Resolution on media education in the “new media” environment

IRIS 2020-2:1/20

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On 29 November 2019, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a Resolution on media education in the new media environment. The Resolution firstly notes some of the benefits of digitisation, in particular emphasising that online media enables access to a wider range of information and thus facilitates open and participatory democracy. The Resolution goes on to note some of the risks associated with online media, citing issues such as hate speech, incitement to violence, disinformation and propaganda.

After stressing the need to protect the right to be properly informed, the Assembly recognises media education as “a key tool for strengthening media pluralism and the quality of media content”, which are prerequisites of democracy. According to the Resolution, the purpose of media education should be to enable all members of the public to develop digital skills and a critical approach to media so that they can effectively distinguish facts from false news and recognise attempts at online manipulation and radicalisation. The Assembly further promotes coordination between relevant actors with regard to media education. Additionally, the Assembly notes that funding of media education projects should be based on structured and transparent schemes of non-commercial origin.

The Resolution goes on to refers to earlier Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers, including on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership (see IRIS 2018-5/4), and makes recommendations to various relevant actors. Member states are called upon to embed media literacy projects in all levels of education. Furthermore, member states should facilitate appropriate training for both teachers and journalists in this regard. The Resolution also recommends that member states coordinate their respective national media literacy policy by, for example, setting up of a media literacy network, and participate in international forums in order to share best practices in relation to media education. The Assembly also calls on member states to incorporate the duty to facilitate media literacy into the public-service media remit.

The Assembly also recommends that public service media organisations create media literacy projects based on the guidelines developed by the European Broadcasting Union. Public service media organisations are furthermore called

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upon to devise appropriate educational content for young audiences, as well as training programmes for teachers and journalists. The Resolution also addresses the European Broadcasting Union, advising it to promote its guidelines on media literacy, and to encourage public service media to implement those guidelines.

The Assembly furthermore recommends that the Association of Commercial Television in Europe coordinate with public service media regarding efforts regarding media literacy. The Assembly also states that professionals and organisations in the media sector should develop for journalists training materials that address legal, ethical and security aspects of online media, and that such materials should remain at the disposal of journalists permanently. Lastly, the Resolution calls on Internet intermediaries to cooperate with other actors to promote media literacy and to facilitate independent fact-checking so as to contribute to the goals of media education.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Resolution 2314 (2019) Media education in the new media environment, 29 November 2019

http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=28302&lang=en

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