation to schools. As I see it, the mediatization of schools can be described as two-fold. On the one hand there has been a long-term and ongoing mediatization of Swedish schools coming ‘from above’. What I allude to here are several major ventures to computerize Swedish schools and classrooms, and raise the level of know-how among teachers in the use of computer software mainly for presentations, source gathering and administrative work. The other aspect is the mediatization of schools that has evolved ‘from below’. This alludes to how the students (and also teachers) bring in their media know-how, skills and cultural references.

To put it simply, the future for MIL resides somewhere in between the administrative ambitions set from above and the social and communicative needs coming from below. Here

it can be fruitful to see media as practice and as something we do (Couldry 2012, Moores 2012), while always online (Turkle 2011), in our individual networks (Raine & Wellman 2011) in a media saturated world where we live in and through media, rather than with media (Deuze 2012). This means that the traditional perspective on media as text and media literacy, though still of great importance, must be complemented and further developed in order to understand and make pedagogical use of a lot of what is going on in personal, mobile and social media.

Another area of importance in relation to the development of MIL in Sweden is cultural policy. Since 2009, Sweden has a new national agenda for cultural politics. Compared to older cultural policies the new order has a much stronger market orientation. In the former political agenda regarding cultural issues (prevalent from 1974, somewhat updated in 1996, and laid to rest in 2009) there were formulations about creativity and participation in de-centralized cultural life, where critical thinking played an important part; and it was around this the Swedish ‘media literacy movement’ was formed with its focus centered on critical readings, cultural studies, empowerment and video production. From the mid-1990s onwards, due to new technology, changes in world markets and the overall neoliberal political shift, there has been more emphasis on information literacy and computer literacy than media literacy or specifics like film literacy (Stigbrand 1997).

Somewhat simplified one could say that issues of media literacy and the development of a critical and engaged citizen had a strong connection to the culture of the social democratic political rationale, whereas issues of information literacy, entrepreneurial thinking and Sweden’s competitive powers appear more related to liberal-conservative thinking. Both these doctrines are now present and there is an ongoing dialogue or, if you like, a struggle between them. The one issue that seems to bridge over the conflicting interests and views is the awareness and risk discourse growing around what children might encounter through their use of online media.

As already stated, the technological dimension should not be underestimated in relation to the history of MIL in Sweden (the following is largely based on Hylén 2011.) In the late 1950s regional centers were set up to offer teachers the chance to borrow audio-visual equipment. The computerization of Sweden started at about the same time, in private companies and in some government offices, but it was not until the mid-1970s that Sweden really awakened to the computer era, through infected discussion concerning computers and surveillance as tendencies towards a growing ‘Big Brother Society’. Eventually, legislation for handling digital information came about, in 1973 and in 1998. The Swedish school system did not keep up with the computerization that took place otherwise within Swedish society during the 1980s and 1990s, although several school commissions were launched to investigate the possibilities of developing such things as special software for teaching purposes, for example in mathematics. In 1984 (a symbolic year in relation to computerization) a project called *Computers for primary school* was launched by the state. Here the still very large computers and use of ADB (automatic computer treatment) were especially tied to the subject of mathematics. The *DOS* project (1988–1991) concerned ‘The computer as a pedagogical tool’ and was conducted in 160 schools around Sweden. One of the main results of *DOS* was the awareness that software for teaching purposes needed to be developed.

In 1992 the National Agency for Education were commissioned to make a survey of the existence of computers in Swedish schools. The results were not uplifting. In 1994 the liberal-conservative government appointed a national IT Commission, whose main task became to present suggestions on how to strengthen and enforce the use of IT technology in Sweden. The commission also presented a report (SOU 1994:118).

In 1995 the then social democratic government set up another IT Commission (SOU 1995:68) to consider the possibility of stimulating the creation of digital learning resources (like CD-ROM). In the mid-1990s a national network for school computers were set up, and Sweden entered into both Nordic and European collaborations that resulted in the setup of a transnational school computer network. Issues of distance learning were investigated and implemented in the late 1990s.

The Knowledge Foundation (henceforth the KK Foundation) should also be mentioned here. It was established in 1994 and can be regarded as a sign of the times for a systematic shift of political orientation in Sweden.¹ The KK Foundation has since it started invested something like SEK 8.2 billion in more than 2,300 projects. One of its biggest ventures was putting SEK 100 million into a handful of projects meant to strengthen IT in teacher education in the early 2000s.

The biggest effort ever made, all categories, in the history of Swedish schooling was the *Information Technology in Schools* (ITIS) project (1999–2002), which was launched by the *National Agency for Education* in collaboration with the municipal employees union. It was stated that it was not the technology per se, but ‘the development and learning processes of the young’ that were to be in focus, but the main goal of ITIS was to teach teachers how to handle computers so that they in turn could help their students. ITIS both aimed for the development of competencies and of infrastructure (for example, the European school computer network). More than half of all teachers in Sweden went through courses arranged under the ITIS umbrella. All in all, around 75,000 school employees took part in ITIS and all got a personal e-mail address, access to a (shared) work computer, and some basic computer know-how. The bid on how to disseminate the knowledge was multidisciplinary study groups of teachers, set up in accordance with at that time prevailing ideas about the advantages of multidisciplinary work.

Some major evaluations were carried out after ITIS, with a quantitative part (Tebelius, Aderklou & Fritzdorf 2003) and a qualitative one (Chaib et al. 2004). One of the overall results was that most teachers after ITIS had become more positive in their views of the technology and considered the computer an integrated part of their work. Many teachers also felt that ITIS had helped to change the way they were doing their job, and that they had become more personally reflective about their teaching practices as well as strengthened in their collaboration with colleagues. The biggest problems were said to be the lack of adequate technology, infrastructure and support. It is also interesting to note that many of the teachers felt that their digitally literate students did not add much to the teaching situation.

¹ The foundation is interesting in the light of the ‘system shift’ that happened in Sweden in the 1990s, being one of several such that were financed with money from a former system for profit sharing within Swedish companies (*Löntagarfonder*). There was strong opposition against these in Sweden during the 1980s and when the liberal-conservative government was installed in 1991 they transferred these SEK billions to a handful of development foundations.

Government strategy after ITIS, mostly through the National Agency for Education, has been to offer resources rather than grand reforms or programs. To a growing extent this has been done through web-based services; where good examples, links, support, and dedicated services around for example source criticism, copyright and internet safety are made available for individual teachers who want to develop their own teaching practices. *PIM* (Practical IT- and Media Competence, 2006–2014) is such a program on a national scale. The addressee is the individual teacher, but the process is commanded in close collaboration with the municipality. *PIM* is free of charge, available to anyone with an interest in the field and consists of ten guides in which experienced teachers describe how IT and media can be used in schools. The guides cover all kinds of topics. From mailings for a meeting with parents, to Internet search techniques and source criticism, to compiling images and music to create a slideshow.²

The *PIM* guides offer ‘step by step’ support with many classroom based examples, each with some exercises included and there are five levels of expertise to achieve. As *PIM* is an Internet based resource, teachers can study wherever and whenever it suits them. All examinations take place under the auspices of the municipality. So far 30,000 teachers in 100 municipalities have taken *PIM* certificates.

Besides *PIM*, the National Agency for Education for some years now also has been pushing the *Bureau for Multimedia*,³ with examples on their web page of how to analyze advertising. Films are offered, together with links to different sources that can be useful when working with media literacy in the classroom, as well as directives for publication and film making.

Both *PIM* and *The Bureau for Multimedia* will be discontinued in July 2014, however, the reason being that the National Agency for Education will no longer be getting earmarked funding for this from the Ministry of Education. Instead more emphasis is to be placed on the digitization of schools.

The National Agency for Education has twice been commissioned to do a national follow up concerning media and IT in schools. The latest report was presented in April 2013. Here are some of the main results.

- Teacher access to computers has improved, especially in upper secondary schools; but the situation is also better in preschools and on all levels of the Swedish school system.
- There is a strong increase in the number of personal computers (following the 1 to 1 drive).
- It is now much more common with tablet computers (such as the iPad) and the like in preschools, the children using them both together with the personnel and on their own. The main areas of usage are for viewing film, listening to music and for the development of reading, writing and counting skills.

Still there are many areas that need to be improved.

- Teachers still express a great need for in-service training.
- Students still mainly use school computers to look for information (Google) and to write their exams.

² <http://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/resurser-for-larande/itiskolan/in-english/pim-1.141453>, 131115

³ <http://www.multimedia.skolverket.se/141004>

- The use of IT is as low as three years ago and it is still unusual that students use computers during lessons, especially in mathematics, natural sciences and technology.
- Differences in computer access between municipal schools and free schools have leveled out, but still there is a digital divide.
- Malfunctions of IT equipment are a common hassle.
- Many schools allow their students to bring their own IT equipment to use in school and few schools block out social media, such as Facebook.
- Most students feel comfortable using computers to write, seek information and do presentations (Power Point), but also feel that they are less competent in source criticism or in usage of calculation programs (like Excel).
- One-third of the headmasters feel that they don’t have enough competence to develop IT for teaching and that they don’t know enough about the legislation in this area.

To conclude, I have tried in this part to show some of the interplay taking place between technological and political changes and ideologies concerning media and media education. To be noted is that the terms ‘media’ and ‘media education’ are becoming increasingly complicated, and that aspects of information literacy and computer literacy for technological and cultural reasons should be integrated in MIL.

B. What was done in media education policies prior to European recommendation? With what actors? Overcoming what resistances? Around any controversies?

As a complement to what already has been said, one can mention that discussions have been ongoing about media education and media literacy in Sweden since the late 1960s. One important part of this has been discussion about how to handle popular culture within schools (Persson 2000). A lot has been done over the years, both in order to provide resources (such as video in the 1980s and 1990s) and for pedagogical thinking where media are seen from wider perspectives of learning (Aulin-Gråhamn et al. 2003, Säljö 2013).

The three latest Swedish curricula (Lpr 80, LPO 94, Lgr 11) for primary, secondary and high schools contain paragraphs concerning media literacy and the usage of media in teaching, especially as part of the subjects Swedish, Civics, and Art and Design.

C. Was media education presented as a tool to address the contemporary crisis in educational systems? Was it associated to major reforms or reform movements?

As has been narrated above, there was some sort of movement around media literacy as critical practice and ground for children’s own media productions until computers and mobile telecom hit society. This does not mean that this discourse is completely over, but what nowadays often dominates is a technological, tool oriented and administrative perspective on IT. Recently (March 2014) the *Commission for Digitization* presented a report suggesting that the solution to the present school crises in Sweden and Sweden’s low scores in the PISA evaluations should be an intensified drive for computer literacy.

D. How did the field of media literacy evolve in relation to the other literacies: information literacy, computer literacy, digital literacy? Please indicate if there are phases, major trends. Clarify whenever possible the proximity or distance between media education and

digital literacy, media education and information literacy, media education and computer literacy.

Again, much of this has already been mentioned in the historical narrative presented above. All the terms brought up in this question have been used, but by different actors. In the 1980s (“when everything was text”) there was a broad discussion around a widened concept of literacy. In the late 1990s Swedish schools went through a period of digitization when many teachers also went through in-service training. In the last two years the term MIL has entered the arena, but discussions of digital literacy, or rather digital competencies, prevail in many instances.

2. Dimension	Legal policy framework
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A. What is the official designation and legal definition of media education? What other words are associated to it?

The terminology has changed over time and varies with context and actor. MIL has recently become a term increasingly used by several governmental agencies and organizations, whereas in the world of the *Commission for Digitization* the terms in use still are ‘IT’ and ‘digital competencies’. Over the years much discursive work has been going on around the term ‘literacy’. One place for this has been The Swedish School of Library and Information Science (SSLIS), Sweden's largest education and research in library and information science at the University of Borås, in the western part of Sweden. There the term ‘information literacy’ has held a strong position, but now MIL has entered the arena and in the autumn of 2014 the University of Borås will offer what probably is the first university course in MIL.⁴

B. What are the legal documents (laws, recommendations...) framing media education policies?

The following documents can be mentioned here.

- *Unesco declaration on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

The Swedish Parliament has debated incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into the Swedish legal system. What so far is present are strong directives for schools, teacher education and others with official authority. In relation to MIL, *Article 13 appears particularly relevant*: ‘The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.’⁵

- *The Swedish school law.*

This was updated in 2011. In the fourth paragraph of the first chapter some things that are of importance also to MIL are stated. Schooling and teaching should encourage all

⁴ <http://www.hb.se/Vill-studera/Program-och-kurser/Kurser-VT-2014/Medie--och-informationskunnighet-i-skolan/140410>.

⁵ <http://www.unicef.org/crc/141004>

children’s and students’ development and lust for lifelong learning, with respect for universal human rights and the democratic values on which the Swedish society stands (including freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the media). It is also the task of schools to balance any differences in the opportunities for students to assimilate the education (for example concerning access to the technical tools and information providers necessary for MIL). Further, the educational system is commissioned to enhance all children’s and students’ personal development into versatile, creative, competent and responsible individuals and citizens.⁶As important is that the school law demands (since 2011) that all schools (private as well as public) must have some sort of school library to offer their students.

– *The national curricula for primary school to high school.*

Within these are many formulations that, although they don’t mention media explicitly, on reasonable grounds can be seen as MIL related. These deal with language (in a wide sense), learning, identity, fostering of creative ability and ability to express personal statements and opinions. The sentence that gets closest to ‘media’ is the following: ‘students should be able to orient themselves in a complex reality with a wide flow of information and rapid changes. The skills and methods to pick up and use new knowledge therefore become important. It is also necessary that students develop their abilities to critically inspect facts’.

Among the general goals for all levels the following can be mentioned.⁷ The student should be able to:

- use critical thinking and independently formulate standpoints grounded in knowledge and ethical considerations
- use and take part in a variety of cultural expressions, such as language, imagery, music, drama and dance
- use modern technology as a tool in the search for knowledge, communication, creation and learning

The importance of school libraries are mentioned in the curricula for all school levels. Work with books is fundamental to libraries, but other media also get included in their work with literacy. The curricula also mention the importance of libraries (and librarians) in the search for evaluation of information and [criticism of sources](#).⁸

– *The subject syllabuses for Swedish, Civics, Art and Design*

Syllabuses are more detailed than curricula and it would lead too far afield to cite them here. What can be said on a more general level is that the importance again is underlined of students’ ability to formulate personal opinions, to be creative in using different forms of expressions, and to handle media technologies. The term ‘text’ appears in the syllabuses for Swedish as well as the importance of being able to search for and critically

⁶*Skollag 2010:800*, http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/Skollag-2010800_sfs-2010-800/?bet=2010:800#K1, 140410

⁶<http://nordicom.gu.se/en/clearinghouse/clearinghouse-network>, 140410

⁷<http://www.skolverket.se/laroplaner-amnen-och-kurser/grundskoleutbildning/grundskola/laroplan>, 140410

⁸<http://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/resurser-for-larande/skolbibliotek/konferensreportage/dok-1.192325>, 140410

evaluate information.⁹ The critical perspective is grounded in the subject description for Civics, while the subject description for Art and Design speaks of the development of ability to critically discuss and evaluate different forms of imagery and visual messages. Here is also stated the importance of giving the students the opportunity to use their own culture and references in their visual creation at school.¹⁰

C. Does the law designate a clear authority to oversee media education? If so, describe (located in ministry of education, culture, regulatory media authority...).

The National Agency for Education is the central administrative authority for the public school system, publicly organized preschooling, school-age childcare (and adult education). The Agency supervises, supports, follows up and evaluates the school in order to improve quality and outcomes, and to make sure that the right to an equivalent education is fulfilled.

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate scrutinizes schools and assesses applications to run an independent school.

In addition to this the public service system for broadcasting and the Swedish library system are legislated systems with some MIL obligations.

D. Are there any mechanisms facilitating inter-ministerial relations on this specific issue?

Not really. The mapping done by Forsman (2014) shows that there are several projects where agencies and organizations and actors from civic society work for what can be regarded as clusters of common interest. It is likely that the Swedish Media Council aspires and will be commissioned to take on some sort of coordinating function around MIL in Sweden.

Another actor that is closer to research and policy making than to politics is *Nordicom*, which collects and adapts academic knowledge and mediates its compilations to various groups of users in the Nordic region, Europe and elsewhere in the world. *Nordicom* was also the driving force – together with The Swedish Media Council, the Swedish Film Institute and *Filmpedagogerna* (the Film Educators) – behind the Swedish adaption of the Unesco document *Media and information literacy. Curriculum for teachers* (2011). (See Carlsson 2013.)

E. Are there formal or explicit links with other entities or social actors that may deliver media education (private sector, civic sector)?

Yes, through the Swedish Film Institute and their support for work with film in schools there are links to freelancers and organizations and associations for people working with film pedagogy. There are also links between municipalities and private companies offering digital equipment, audiovisual material and other resources to schools. There are projects and occasions such as educational fairs that function as ‘get togethers’ for stakeholders from the different clusters of interest.

⁹*Kursplan svenska*,

<http://www.skolverket.se/laroplaner-amnen-och-kurser/grundskoleutbildning/grundskola/svenska>, 140410

¹⁰*Kursplan Bild*, <http://www.skolverket.se/laroplaner-amnen-och-kurser/grundskoleutbildning/grundskola/bild>, 140410

F. Do they point to self- and co-regulatory mechanisms? Which ones?

Maybe this is a misunderstanding of the question asked, but in Sweden the press and the advertising industry have created their own ethical boards and codes of conduct for their businesses. This is a way to maintain quality, avoid deviations, and fend off suggestions of legislation or formal directives from the state.

The Press Ombudsman (PO) and the *Press Council* (PON) are independent self-disciplinary bodies which deal with complaints about the editorial content of newspapers, magazines and their websites. The complaint must be personal (i.e. the sender identifiable in some way) and made within three months from the publication date. Companies, government authorities and organizations can also file complaints. The remedy for such institutional complaints is the right to reply or the right of a correction.¹¹

The Trust for the Advertising Ombudsman (RO) is the self-regulatory mechanism of industries and of the advertising market. The task is to assay advertising, guide, inform and educate. The trust has two authorities where reported cases of misuse of advertising and PR are ethically tested.¹²

G. How are the relations between content editors and program industries handled? Any disputes or dialogues? Any co-regulatory frameworks, guidelines?

The Press Ombudsman and the *Trust for the Advertising Ombudsman* are examples of self-regulation. *The Swedish Broadcasting Authority* supervises radio and television program services, on-demand services and teletext. A separate decision-making body within the *Swedish Broadcasting Authority* monitors whether the content of radio and television programs adhere to the broadcasting regulations.¹³

Since there is a constitutional law stating freedom of speech and freedom of the press and other media there is no pre-scanning of content, besides what already has been mentioned about The Swedish media Councils handling of films for people below 15 years of age.

H. Any discrepancies between online and offline policies?

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I. Who is in charge of reporting to the state?

This depends on what areas the question alludes to.

Regarding schooling, the responsible bodies are the *National Agency for Education* and the *Schools Inspectorate*.

J. Who is in charge of reporting to the European Union?

In questions of schooling, the *National Agency for Education*.

On media literacy The Swedish Media Council has a communicative, but only formal role.

¹¹ <http://www.po.se/140410>

¹² <http://www.reklamombudsmannen.org/140410>

¹³ <http://www.radioochtv.se/en/140410>

3.1 Dimension	Capacity-building: teacher training
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A. Do media education policies address the issue of teacher training? How (initial training, continuous...)? For what school level (kindergarten/primary school/junior high/high school)?

It is important to know that the Swedish school system at large and the teacher education work on the basis of the goal-directed instructions in the national curricula. This is combined with wide local leeway in the design of syllabus and examinations.

In the national goals for teacher education, stated in the Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 2007:129) there are some formulations that have a bearing on MIL. One is that teachers are supposed to be able to ‘mediate and establish the democratic principles and basic values of the Swedish society’. The other goal states that the students must ‘be able to show capacity to use information technology in their pedagogical work and be aware of the importance that different media have for this’.¹⁴ These goals are common for all levels of teacher education. The many differences between different levels of teacher education can instead be explained by variations in the curricula for different age spans.

B. For teachers, is media education a degree per se (credits/certification) or is it part of other degrees (language/history/sciences/informatics...)? Is it optional or compulsory? How many hours of training/year are offered?

Media education (including ICT) is supposed to be something that permeates all subjects on all levels, but MIL is not a degree per se. As Forsman (2014) shows, there are no specifications of ECT, etc. on the national level and there are wide differences between the around 20 universities and university colleges in Sweden that offer teacher education. Not many of them could state either amount of hours or credits for media courses in their answers to the survey. One finds the most obvious connections to MIL in the curricula for Swedish, Civics and Art and Design. According to the survey here referred to, it is within these parts of teacher education that one finds the most obvious examples of work and awareness around MIL.

C. For students, do media education policies propose curricular development? Specific programs? Is it optional? Compulsory? At what school level (primary, high school...)?

As already stated, there are general formulations in curricula and policy statements about media, information, democracy, rights to personal expressions and opinions, etc. Again, the three subjects from intermediated level onwards that have the most developed and explicit MIL-profile are Swedish, Civics and Art and Design, each with a somewhat different focus.

D. Do media education policies propose a set of competences? Of indicators? What standard-setting instruments are offered? Do they distinguish between the different components of media literacy (computer literacy, digital literacy, visual and film literacy...)?

¹⁴SFS 2007:129 <http://www.notisum.se/rnp/sls/sfs/20070129.pdf>

On the national level the description of competences is very general, and not specified or presented in the form of indicators. On a local level though, such things may appear.

One comment to this that can be made concerns the terminology and orientation of the debate. The tendency is to focus on the digitization of schools and the use of ‘new media’ as a given and unavoidable part of the future teacher’s professional profile.

3.2 Dimension	Capacity-building: Teaching/training materials and other relevant content
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A. Are there teaching resources and materials made available by law and policies?

Yes. The major national, public efforts done around digitization of schools have been mentioned. To repeat, *ITIS (Information Technology in Schools, 1999–2002)*, launched by the National Agency for Education in collaboration with the municipal employees union and connected to *The Delegation for IT in Schools*, was the biggest effort ever made in the history of Swedish schooling. The aim of ITIS was to train teachers in the usage of computers. *PIM (2006–2014)* and *Multimedia Bureau (2006–2014)* have already been mentioned.

B. Do they address the issue of intellectual property (exceptions for education....)?

This has been and still is under discussion. A new dimension is the questions that evolve in the wake of the expanding use of ‘cloud services’ and online databases provided by companies like Google. Here questions of how schools handle personal information about their students in relation to Google and the like has become something of an issue, brought up by the Data Inspection Board, whose commission is to protect the individual's privacy in the information society without unnecessarily preventing or complicating the use of new technology.¹⁵

C. Is there scarcity or abundance of such materials? In national/local language or other languages?

As Forsman (2014) shows there is an abundance of material around some MIL-issues. Especially the ones addressing how to use digital tools and digital teaching aids and educational materials, criticism of the sources, and risks that young people are confronted with online.

D. What is the role of research institutions (universities, training schools) and other support mechanisms?

The links are between the ongoing debates around MIL; the parallel digitization of schools and research in general are weak. This holds true both for Media and Communication, Education and others university subjects. Once again Nordicom should be mentioned. since their ambition is to develop media studies and ensure that research results are made visible at different levels in both the public and private sector. One part of this is the Unesco-financed operation International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, which Nordicom has

¹⁵ <http://www.datainspektionen.se/in-english/140410>

been in charge of since 1997. The Clearinghouse brings together a network of approximately 900 participants representing a number of different users – members of the research community, media professionals, politicians, government authorities, voluntary organizations and other interested individuals. Over 100 countries from all continents are represented in the network.¹⁶ There is a website, newsletters, yearbooks. A lot of the activities within the Clearinghouse focus on MIL.¹⁷

E. Within the school, what is the role of libraries and media centers?

The importance of libraries for the understanding of and practical work with MIL is immeasurable, and students’ right to have access to a school library is statutory. Libraries function both as resources for materials, information and pedagogical assistance, as well as being a space for contemplation around aspects of different forms of mediation.

F. What is the nature of the resources made available? Are they created by teachers, by students, by private sector...? How are they produced (selection, authorship, mode of production...)?

A lot of the material used in the classroom context is created by teachers and/or students. This is probably something that will increase as one-to-one spreads across the country. As Forsman (2014) shows there is also a large private sector offering teaching materials, both in analogue form (like textbooks) and to a growing extent in digital form, with online resources as part of the package.

G. What is their degree of authenticity? Do they result from specific project activities or from guided/mandatory activities?

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H. How are these resources selected and validated (national board, recommendation...)?

Most often on a local level by individual teachers together with colleagues, head teachers or principals.

I. How are they circulated? How are they re-used, or referenced, if at all?

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3.3 Dimension	Capacity-building: funding
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A. How are media education policies funded?

This is a difficult question. Media education is a part of the Swedish school system, which is financed through taxes brought in and distributed by the municipalities. Also the Swedish Media Council and the Swedish Film Institute are financed through state taxes. The public

¹⁶<http://nordicom.gu.se/en/clearinghouse/clearinghouse-network>, 140410

¹⁷<http://nordicom.gu.se/sv/clearinghouse>, 140410

service broadcasting company UR is financed through licenses that are mandatory for all households in Sweden.

B. What level of government addresses media education funding (central government, provinces/regions, and municipalities)?

See above

C. What sectors are involved in media education expenditure: private, public (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Research, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Culture) or civic (Associations, NGOs)?

It depends.

The school system is financed by taxes brought in and distributed by the municipalities. The financial resources of the National Agency for Education is filtered through the Ministry of Education. The financial resources to the Swedish Media Council is filtered through The Ministry of Culture finances, etc.

There are several NGOs especially engaged in issues of online safety, and these are often privately funded, in combination with government subsidies, etc.

D. Whenever possible, please indicate public expenditure for media education per total GDP.

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E. How are the resources funded? The training programs?

Mainly through taxes.

F. What is their proportion in relation to the total education system revenues?

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G. Is there any yearly financial report? Is it available to the public?

Not on the specific costs for media education exclusively.

G. Specify the explicit mention of financial resources allocated to media and information education (separate from the salary of mother tongue language teachers for example unless otherwise specified, or in relation to media education body or authority). If it is not explicit, it means there is no visibility and no accountability required.

This question is not possible to answer. Decisions are made independently in every school all around Sweden and in the different school management districts, within the 290 municipalities.

4. Dimension	Role of actors (outside school system)
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A. Do media education policies take into account partnerships outside the school system?

Yes; and there has been a growing interest in such relations. Within the general neoliberal ideology and economics of the last ten (at least) years or so, there has been a general encouragement of all contacts between schools and market forces, especially in the form of small enterprises.

To this one should add that Sweden is a society of organizations and associations that produce great amounts of ‘information’, ‘knowledge’ and ‘engagement’. Added to this is an unspoken encouragement of co-operation between schools and external actors.

When it comes to UR and The Swedish Film Institute there are formal, tax financed directives for collaboration, with the Ministry of Culture in the background.

B. What is the role of regulatory media authorities, if any?

The *Swedish Broadcasting Commission* supervises radio and television broadcasts and is responsible for license giving.

C. What is the role of private sector (editorial capacity, training, resource availability...)?

I am not sure if I understand the question correctly. My answer is to give reference to two services offered by the cultural industry.

Media Smart is a free-teaching material directed towards children in primary schools. The ambition is to give the young a tool to develop their abilities to understand and interpret advertising in ‘an efficient way’. This is described by Media Smart as a path to creating ‘constructive and critical consumers’. The service is offered in collaboration with the Association of Swedish Advertisers.¹⁸ Media Smart exists in eight countries in Europe and was launched in Sweden in 2006.¹⁹

Mediekompass (Media Compass) is a tool for teachers who want to use the press (on different platforms) and its contents as part of their teaching. Behind Media Compass one finds a number of local Swedish newspapers and media companies operating in the western and southern regions of Sweden together with the Swedish Media Publishers Association. The ambition behind Media Compass is to strengthen the interests of its members, and to influence media laws within EU and freedom of the press in a more global way.²⁰ Media Compass can be found in several countries around the world.²¹ In Sweden, Media Compass was preceded by ‘The newspaper in School’ which started in 1962 and probably was the first organized example of MIL within the Swedish school system.²²

D. What is the role of civil society associations (awareness raising, training, resource production...)?

¹⁸*Om Media Smart*. <http://mediasmart.se/om-media-smart/140410>

¹⁹*Welcome to Media Smart*, <http://www.mediasmart.org.uk/frontpage>, 140410

²⁰*Om mediekompass*. <http://www.mediekompass.se/om-mediekompass/140410>

²¹Information on sister organisations to *Mediekompass* can be found on *News in Education*. <http://www.wan-ifra.org/articles/2010/12/03/news-in-education-nie>, 140410

²²*Tidningen i Skolan* started up in 1963 in a collaboration between the National Board of Education (as it then was) and the Swedish Media Publishers’ Association, and was active for almost 50 years, mostly working with the newspaper medium.

As Forsman (2014) shows there are many ongoing civic society activities related to MIL. Here two examples.

Filmpedagogerna have worked locally, regionally, nationally and internationally with film and media education for more than 20 years. They also produce teaching material and describe their method as simple, since they ‘use the materials we have around us, the media that is current and popular amongst students. Therefore most of the materials used are popular culture. *Filmpedagogerna* work in classes of around 20–60 students and in workshop sessions, use the concept of MIL diligently and have an ongoing collaboration with Unesco.

Friends is a non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of mobbing/bullying that educates and supports schools and sports clubs throughout Sweden. The vision of Friends is to see young children and adolescents grow up in a safe and secure society where all are treated equally. Friends use a long-term approach to increasing the knowledge and involvement of adults and children through education, guidance and the formation of public opinion. Currently they have 40 employees with varying backgrounds as well as an extensive experience from working with children and young adults. Friends run four regional offices located across Sweden and has collaborated with more than 1500 schools since its inception in 1997. Activities are financed by donations from private individuals and companies, as well as through honorariums received for its education and training programs. Friends has a so-called 90-account and is monitored by The Swedish Foundation for Fundraising Control. One area where Friends has started to work more concerns online violations and bullying. In a survey made by Friends every third child responded that they had been violated via cell phone, computer or iPad/tablet in the last year.²³

Surfa Lugnt (Safe netsurfing) has been around since 2005. This is a national initiative meant to raise awareness among adults about the everyday life of children and the young online. The organization wants to stress all the positive aspects that come with life online, but also to warn of the risks, such as cyberbullying and issues of integrity. This initiative is supported by the Swedish government, and gathers several official agencies, companies and non-profit associations.²⁴

E. What is the level of youth participation in the mechanisms available?

Generally it can be said to be high. This is also something that almost always is aimed for in almost everything that is done around MIL, and especially in relation to schools. This interactive mode and participatory approach has a youthful aura and mode of address that can almost be said to be part of the MIL format.

F. Are there grassroots communities of practice that participate in media education? Professional organizations of media education teachers? Journalists and news professional organizations? Librarians and learning centers professionals? Computer scientists and their clubs?

See above

²³<http://www.friends.se/friends/in-english>, 140410

²⁴*Barn och unga har rätt till en positiv nätvardag där vuxna finns och bryr sig.* <http://surfalugnt.se/om-surfalugnt/140410>.

G. Are parent associations and media/information professionals invited to collaborate to media education? On what basis, in which capacity?

Some of this has also already been mentioned. Some go through the schools as part of time limited projects about and with media, with the parents as part of the effectuation process. Through the circuits of film education and local and regional centers for resources, packages with visits from professional film makers or others are arranged. The already mentioned Media Compass can also mediate professional contacts and opportunities for students to make a visit to and have contact with the local paper closest to the school.

H. Are there specific events (semaine de la presse, festivals, competitions, games...) that show the importance of media education? Are they legitimized by state policies?

Yes, there are several such occasions, as follows, and they seem to be growing in number. First are two big events close to circuits and interests of those engaged in the digitalization of schools (cf. Introduction).

The future of learning and teaching (*Framtidens Lärande*) is an annual (April) conference and educational fair arranged by the Trust (moreover Association and also a magazine) **The Computer in the School** (*Datorn i skolan*) in association with The National Agency for Education, The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and others. The target group for the conference is political trustees and others that can exert an influence; teachers, educators of teachers, the IT business, and others.²⁵ One part of the event is that teachers are given prizes for innovative use of ICT in their teaching.

School Forum (*Skolforum*) is an annual (October) conference and educational fair, arranged in collaboration between the two major teachers unions and traders of teaching materials.

The MIL Week, arranged by the Swedish Media Council premiered in February 2014. Mostly this week will be used to launch publications and new activities. A prime example of the latter is ‘the MIL-room’. This is an interactive site for teachers, parents and others. In this first year the MIL Week overlapped with Safer Internet Day 2014, which is an international arrangement that The Swedish Media Council has taken part in before.

The MIL Day was arranged for the first time (in January) by among others *Filmpedagogerna* as a part of the Gothenburg film festival. This event is planned to be annual.

I. Are there any overlapping structures or events that try to bring together media literacy, information literacy and computer literacy? Any online platform or mechanism? Describe.

The best example at the moment is probably the ongoing work that Forsman (2014) is part of where the integrative MIL concept of Unesco is used to bring previous separated interests together, based on the mapping done. The already mentioned *PIM* project together with the Multimedia Bureau, under the direction of The National Agency of Schooling, had such

²⁵*Framtidens lärande är här och nu.* <http://www2.diu.se/framlar/om/framtidens-larande-nasta-steg-10-11-april-2014>, 140420.

ambitions, although on two separate sites. *Filmpedagogerna* has opened a website in association with Unesco, that can be said to have some of these ambitions.

5. Dimension	Evaluation mechanisms (inside and outside school)
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A. What are the legal mechanisms to ensure and measure the efficiency of media education policies?

There are no such systems or routines. If there were, the responsibility would most likely be laid on The National Agency of Education or the Swedish Schools Inspectorate.

B. Are these legal mechanisms used and how? How relevant are non-binding guidelines, if any?

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C. How is the performance of media education resources, programs and actors evaluated? According to what indexes, indicators (national, international...)?

There are no such indexes. What is imaginable is that the goals in the national curricula and subject syllabuses might somehow be evaluated. Most likely The National Agency of Education would be in charge of this. It is also possible to imagine that the Media Council somehow could direct this, but there are complications due to the decentralized Swedish school system.

D. What publics are targeted (youth, poor, excluded...)?

A lot of what is mentioned above is oriented towards teachers and other professionals working with children. Some of it is more directed to parents. There are also a lot of materials directly addressing school age children.

E. Any proportion or quantifiable data on how many people are targeted (among youth, poor, excluded...)? Any proportion or quantifiable data on how many programs and of what types are made available to them? To what effect?

No.

E. Are media education policies used to test media accountability (government role, traditional media contributions, public service media...)?

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F. Are research institutions financed to conduct objective evaluations of programs and resources or not? Is research in media education fostered to support and inform public policies?

No.

G. Is there any yearly report? Is it available to the public? Who produces it?

No.

6. Dimension	Main concepts and legitimizing values
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A. What educational paradigms are put forward (transmission, prevention, participation...)?

By which actors (public, private, civic)?

One can register different clusters of interest. One of them concerns the digitization of schools, and involves a combination of interest organizations, such as the teachers unions and The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) in collaboration with commercial interests. The view on media underlying their argument is that media is a tool or a vehicle for efficient learning and transmission.

Another cluster is formed around issues of online risks and mainly engages non-profit associations. Their perspective is deeply informed by thoughts of prevention through enlightening information.

There is also a cluster of common interest around the term MIL. The strongest and most active part in this at the moment is definitely the Swedish Media Council, which combines its authoritative ambitions with a dialogical discourse.

B. What competences are favoured and adopted, if any (critical thinking, citizenship...)?

This depends on the paradigm invoked. Generally speaking the idea of the critically informed ‘media user’ has over the years drifted towards ideas of the rational consumer.

C. What hierarchy of values (quality, empowerment, diversity and pluralism, employment...) are used to justify policies (based on political discourses, laws...)?

Actually all of these can be found. To be noted is that discussions concerning quality have largely left the scene. This is also true for the former critical debate around pluralism in the Swedish media landscape. Instead, discourses around employability and Sweden’s competitive strength on the world market has become more prevailing, for example in the discussion about digitization of schools.

D. Are human rights invoked?

Yes. There is a common value ground in Swedish schooling around MIL based on human rights and especially the rights of children. This has its strongest foundation within the cluster advocating MIL based on the Unesco document and its recent adoption into Swedish law (Carlsson 2013).

D. What hierarchy of values are used to justify actions, mechanisms and events outside formal and official policies and outside schools?

Informative values, values of engagement and social responsibility, but this is more obvious in civic society discourses than in governmental agencies.

7. Dimension	General appreciation (and recommendations)
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In Sweden no one seems to be against a continued and deepened development of MIL. Still, the MIL situation in Sweden is far from optimal. One part of ‘the stalling problem’ in relation to MIL is the lack of common terminology, goals and lists of MIL questions or indicators of achievements in this area. What does MIL cover, or rather what should it include? What are the goals and the stakes within it? Technology or pedagogies? Who is responsible? What are the long-term and short-term goals? This complexity and the need for multidisciplinary thinking really is a challenge, not least in Sweden, which is both ‘consensus oriented’ and ‘a drain pipe society’.

In Sweden, as seems to be the case in many other EU-countries as well, MIL activates references to a ‘bundle of literacies’. All seem to be dependent on who the actor is and the context. MIL is one thing to librarians and partly something else to a teacher of Swedish, as it is to a teacher of Civics or Art, nor does MIL seem to be the same thing to a researcher in media and communication as it is to someone in education or in ICT studies.

From a historical and structural perspective Sweden should hold a strong position in relation to MIL, since there is a long tradition of democratic government, constitutional freedom of speech, and freedom of the press and other media. Other aspects of the Swedish MIL situation are widespread access to and use of ICT, mobile internet and command of personal media technologies among the population at large (Findahl 2013). Furthermore, Sweden has a long and strong tradition of and a modernized system of public libraries and other information providers. The public service system also has a strong position (with a new engagement from 2014 to 2018). There is a long, but also mixed tradition, around media education, youth work, children’s culture, and public voice in Sweden. The rights of children and views on the child as active and competent also have a positive effect on the level of awareness around the Swedish MIL discourse.

There are some negative factors to consider in the discussion of MIL in Sweden. The whole MIL area has been strongly affected by the general political debates about the ‘crisis of the Swedish school system’. There is a tendency for efforts in the MIL area to be short lived. There is also a lack of institutional memory in this area and very weak links to the research society. There is a lack of co-ordination and timing, as well as common goals between national ministries, governmental agencies, the municipalities and the many other actors involved in MIL. Generally, there is a growing focus on the dispersion and density of IT technology rather than a focus on pedagogical ideas, values of citizenship and knowledge goals.

8. Dimension	Good practices
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At the beginning of this document the following five MIL-areas mapped in Forsman (2014) were mentioned: *Ministries and governmental agencies*; *Other public actors* (libraries, public service, Swedish Film Institute); *Civic society* (organizations, associations, trusts); *Private*

agents; and *Teacher Education*. In this section I offer some examples of good practices taken from these different MIL areas.

The first example is taken from the field of *Other public actors* and concerns the availability of information resources for school based MIL practices. The chosen producer here is the public service Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company (UR). UR’s mandate is to produce and broadcast educational and general knowledge programs that enhance, fill out, and strengthen the work of others active in education. UR broadcasts on both Swedish Radio (SR) and Swedish Television (SVT) channels and run the ‘Knowledge Channel’ in collaboration with SVT.

Many of the UR programs have a continued life also after their broadcast. There are 11,000 UR programs available on the UR website, of which around 9,000 are free for use in schools.²⁶ A substantial part of these programs have been made to match the curricula of different school grades. UR has divided its output into 17 different pedagogical themes, among them several series with a strong MIL profile; for example, *Source Criticism – See through the media noise*; *Influence and be influenced in a democracy* and *Genre Pedagogy*. The output is also geared to different age groups and covers all school grades as well as teacher education and can be related to the syllabuses for all kinds of school subjects.

The Media Age (*Mediatiden*) is the title of an example from the output made for grades 7 to 9 (13 to 16 years). This series belongs in the theme ‘Information and media’ and is meant to function with the subjects of Swedish or Civics. The Media Age deals with critical examination of media based on young people’s ‘disagreement’ with older media. Here are some of the themes brought up: press ethics; freedom of speech, censorship, civic journalism, propaganda and source criticism. This quote (own translation from the Swedish) summarizes some of the quintessential in the series: ‘We meet young people with relatives in prison because of their opinions and young people who keep themselves informed about their original homeland through the Internet and that try out different identities online’.²⁷

The second example comes from the *civic sector* and also concerns the dimension of information accessibility. The example of good practice chosen is one part of the work of *Filmpedagogerna*. This group of three men belonging to the Cultural Association *Folkets Bio* (The People’s Cinema) have been working with film and media education since the late 1980s and offer and distribute off-mainstream films and documentaries. Their pedagogical model has young people’s own experiences and preferences of popular visual culture as point of departure. *Filmpedagogerna* offers lectures, workshops and other formats for dialogic work to schools and other venues that they visit to discuss such issues as racism in film, Shakespeare and film, gender roles, etc. Beside these much requested activities They have also constructed a website based on the curricula and modules for MIL in practice that are offered in Unesco’s document *Media and information Literacy. Curriculum for teachers* (2011).

The third example is taken from the *private sector* and focuses more on the gathering and filtering of information, source criticism and opportunities for school children to produce their own media material. The example chosen is Media Compass, which is a part of the international organization ‘News in Education’, driven by The World Association of

²⁶*Barnbrytande avtal mellan UR och copyswede*, <http://www.ur.se/Webbar/Om-UR/Pressrum#>, 140410

²⁷*Mediatiden*, <http://www.ur.se/Produkter/173486-Mediatiden-Vem-kan-man-lita-pa>, 140410

Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA). The aim of WAN-IFRA is to help newspapers, parents and teachers work together to engage the young in creating a literate, civic-minded new generation of readers all over the world.²⁸ Behind the Swedish version of Media Compass one finds a group of local newspapers and media companies mainly based in the south and western parts of Sweden. The aim of Media Compass is to encourage frequent newspaper reading, online or offline, and one of the projects offered to schools (as a way of fostering news consumers for the future) is called *The Press Station*.

In this project pupils are required to work for a few weeks with different themes such as human rights, democratic values, a sustainable future, and IT competences using newspapers as one of their main sources. They also have the opportunity to get in contact with their local newspaper and even to use the editorial staff as a sounding board. The whole project ends with a week of competition, where besides the honor involved a school class also can win some money (to use for a school excursion).²⁹ All the classes that participate get a free subscription to their local paper for one year.³⁰

There are seven goals stated for Media Compass: (1) To get teachers to feel that newspapers are a natural and essential resource in their teaching. (2) To offer the newspapers material for positive journalism about Swedish schools. (3) To help students develop their reading skills and engagement in the world around, plus to advance their insight into the role of media in society. (4) For everyone taking part in Media Compass the intention is to experience that it is fun and meaningful to use newspapers for learning. (5) The assignments given to the students and their teachers are supposed to encourage collaboration between home and school. (6) The work with the Press Station is intended to stimulate the use of IT resources in schools. (7) The participating students shall feel and experience that they are part of a bigger context and that they have the opportunity to make their voices heard.³¹

The fourth and final example comes from the sector of ministries and governmental agencies where the governmental agencies are the ones that can be active in projects, collaborations with civic society, dialogues with commercial actors etc. Among the actors and stakeholders most engaged in using the MIL concept, with reference to Unesco, one finds the Swedish Media Council (SMC).

The SMC are oriented to teachers and other working professional with children has somewhat more than 20 employees and offers a variety of MIL related material, much of which is information and campaign material. They also provide reports and statistics about young people’s media use as well as tutorial material that partly is based on facts and data gathered by the SMC. To a growing extent, material offered by the SMC is practice based and interactive. One big venture in this direction was the launching of a new website, *the MIL-room*, in February 2014.

The MIL-room is a web-based resource for teachers, parents and librarians building on the MIL definition that the Agency had made theirs: ‘MIL can be described as the ability to find,

²⁸<http://www.wan-ifra.org/articles/2010/12/03/news-in-education-nie>, 140410

²⁹*Vad är presstationen?* <http://presstationen.se/140410>

³⁰<http://www.mediekompass.se/presstationen/140410>

³¹*Presstationen*. <http://www.mediekompass.se/presstationen/140410>

analyze, critically value and create media in different media and contexts’. The MIL-room is divided into three themes, each with its own emphasis.

The first theme, The Role of Media in Society, brings up the following issues: the emergence and role of social media; media logics, publicists in the new media landscape, freedom of the press and free opinion, ethical rules and broadcasting permission. The underpinnings of the second theme, Find, Analyze and Critically Value, are information gathering, search engines, news and the journalistic method, images, source criticism, media financing, different forms of advertising, and women and men in advertising. The third theme, called Communicate and Create, has the following subthemes: what children do online, language and communication, the social web, gaming, and bullying and hate speech online.

Under every theme and subtheme there are facts and questions for further reflection and discussion. Yet another dimension is suggestions for lesson design and links to different sources and pedagogical materials. Many of these links lead to UR and also to *Mediekompas* (driven by the Swedish Association of Advertisers). There are also links to the relevant curricula, statistics on children’s and youngsters’ media use, etc.

The MIL-room is a part of SMC’s work with strengthening MIL awareness in child care professionals as well as strengthening children as conscious media users, and with protecting them from harmful media effects. The MIL-room project is a collaboration between the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company, the Swedish Consumer Agency and the Association of Swedish Librarians and is partly financed by the EU’s Safer Internet Program.³²

9. Dimension	References and resources
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