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Research and Needs Analysis

die Berater, Austria



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1. Part 1 - General information: Media Literacy

1.1. Definition of the topic

Media literacy is the ability to use the media, to understand and critically evaluate the different aspects of the media and media content, and to communicate oneself in multiple contexts. Media literacy refers to all media, including television and cinema, radio and music on different sound carriers, newspapers and magazines, books, internet and other new digital communication technologies.¹

Media literacy expands the concept of literacy, as today's messages come in many forms and literacy can no longer refer simply to the ability to read and write.²

Media literacy is a key competence that helps to make better decisions. We need media literacy to be able to make informed choices between different media, to critically evaluate content and information and to communicate in diverse media. We need media literacy to use the potential of the internet in an unrestricted risk- and media-competent way.³

Media literacy can be subdivided into four dimensions: media critique, media didactic, media use, media creation:

Media critique

should adequately grasp analytically problematic social processes. Every person should be able to reflexively apply the analytical knowledge to himself and his actions. The ability to consider the social consequences of media development is another dimension of media criticism.

Media didactic

encompasses knowledge about today's media systems. The informative sub-dimension of

¹ <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/uek/medien.html>

² <https://medialiteracynow.org/what-is-media-literacy/>

³ <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/uek/medien.html>

media studies includes classical knowledge. The instrumental-qualificational sub-dimension means the ability to operate new devices. The two aspects of media criticism and media studies comprise the sub-dimension of mediation. The sub-dimension of goal orientation lies in people's actions. Here, therefore, the use of media plays an important role.

Media use

is to be understood in two ways: Media should be used receptively (programme use competence) and interactive offers should be used.

Media creation

represents the fourth area of media competence. The area of media design includes the innovative changes and developments of the media system and the creative aesthetic variants that go beyond the limits of everyday communication routines⁴

1.2. Basic scientific information

The central importance of media literacy in the information society is pointed out in various normative texts at national and supranational level as well as in numerous studies by international organisations.⁵

The discussion of "media literacy" is confused by the lack of an agreed meaning for the term. There is plenty of academic debate on what "media literacy", "digital literacy", "information literacy", "media education" and other similar terms mean exactly.

Overall Trends in the European Union since 2000

- Growing Recognition of the Importance of Media Literacy: There is a consensus that media literacy and related concepts are a vital issue. Media literacy is promoted by EU institutions as well as member states. Increasingly, media literacy has become part of national educational curricula.

⁴ <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medienkompetenz>

⁵ <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/uek/medien.html>

- Growing Role of Actors outside the Education Sector: Since the 1970s, the education sector has gradually lost its monopoly of media education.

Responsibilities have been extended to reach parents and families, the media, other public institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This shift also means that the "civic" vocation of media education has gained in importance. In part this transformation is related to the movement in favour of lifelong learning, retraining etc.⁶

1.3. Useful resources/additional Good Practices

<https://eavi.eu/>

<http://smart-toolkit.eu/media-literacy/>

1.4. Links

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_literacy

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medienkompetenz>

https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Digital_and_Media_Literacy.pdf

https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/en/Topics/youth_strategy/digital.html

<https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/uek/medien.html>

<https://www.mediamanual.at/>

<https://medialiteracynow.org/what-is-media-literacy/>

<https://www.medialit.org/reading-room/what-media-literacy-definitionand-more>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/250152397_The_European_Charter_for_Media_Literacy_Meaning_and_Potential

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2008/397254/IPOL->

⁶ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2008/397254/IPOL-CULT_NT\(2008\)397254_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2008/397254/IPOL-CULT_NT(2008)397254_EN.pdf)

[CULT_NT\(2008\)397254_EN.pdf](#)

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/media-literacy>

<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/jmle/>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0002764219869406>

https://books.google.at/books?hl=de&lr=&id=P6pzDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT21&dq=media+literacy&ots=QfIZhhr5fT&sig=l-aPIMN7K8MIKJWp-gDT476hnEo&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=media%20literacy&f=false

<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/jmle/vol10/iss2/1/>

https://books.google.at/books?hl=de&lr=&id=hTGbDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=media+literacy&ots=WGapydFk_d&sig=2NYq7ODVV-8u9LB8Nd2DKFWt49E&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=media%20literacy&f=false

http://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/31574/1/AR2_Teaching%20Media%20Literacy_NESET.pdf

https://euromeduc.eu/IMG/pdf/Euromeduc_ENG.pdf

<https://erga-online.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ERGA-SG2-Report-2020-Improving-Media-Literacy-campaigns-on-disinformation.pdf>

1.5. Ideas how to structure the Module

The module should address all four dimensions of media literacy. This means that it should not only include input on media use and critique, but also information on media systems on the one hand, and the module should ideally teach about media creation as well.

The module should be decidedly interactive, not only because this increases learner engagement, but because it fits the topic of media literacy.

By completing the module, learners should:

- Know what “media literacy” is
- Gain a basic understanding of how media works, different types of media.
- Gain basic knowledge of privacy protection.
- Be able to search for information on the internet, evaluate the trustworthiness

- of different media.
- Have experienced producing a piece of media on their own

2. PART 2: Active Citizenship in your country

2.1. Relevance of topic plus general information

Media literacy is a highly relevant topic in Austria. Like in other countries in the EU, Europe and the world, the importance of media literacy has been recognized decades ago. Especially since online and social media have become more important, public authorities and the education system have realized that training in media literacy is essential in order to safeguard a democratic society.

2.2. Current trends

Fostering media literacy is closely linked to the educational sector. There are many initiatives in place, most of which are undertaken or funded by the public. This includes efforts by the ministry of education, directorate of education, and other public actors. (see stakeholders). This is complimented by projects by other actors in education (e.g. EU funded projects) or the media.

Active citizen participation in the closest sense is barely noticable.

2.3. Stakeholders on local, national or European level

Austrian Ministry of education

<https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/>

Vienna directorate of education

<https://www.bildung-wien.gv.at/>

Democracy center Vienna

<https://www.demokratiezentrum.org/>



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Austrian Communication authority

<https://www.rtr.at/rtr/startseite.de.html>

Vienna education server

<https://bildungsserver.wien/start/home-wiener-bildungsserver>

Vienna social youth services

<https://www.jugendarbeit.wien/>

Workers' chamber

<https://www.arbeiterkammer.at>

Austrian trade union federation

<https://www.oegb.at/>

Media manual

<https://www.mediamanual.at/>

Community colleges Austria

<https://www.vhs.at/de>

Safer internet

<https://www.saferinternet.at/>

Association of Austrian newspapers

<https://voez.at>

Commit Community Medien Institut

<https://www.commit.at/>

3. PART 3: Definition of 3 good practices

3.1. Good practice 1

Not to be confused with Commit association, this EU funded project aims to counteract online propaganda and “fake news”.

COMMIT aims to prevent & dissuade vulnerable young people in 4 partner countries (Italy, Austria, The Netherlands, Greece) from extremism, radicalism & terrorism, providing them with skills relevant to co-create counter-narratives challenging extremist online propaganda and alternative narratives promoting democratic values, tolerance & cooperation, and to identify & resist extremist online content.

COMMIT addresses also university students, media professionals, CSOs, to improve their capacity to meet the new challenges linked to extremist online propaganda & violent radicalisation, training them through a tailor-made capacity-building programme in alternative & counter-narratives for preventing radicalism.

COMMIT adopts a trans-medial approach combining online campaigning & face-to-face activities (workshops, contest, events).

<https://commitproject.eu/>

3.2. Good practice 2

On behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, mediamanual.at annually announces the media literacy award [mla] for the best and most innovative media education projects in European schools.

Submissions in five categories can be of any genre. They should be innovative, witty, original, exciting and/or experimental.

The competition encourages a creative and critical approach to media of all kinds. Mini-dramas, documentary as well as experimental works, websites, games, photos, features, radio plays, weblogs and podcasts are welcome as well as models of collaborative media work.

A jury will evaluate the entries and award prizes to the best. Awards in the media didactics category will be presented by the editorial team of mediamanual.at.

<https://www.mediamanual.at/media-literacy-award>

3.3. Good practice 3

The online zoo is a series of publications, including an illustrated storybook, E-book, video series, and accompanying material, aimed at children between the age of 3 and 6. Its goal is to support young children in developing digital competences and media literacy in a playful, age-appropriate way. The book has been provided to all Viennese Kindergartens and is also available for order by individuals, all contents are also available online.

In 2017, the online zoo hardcopy book was chosen as one best practice project tackling media literacy by School Education gateway.

<https://www.ispa.at/wissenspool/onlinezoo/>

<https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/latest/news/media-literacy--best-practice.htm>

4. PART 4: Focus Groups and Questionnaires

4.1. Focus group's findings

The focus group event took place on Monday, 30th of September and it followed the questions that the consortium has developed during the partner meeting in Nicosia. After a short introduction the first part of the focus groups was based on the resources and what type of resources the project consortium should include to implement all foreseen activities in the project. The focus group participants gave some examples from other initiatives like EndeGelände, an international activist movement with the aim to stop the coal mining in Europe, because they create both online and offline activities that reach a lot of young people by using new and innovative methods. Also the NewWORK initiative was mentioned as well as the "Akademie Ehrenamtlicher Vereine".

Participants of the focus group discussed a lot on the needs to create engaging material for young people. The participants stressed out that often the attractiveness of the material is reduced or not fitting to the needs of young people due to a lack of understanding of the real needs. As possible solutions to create engaging content that attracts young people our participants suggested to focus on the level on communication, how message should arrive and also on the branding, not only on the visual identity, but also regarding texts. Including role models is an important tool to personalise the content and, this is the most important point, offering also ways how young people can directly benefit from the knowledge and the experience of role models. It is important to use social components and try to localise it in the world of young people. The use of emotions in general can help to raise the interest in the product and we should try to combine this with concrete roles that young people could take over in organisations/initiatives/movements, for example: If I am a Social Media Manager in organisation X, my tasks would be this and that and so I could help to reach the goal X of the organisation etc. This helps young people to get an idea how they could active and where they can put their new knowledge into practice.

In the third part we were talking about ways to reach out to our target group. Based on successful initiatives like the national Boys Day we discussed about possible ways to get in contact with young people. Classical ways like contacting schools are still a good way, according to our participants, to reach young people as well as organisations where young people are already active. In all ways it is important to focus on personal contact, to not base the activity on mass mails, but to focus on the creation of a network. Also WhatsApp groups can be helpful. It is also

important to leave the beaten track and include for example also rural areas to avoid barriers that can limit the research.

In the last part we explored existing initiatives, tools and links for five of our main topics (human rights, citizens rights, social inclusion, media literacy and sustainable development).

4.2. Questionnaire's findings

The questionnaire in Austria covered the questions of almost 30 young people, 50% are between 25 and 30, almost 40% are younger (18-24) and the rest is between 30 and 35. A bit more than 50% are working, while the others are studying. They are active various fields and in different associations, a lot of them in cultural and sport associations. Interesting: Only 2 people said that they are not active voluntarily.

Participants would describe an active citizen as someone who is interested in the society and on freedom and that tries to change something by convincing others. It is someone who wants to contribute actively to a better society.

Some of the answers are confirming the growing gap between politics and young people. First of all, a majority (65%) is convinced that the concept of democracy has changed over the last years and more than 50% are saying that the Covid19 pandemic has reduced the visibility of young people and their needs in public life. This data is matching with some other surveys conducted on national level in the last year. Young people seem to be underrepresented in decision-making processes, 60% in our survey are thinking that there are hardly any ways to get involved in the decision-making processes. On the other hand, the often mentioned argument that young people are anyway not interested in political debates is not shared by our participants: Most of them are thinking that young people are interested, even though there is still seen some improvement. Interesting also the question if the government is sustaining the participation of young people: Nobody agrees with this affirmation, a majority is convinced that there are no ways to participate and make visible the needs of young people.

Regarding human rights, our participants are aware of the topic. Only 40% are actively in this field with diverse activities, the majority is participating or organizing activities in this field only from time to time. Also on Social Media the involvement is lower compared to other issues.

Contrary, the topic sustainability and environment seems to be a priority for young people, almost 80% mentioned that the topic is very important for them, almost all want also changes in the economic sustainability (50% extremely concerned, 50% very concerned). Given this figures, it is not a surprise that the interest for the topic is also quite high on social media. 50% know all SDGs, 40% some of them, only 12% have never heard about it. Regarding concrete proposals how young people can get active in this field, there are multiple possibilities, in general almost all propose to get active, either by joining already existing activities or participating in demonstrations like Fridays for Future, or by raising the voice through organizations. Some also propose to get in contact with local politicians, but on the other hand we also see the distrust in established parties, some of them propose not to vote for them as they are not following the interests of young people.

Regarding the topic inclusion and political involvement, we can see that the majority is taking part in events only sometimes and not on a daily basis. Almost all of our participants are doing volunteer work, but the level of frequency is different. Almost nobody wears a bracelet or other symbol of an association etc. and interesting: Almost nobody (92%) is participating in illegal activities. Some of the participants are boycotting products, but there is no clear trend. Almost all are going regularly to elections and they are also regularly sign for petitions online.

Our participants are not really convinced that traditional media (TV, Radio) is supporting the views of young people, a majority disagree with this statement. The content in media is not really tailored to the needs of young people according to our answers, even though we can see here a more neutral perspective. There is also no clear trend if Social Media can be considered as an trustful source for news, the majority here has a neutral perspective. A large majority knows about their data protection settings on their social media accounts. People are active on social media, but do not comment much.

The survey underlines how young people have the feeling to not be heard in public and in decision-making processes, trends that were already confirmed also by other studies and surveys in the last years. Also in our survey, we can see two interesting trends: Young people seem highly interested in political processes and are active in many fields, but on the other hand, they feel underrepresented in public life and in political decisions. The official Austria should invest more in creating transparent and modern ways of decision-making that also take into consideration the needs of the young people that will be the future of Europe.

5. PART 5: Summary

Media literacy is the ability to use the media, to understand and critically evaluate the different aspects of the media and media content, and to communicate oneself in multiple contexts.

The central importance of media literacy in the information society is pointed out in various normative texts at national and supranational level as well as in numerous studies by international organisations.

Fostering media literacy is closely linked to the educational sector. There are many initiatives in place, most of which are undertaken or funded by the public.

Active Citizenship in Austria is mostly carried out by a variety of NGOs and associations active in different fields. In many of these organisations, young people are contributing with the experiences and expectations, this was also confirmed by our survey that followed in their results other conducted survey in the last years. There is, however, a link missing between the decision-makers and the processes and young people that often feel not recognised with their point of views and ideas in politics.

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