



The *MELIA Observatory* Project

Media Literacy Observatory for Active Citizenship and Sustainable Democracy

T3.1.3 Media literacy capacity building toolkit for educators

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- Introduction

The WP3 will establish transnational training network for upgrading the level of media literacy and boosting civil participation. Its objective is to establish durable framework for continuous developments civil skills, especially among youth, that would enable them to play active role in democratic process.

Within this output was created Media literacy capacity building toolkit.

This capacity building toolkit is created by Edhance Plus in cooperation with all partners. Partners with expertise and experience in media, education and civic engagement (NGOs, HEIs) prepared capacity building tools. Public authorities dealt with a normative framework. Other all partners provided consultation and advice.

- Summary of the Media literacy capacity building toolkit for educators

On the basis of detection of good practices from inside and outside the Region, we will develop the following innovative educational toolkit on the field of media literacy and active citizenship: **toolkit for training of youth educators (teachers, tutors, coaches).**

Toolkit contain curriculum (D.T.3.1.5) of training program and following learning materials: handbook, brochure and interactive presentations with infographic (D.T.3.1.6). Curriculum include contents that provide knowledge, skills and competences to target group. It is crafted by accordance to special needs of particular target population. The curriculum is created on the basis of implementation of training programs for capacity building, with the main purpose of developing skills and competences in the field of media literacy, in relation to active citizenship. The learning materials are designed in a culturally and socially adaptive manner so they can be adapted to different social, systemic or cultural circumstances in variety of national or local contexts. Also, presentations and handbooks are adaptable to digital format in order to stimulate interactive learning process (digital and interactive exercises). In this regard, we followed suggestions by European Commission which sees media literacy as “a stimulus and a pre-condition for pluralism and independence in the media”, leading to “a positive impact on the values of diversity, tolerance, transparency, equity and dialogue.” The toolkits will directly contribute to PSO2, since it will be instrumental for improving education programs in the field of media literacy with launching innovative training programs for both youth and their educators. With their wide applicability, they will also contribute to establishment of transnational training network (PSO1).

Curriculum objectives

Teachers must understand how media literacy might be utilized in the school curriculum. They must be able to critically assess media texts and information sources in the light of the functions attributed to news media and other information providers. And for that purpose to select a wide range of material from media and information resources. They must have skills to assess students' and pupils' understanding of media literacy and active citizenship.

Learning materials on media literacy and active citizenship for educators will equip educators with necessary teaching contents, knowledge and trends in approaching media literacy and active citizenship topics.

Success in educating the young generation is closely linked to the level of media and digital literacy of educators themselves. Because the information provided by the media is complex and often contradictory, the educator's main task is to guide his students in the process of understanding, the art of interpreting the information correctly and then transforming it into knowledge or skills. For education, we have chosen topics that reflect the most current issues of media literacy and active citizenship in the real life of the current generation:

- Behavior on social networks
- Practice critical thinking
- Marketing and advertising
- News and hoaxes
- Manipulation and propaganda
- Politics

Media literacy is an imaginary bridge across education, where educators have the opportunity to use an environment that the young generation knows very well. With the help of interactive presentations (which will be focused on target groups of pupils and students) we will focus on practical examples and activities that are associated with real problems in the field. The aim of the curriculum is to encourage pupils and students to ask questions towards

educators, search for context, verification, evaluation. The educator should lead pupils and students to be actively motivated in the field of citizenship and to take an interest in political events, as well as to use multimedia tools in a creative way. The educator serves as a mediator between the pupil/student and the curriculum.

Capacity building tools

To strengthen civic competences and media literacy we have compiled Capacity building tools for enhancing media literacy skills, which includes: presentations, handbooks, reading lists and brochures.

For educators are available sets of interactive presentations (which are designed for cooperation with pupils and students) and so-called "handbooks", which will provide them with methodological and didactic instructions for grasping the topic in order to address the young generation as much as possible. These materials are also a tool for increasing the digital competencies of educators who may be concerned about technology in teaching. Furthermore, a list of suitable literature for deepening knowledge of media education will be prepared.

Description of the individual lessons

■ Behavior on social networks

People on social networks face the threat of influencing their opinion, without realizing how easily their judgement can be influenced by the influx of information. They should be able to interpret the relationship between media messages and reality.

Cultivating critical thinking over ordinary content as a result leads to the strengthening of competencies within active citizenship and sustainable democracy. It is therefore of the utmost importance to equip them with the ability to understand and critically assess and classify media content. We point out disinformation messages, which can spread quickly through the online environment and especially social networks, as one of the negative aspects. We try to teach educators the ability to critically evaluate on the basis of examples from their lives. As a result, they should learn to apply this skill subsequently to situations related to active citizenship. And because most of the time people spend on social networks, where they view various content, we have included this topic as a suitable means of acquiring skills. Educators should learn to compare different interpretations of visually pictorial expressions on specific examples and explain their attitudes towards them.

We use examples of influencers' lives to demonstrate that not everything educators see is real and true. If educators acquire critical evaluation on content that is close to them, they can apply this skill to other media tools, different topics and other spheres of their lives.

The environment of social networks brings not only positives, but also negatives in terms of the impact on the mental health of this target group. Educators are overwhelmed by the large amount of content about "false beauty".

At the beginning of the lesson, educators will be briefly introduced to the concept of social network and their examples. A video sample of content that is close to this target group has been prepared. The educator can think about the consequences and changes brought about by the development media to the society. It will be explained to educators that using these

platforms can be dangerous and addictive. The content is usually digitally edited or stylized, so we have included a sample that confirms these edits. To amplify this thesis, examples were prepared that relate to the editing of appearance, but also places. There may be a deeper analysis and the finding of stimuli and problems - educators do not evaluate their behavior and their shortcomings, but the mistakes of someone else, with whom they can subsequently identify privately. This target group may be exposed to cyberstalking and cyberbullying, so a comic has been included that illustrates this situation.

It is useful for educators to be aware of what a digital footprint is. It will help them to resolve and better understand the meaning of individual functions. The final slides deal with the excessive use of digital technologies and social networks and the associated (not only) physiological problems.

■ Critical thinking skills

In order for educators to actively participate in social life, they should be able to critically evaluate policy arguments, information from news and other media. It is necessary to think critically about this. This lesson is used to practice this skill.

Critical thinking is a combination of words that are used more and more often in the field of media and education in various cases. What can we imagine under this term and how to make us think critically? We make sure that critical thinking is not confused with criticism (this is a concept that educators are familiar with, so they use its definition when hearing the concept of critical thinking).

In the following slides we focus on logical fallacies and cognitive distortions. We do not require knowledge of terminology from educators, but it is desirable to be aware of unconscious mistakes in argumentation and drawing conclusions.

Great emphasis is placed on practical exercises. Educators can click on interactive elements, under which there is an explanation of either a logical fallacy or a cognitive distortion with specific examples. This target group will practice even more demanding examples in order to master this skill of critical evaluation of a statement really well. The educator should then be

able to recognize the problem and clarify its nature and should be able to critically interpret the knowledge and findings. He/she verifies them, he/she finds arguments and evidence for his/her claim.

■ Marketing and advertising

Advertising – everyone knows it, but we do not always recognize it. We don't see commercials just on TV, but all the time on the internet. Thanks to the data stored about users on the internet, advertisements are then served to our needs. Therefore, we will explain to educators what are the basic principles of marketing, how they are interesting and also that advertising is targeted at specific users - the latest technologies using the principles of algorithmization.

In this lesson, we also focus on Product Placement not only on social networks, where they often meet it. The online (but also offline) world is full of so-called product placement, which influences consumer behavior. It is a modern marketing tool - a promotion of a product or service, which, in addition to the classic advertising presentation of the product, focuses on the social, personal and societal features and characteristics of the consumer. Marketing strategies directly target the young generation through the internet and use areas that are close to this generation, such as music videos, online games and, above all, the power of influencers. For the young generation, product placement is difficult to identify despite the fact that viewers or recipients of information must be informed about it in advance (according to the EU law).

The reason why we include this topic is that modern marketing is also widely used in politics and influencing opinion, and it is a threat that we must face in today's world. It is therefore necessary for educators to learn the basic principles of the algorithm and its use in the online world. Many of them do not realize how the algorithm works and why the ads are displayed to them. For better clarity, a video was prepared that explains this issue. Thanks to the understanding of the issue in the example, which they often encounter in the digital environment, they can then more easily recognize the manipulation of the political intention.

The aim of this lesson is to reveal manipulations in the online world of marketing and advertising in order to acquire the skills of their critical evaluation.

- News and hoaxes

Educators receive most of the information from the media and cannot clearly evaluate what is fact and what is fiction. We pay attention to hoaxes and disinformation, which are part of media messages. The online world, as well as the printed media, are a source of unsubstantiated information and hoaxes. It is therefore of the utmost importance to equip educators with the ability to understand, critically (reflexively) assess and classify media content. educators must be able to critically approach media information (to distinguish between subjective and objective messages)

In the lesson, educators will learn what the most important elements of media communication are and, with the help of a practical sample with a political topic, they will learn the difference between news and journalism. This aims to strengthen the ability to recognize and name areas of media influence on humans.

The next part of the lesson focuses on the possible influence of the content of media messages by the media owner. This part can be extended by individual or group work with the Internet within the search for other important and influential personalities owning important large media or by searching for other titles/stations.

Furthermore, with a practical example, they will learn what the term interpretation means. This aims to strengthen the ability to recognize stereotypes in the media message and gives examples of their simplistic and general approach to reality. In the next part of the lesson, they will learn about hoaxes and their purpose and, through suitable video samples, the use of hoaxes "in practice". That is, in an environment that is close to the educators and thanks to which they can acquire these skills. In the next part of the lesson, they will learn to define and recognize disinformation and find out where they are used (propaganda, troll farms or conspiracy theories). Using these examples, they will learn to critically evaluate information from a media message.

- Manipulation and propaganda

Educators encounter manipulative behavior in their lives. They are often unable to distinguish or defend against it. However, manipulative communication is often used in the presentation of politicians. Given that educators can already enter public life, we have included this topic for this target group as well.

The aim of this topic is to acquaint educators with the intention and techniques of manipulation and to educate them in the field of recognition and work with such a message with regard to active citizenship and sustainable democracy. Manipulation techniques are also reflected in propaganda, so attention is also paid to this concept.

Educators will get acquainted with the concept of manipulation and manipulative techniques that are used. Examples were selected that the target group can most often meet in their environment. In the next part of the lesson, we will introduce educators to the types of manipulators. This is a pattern of behavior. In order to explain the problem to the educators as well as possible, we prepared an animated video with voiceover and illustrative examples. The educator will play an animated video in which this issue is explained and there will be several examples of types of manipulators. Thanks to this, the educator will strengthen the ability to evaluate how manipulative techniques are used in practice and more easily identify with the example.

Manipulation is used in a political environment, so an audio sample was included, in which educators get acquainted with the example of politician-led manipulation. We will strengthen the educator's ability to perceive the relationship between the media and freedom of speech and the importance of the press for democratic societies, so that he/she understands the risk aspects of this relationship,

With the help of visual elements, educators get acquainted with the interpretation in photographs and its distortion, as well as manipulation in photographs. In this lesson, we also deal with the concept of propaganda and introduce educators to examples of occurrence. At the end of the lesson, we deal with the concepts of censorship and self-censorship.

■ Politics

It is useful to find out what educators think about politics, whether and to what extent they are interested in what is happening in the state in which they live and who are the people who decide for us. They will learn the role of politicians in their daily lives. Great emphasis is also placed on the concept of hate speech.

With the help of video examples of political speeches, educators should learn different forms of political speech, one of the examples being hate speech. Using a video sample, we will show educators the inappropriate behavior of politicians in public with an emphasis on pre-election manipulation with potential voters. This should help educators formulate their moral beliefs. Last but not least, through examples, the educator will be motivated by visual examples and arguments to actively participate in political life and learn what are the potential risks that will affect him if he neglects this activity. This fact is also reflected in the perception of politics and active citizenship, which is an important element of democracy. The aim of this lesson is to introduce educators to politics, to realize the importance of municipal policy and motivate them to take an active interest in political events around them and, consequently, in the world.

Description of presentations and handbooks

Regarding the use of digital learning materials, digital technologies will be used for teaching. Teaching will be presented to educators through 12 interactive presentations. A set of presentations was created for each target group (pupils and educators). These sets will be available to the educator and will also serve as teaching material for him/her.

The presentation is displayed in a web browser. It is recommended to proceed in this order:

1. Behavior on social networks
2. Critical Thinking Skills
3. Marketing and Advertising
4. News and Hoaxes
5. Manipulation and Propaganda
6. Politics

Presentations contain original graphic elements (e.g., in the form of photographs), animated videos, audio samples, audio tracks, video samples. An interactive element is a button that is located on some slides of presentations, with the ability to click and display text. Another interactive element are the sliding buttons with which the educator controls the presentation or sound.

Interactive presentations will be responsive and thanks to interactive elements, the educator can control what is happening in the classroom. We recommend using an interactive whiteboard to project the presentation.

For each presentation, a thematic handbook is created, which the pupil or student either prints out for the presentation or reads in pdf format. At the same time, this handbook also serves an educator, who will receive a set of tests for pupils to verify the Standards of knowledge at completion of other target groups (pupil or student).

This handbook is supplemented with interesting teaching tips and didactical recommendations for educators.

Those presentations and handbooks will serve as a guidance to educators on delivering media literacy and active citizenship training or how to effectively use learning materials developed in the MELIA project.

Learning and teaching is based on individual work through motivation, focus, self-observation, reflection, self-evaluation.

Presentations are coded in HTML5 and run on any computer in a usual web browser. Each presentation is marked with the project's publicity on the first slide. To move to the next slide, educators will click on the arrow to the right. To return to the previous slide, educators will click left. Besides that, slides include an “info button” marked with visible “i” icon on the slide in the lower left corner of the slide. Under it, there is additional information or example that will help better understand the issue. (Educators follow instructions with additional learning information within particula Handbook.) Some slides have interactive elements in addition to the “i” button. These elements are highlighted. By clicking on them, educators will learn more information (there can be for example an audio sample, video or additional information). Educator will also find an audio icon in the presentation. Some slides contain sound. If necessary, educators can click on the sound icon to mute or reactivate the sound in the presentation. By clicking on the right arrow, the educator will move to the next slide. If the educator wants to go back to the presentation, click on the left arrow. To go back to the very beginning of the presentation, click on the “house” icon which returns educator from the very beginning.

The interactive presentations are available on the official website of the project:

<https://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/melia-observatory/section/materials-for-educators>

Description of handbooks

In each handbook, educators will find copies of slides from the presentation and extension theoretical and didactical material. The learning is also supplemented with interesting facts and definitions and learning and teaching tips. This is a very detailed lesson guide and a manual on how to teach the lesson. Educators also have handbooks that are created for students or pupils. Therefore two Handbooks are created for each topic.

These handbooks are available on the official website of the project:

<https://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/melia-observatory/section/materials-for-educators>

Brochure

A brochure was created to promote the resulting learning toolkit. It is a one-page document that describes the content of the curriculum in a concise and factual manner. The information serves both the learners and the general public.

The brochure are available on the official website of the project:

<https://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/melia-observatory/section/materials-for-educators>

Reading List

We have prepared a list of recommended literature for this target group. As this is an international project and the target groups speak different languages, the list of recommended literature and other resources is multilingual. A list has been compiled for each topic. This reading list is part of the Handbooks, i.e. it can be found in the Handbook by topic and at the end of the document and is labelled "Reading List".

The handbooks with reading list are available in PDF files on the official website of the project:

<https://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/melia-observatory/section/materials-for-educators>