



The Khanty-Mansiysk Declaration Media and Information Literacy for Building a Culture of Open Government

Final document

International conference

“Media and Information Literacy for Building a Culture of Open Government”

Khanty-Mansiysk, Russian Federation
6-10 June 2016

1. Open government is now gaining recognition and acceptance in many countries worldwide. It is based on the principles of greater transparency, accountability, and active citizen engagement in public governance. Open government embodies the concept of democracy and promotes efficiency in governance, and is driven by information and communication technology (ICT) which provide the tools and mechanisms for two-way interaction among the different governance stakeholders—government, diverse citizens and civil society institutions, business and industry, and academia, among others.
2. Interaction among stakeholders requires related competencies such as: reliable information access and retrieval; information assessment and utilization; information and knowledge creation and preservation; and information sharing and exchange using various channels, formats and platforms. To be effective and fruitful, such interaction should be based on trustworthiness of governmental information; mutual respect and compliance with standards of ethics; and privacy and security. It should aim to ensure the well-being of the community, as well as individual.
3. These composite competencies and attitudes form part of a literacy ecosystem—media and information literacy (MIL). The relationship between MIL and the efficiency of open government has not been clearly formulated in the international agenda.
4. The International Conference on Media and Information Literacy for Building a Culture of Open Government was convened in Khanty-Mansiysk, Russian Federation, on 6 to 10 June 2016. The objectives of this pioneering forum were as follows: (1) define the conceptual framework of open government/open government culture; (2) exchange innovative and creative experiences and best practices in open government; (3) discuss

how MIL competencies of different governance stakeholders can foster (or facilitate) open government practice; (4) promote the adoption of MIL educational programs as a requirement in open government adoption.

5. The International Conference was organized by the Government of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Ugra (Russian Federation), the Russian Committee of the UNESCO Information for All Programme (IFAP), and the International Library Cooperation Centre in cooperation with the Intergovernmental Council of the UNESCO IFAP, with support from the Federal Agency for the Press and Mass Media of the Russian Federation, the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO, and LUKoil Petroleum Company. The conference gathered more than a hundred academics, politicians, diplomats, journalists, teachers, governmental officials, civil society activists and private entrepreneurs from 45 countries.
6. The conference proceeded from the definition of MIL adopted in the 2012 Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy, which states, “MIL is defined as a combination of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices required to access, analyze, evaluate, use, produce, and communicate information and knowledge in creative, legal, and ethical ways that respect human rights.”
7. The conference also proceeded from the understanding of open government as a mechanism for the following:
 - enhancing the transparency and accountability of state governance and citizens’ satisfaction with its quality;
 - increasing opportunities for citizens’ direct participation in government planning and decision-making;
 - creating qualitative change in the level of openness among public authorities; and
 - effective and efficient monitoring of public authorities by civil society.
8. The conference participants came to the following conclusions:
 - a) MIL is an essential prerequisite to the establishment and sustainability of an open government;
 - b) MIL facilitates the achievement of the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: 16.5, the substantial reduction of corruption and bribery in all their forms; 16.6, the development of effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels; 16.7, responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels; and 16.10, public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements;
 - c) the acquisition of MIL competencies should be the concern of all sectors and groups as part of a lifelong education process;

- d) there is a need to give special attention to MIL competencies of government agencies and civil servants responsible for ensuring open government;
 - e) as a new element of democracy and a new phase of e-government, open government must be regarded in a broader context than a set of digital open data and governmental e-services, while lessons and experiences in e-government and e-citizenship should provide useful sources of insights and understanding of MIL in open government practice; and
 - f) MIL experts, scholars, researchers, and practitioners should be directly involved in the elaboration of open government practice.
9. Proceeding from the above, the conference participants urge national governments, UN agencies (particularly UNESCO), relevant intergovernmental and public organizations, professional associations, educational, research, cultural and social institutions, media networks, and commercial and industrial businesses to:
- a) recognize MIL as an essential element of open government and in building an open government culture;
 - b) identify the development of MIL policy standards, assessment systems, and tools among national priorities in education, culture, information, and media;
 - c) engage experts on MIL in the establishment of open governments; and
 - d) allocate sufficient resources and promote institutions and networks for the development of MIL in the context of open government.
10. This document was drafted by representatives from Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Brazil, China, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Finland, France, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Macedonia, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Palestine, Paraguay, the Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, South African Republic, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.