The MELIA Observatory Project

Media Literacy Observatory for Active Citizenship and Sustainable Democracy

Output T4.2 Pilot 2 – High school students (vocational schools)

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1 Introduction

Within the WPT4 – MELIA Observatory Pilot Testing, activity A.T4.2 Pilot 2 has been implemented with high school students from vocational schools in two countries of the Danube region, Czech Republic and Croatia. Capacity building tools on media literacy and active citizenship for high school students developed in WPT3 have been tested with an aim to receive feedback on their usability and applicability, as well as enhancement of media literacy competences of students. MELIA capacity building tools were developed to enhance knowledge and skills required to efficiently build resilience against negative phenomena constructed by contemporary media, strengthen youths' ability for critical thinking and empower them for political participation.

The Pilot 2 actions have been implemented according to the Framework methodology for pilot 2 implementation with the tool to monitor the gained media literacy skills (D.T4.2.1), developed by the team consisting of two national working groups, one in the Czech Republic coordinated by project partner Metropolitan University Prague (MUP) and one in Croatia coordinated by project partner Croatian Chamber of Economy (CCE).

Among the high school population, we decided to target students who attend vocational schools. The reason for our decision is that youngsters from these schools often came from more modest social backgrounds and from less educated families, which affects their media habits, ability to develop critical thinking mindsets, and active citizenship competencies and are also a more vulnerable group for the development of various types of media addictions. Further, their regular schooling program usually lacks content related to media and democracy issues.

The pilot on vocational high-school students has been implemented in the Czech Republic and Croatia due to different traditions in vocational school education systems. Each piloting country engaged one vocational high school to participate, selected after applying to open call for participation.

As predefined in the methodology, at least 20 students and 3 teachers from the selected school in each country were to participate in pilot testing. The students were to provide feedback on training materials, on the quality of trainings held and on enhancement of media literacy competencies acquired through training. The teaching staff was to provide feedback on the curriculum of training program, on learning tools and trainings held.

For students under 16 that have participated in pilot testing, the responsible partners ensured the Informed consent of a parent or other legal guardian for them to be part of the MELIA Observatory teaching activities.

In order to be tested in one Czech and one Croatian school, the capacity building tools for high school students have been translated into the national languages of those countries.

This document is the report on pilot 2 implemented in both countries.

2 Pilot 2 in Croatia

In Croatia Health and veterinary school dr. Andrija Štampar in Vinkovci applied to participate in pilot testing of the capacity building tools on media literacy and active citizenship for high school students.

In order to test the capacity building tools for high school students, two capacity building actions have been conducted in this vocational school. The initial capacity building action has been conducted on September 08, 2022, within two school hours. 25 students of the 2B grade and 3 teachers participated in the first training event. After a short presentation of the MELIA Observatory project in the beginning, there was a training on the two topics of the learning materials, as predefined in Framework methodology for Pilot 2 implementation: a) Behaviour on Social Networks; b) Critical Thinking Skills.

The follow up capacity building action has been conducted on October 27, 2022, also within two school hours. 23 students of the 2B grade and 4 teachers participated in the second training event. Another two topics envisaged by the curriculum of training program were presented, as predefined in Framework methodology for Pilot 2 implementation. Those topics were: a) Manipulation and propaganda, b) Politics.

One school hour has been dedicated to each topic on both training events.

The trainings have been conducted by external expert hired by CCE, Sanja Rajković from SanjaR Agency, a Master of Communication and media studies with several years of experience in media, public relations and marketing.

The trainings were conducted in the IT classroom of the school. The educator presented the topics using the projector and a whiteboard, while students went through interactive presentations displayed in a web browser on the computer (1-2 students on one computer), using the accompanying thematic handbook in PDF format.

After each of the training events, the students provided feedback on training materials, the quality of trainings held, and the enhancement of media literacy competencies acquired through training. For this purpose, the feedback questionnaire, provided by the Framework methodology for Pilot 2 implementation (Annex 1 of the Framework methodology for Pilot 2 implementation D.T4.2.1), has been used.

After the second training event, the teachers were interviewed to provide feedback on the curriculum of the training program and learning materials on media literacy and active citizenship for high school students, as well as on the trainings held. For this purpose, the instructions for conducting an interview with teachers (data that need to be collected through the interview) defined in the D.T4.2.1 Framework methodology for Pilot 2 implementation, have been used.

The results obtained through feedback questionnaires completed by students after training events, as well as those obtained through the semi-structured interviews with teachers participating in the training events, are presented in this document.

The school participating in the pilot has been awarded the Certificate of Appreciation for participating in the pilot testing within the MELIA Observatory project. The students participating in pilot 2 have been awarded the Certificate of Attendance.

2.1 Description of the data collecting tools for evaluation of the pilots

In order to provide monitored feedback from students on usability and applicability of the training materials, as well as on the quality of trainings held and on enhancement of media literacy competencies acquired through trainings, the quantitative method of data collection and analysis has been used. The Feedback questionnaire was developed by WPT4 leader with cooperation of all partners. The questionnaire is designed in the form of assessment of the usability and applicability of educational materials and the quality of trainings held, and self-assessment of media literacy skills acquired through training. It measures a degree of student´s satisfaction/dissatisfaction with learning materials, trainings held, and media literacy skills gained. The questionnaire is a part of the document D.T4.2.1 Framework methodology for Pilot 2 implementation, tool to monitor the gained media literacy skills (Annex 1).

To provide feedback from the students and teachers, one round of data collection has been organized after the first training and one after finishing the second training in the selected school in Croatia.

After the initial capacity building action, 25 students and 3 teachers participating in the training, completed the feedback questionnaire. After the follow-up capacity building action, 23 students participating in the event, the same ones who participated in the first training, provided feedback.

In order to provide monitored feedback from teachers who participated in the Pilot 2 testing, the semi-structured interview has been conducted at the end of the pilot testing with 3 teachers from the selected school in Croatia. The teachers that have participated in the capacity building actions (Croatian language teacher, Latin language teacher, School Library Media Specialist), provided feedback on the curriculum of training program, learning materials and trainings held.

Through interviews with teachers, the organizer of piloting actions gathered their opinion on:

1) the following aspects of the curriculum:

- Topics selected for teaching media literacy
- Learning methods
- Special didactical recommendations regarding the use of digital learning materials
- Concrete objectives of the training (all topics)
- Competences obtained (all topics)
- Intended learning outcomes (all topics)

2) the concept and the quality of trainings held within the Pilot 2 testing

3) the quality, usability and applicability of the training materials (interactive online presentations and handbooks).

The specific instructions and questions to be used for conducting an interview with teachers are defined in the Framework methodology document D.T4.2.1.

The feedback questionnaires completed after the initial capacity building action and the follow-up capacity building action in the selected school are part of the documents

D.T4.2.3 and D.T4.2.4. The results of the semi-structured interview with teachers about the curriculum of training program on media literacy and active citizenship, are also part of the document D.T4.2.4.

The results obtained through feedback questionnaires and interview with the teachers are presented in this document.

2.2 Evaluation of pilot management and main actions undertaken

The implementation of pilot 2 in Croatia took place according to the plan and the framework methodology defined at the beginning by the partners responsible for the implementation of the pilot 2 in Croatia and the Czech Republic in cooperation and under the leadership of the WPT4 leader. There were minor problems in the phase of translating the educational materials into the language of the country where the pilot will be carried out, because in addition to translators, experts such as graphic and web designers had to be hired, since these are digital and interactive educational materials available on the web interface. This caused additional and significant costs, which were not foreseen in the project. Whether this is an omission that occurred during the design of the project itself, or whether the leader of this work package should have taken more care of these things and foreseen them, or whether this is an omission by all partners together, is no longer important. The partners responsible for the implementation of the project in cooperation with the leading partner and other partners came up with a solution. However, the result are educational materials that are not fully interactive in some cases like the original English version, because graphic experts in Croatia did everything possible with the data available from the authors of the educational materials and some files were simply not editable.

As for the organization of the pilot testing and training in Croatia, everything went well, from the selection of the school and the selection of educator to the actual training in the school. At the beginning of the second training event, a minor problem occurred because the project's website was not available, but we tested the educational materials that are also available on the website of the leading partner, and this did not reduce the quality of education and the interest of the students.

2.3 Assessment of the quality of preparation of the pilot testing

Most of the participants of both training events evaluated the quality of the preparation of the trainings in which they have participated, that is, the quality of teaching materials and the competence and performance of educator, as very good. In the interview, the teachers also evaluated the quality of training preparation, the quality of training tools, and the competence and performance of educators as very good.

2.4 Assessment of the quality of organization and implementation of the pilot testing

According to feedback received through questionnaires filled out by participants after the first and second training event and through interviews with teachers after the second training, both students and teachers evaluated the organization and implementation of the trainings in which they have participated as very good.

2.5 Description of the education tools tested (handbooks and presentations) and evaluation of their content and usability

The toolkit for training of high school students (with focus on vocational schools), developed within the project, contains curriculum of training program on media literacy and active citizenship and the following learning materials: interactive online presentations, handbooks and brochure.

The curriculum of training program envisages teaching media literacy through 6 topics that the target groups may encounter most often in their daily lives.

These are:

● Behavior on social networks

● Critical thinking skills

● Marketing and advertising

● News and hoaxes

● Manipulation and propaganda

● Politics

The curriculum includes contents of knowledge, skills and competencies according to the needs of both target groups – youth and their educators. The curriculum is the basis for the preparation and implementation of training programs for capacity building. Its main purpose is the development of competencies in the field of media literacy, in relation to active citizenship.

The learning materials are designed in an adaptive manner in order to be successfully used under different circumstances. The materials are prepared digitally in order to stimulate interactive learning process including interactive exercises.

In order to be tested in Croatian school, the capacity building tools for high school students have been translated into Croatian.

The majority of trainings participants rated the presented educational tools for teaching media literacy as applicable or very applicable, and all respondents rated them as useful or very useful.

At both trainings, there was a noticeable interest in digital and interactive educational materials with a lot of audiovisual elements, which are more interesting for students than printed editions, because they give them the impression that they are playing an online game or solving an online quiz.

According to the teachers, interactive presentations are very well designed, instructive, useful and applicable in practice, visually attractive and acceptable. The terminology is

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adapted and understandable to students. The manuals are excellent and adequately accompany the presentations and enable interesting education.

2.6 Assessment of the relevance of the topics covered in the pilot testing

Through a questionnaire, the students evaluated the topics selected for teaching media literacy in the trainings they attended as relevant or very relevant. Through interviews, the teachers evaluated the selection of topics for teaching media literacy and active citizenship as excellent, they find the topics very interesting, current, useful and close to the students. They point out the topic of critical thinking skills as the most important and that it is good that this topic runs through all the other topics.

The students listened to the education with great interest, and it was obvious that they were interested in the topics presented. They participated in a discussion with the educator. In the education *Behavior on social networks*, students showed that they know a lot about this topic because they spend a lot of time during the day on social networks and are aware of their negative influence and negative consequences and the potential dangers they can face in the online world. The education *Critical thinking skills* captured their attention even more because through interesting examples that are close to them, they got to know some new terms, the knowledge of which will help them to better think critically about the information and messages they receive from the media and the environment, as well as those that they themselves create and share on social networks and in society in general.
The interest in the topics of manipulation and propaganda and politics was even greater than in the topics of the first education. In the training *Manipulation and Propaganda*, through interesting video examples of manipulation techniques in society and in the media, students learned to recognize this type of communication, which will help them to better think critically about the information and messages they receive from the media and the environment, as well as those they themselves create and share on social networks and in society in general. The education on the topic of *Politics* captured their attention even more because the topic was covered through interesting video examples of politicians from Croatia and the world, which show what manipulation and propaganda techniques some politicians use and how politicians should not behave. The students showed that they are well aware that they should participate more and more actively in society and in democratic decision-making.

2.7 Assessment of the usefulness of the presented training materials

After the first education, as many as three-quarters of the participants evaluated that they received valuable information about media literacy to a large extent. Most participants, as many as 91% of them, estimated that after the education they are to a large extent or rather better prepared to fight against fake news and hate speech, while 1 participant expressed that he was not sure of this statement, and 1 participant believed that he is to some extent or to a lesser extent better prepared to fight against fake news and hate speech. All participants expressed that they would recommend attending this education to someone else. Most participants, 27 out of 28, rated the presented educational tools for

teaching media literacy as applicable or very applicable, and all respondents rated them as useful or very useful.

After the second education, most participants, 21 out of 23, believe that they received valuable information about media literacy to a large extent or quite a bit, while only one person is undecided, and one participant believes that they received information about media literacy to a lesser extent. The majority of participants, 22 of them, evaluated that after the training they are largely or rather better prepared for the fight against fake news and hate speech, while 1 participant expressed that after the trainings he was not better prepared at all for the fight against fake news and hate speech. Most participants expressed that they would recommend attending this training to someone else, while only one respondent remained undecided in his opinion. Most participants, 22 of them, evaluated the presented educational tools for teaching media literacy as applicable or very applicable and useful or very useful.

According to the teachers, interactive presentations and handbooks are very instructive, useful and applicable in practice.

2.8 Self-assessment of the level of media literacy by participants in the pilot

According to the results of the questionnaire, which the participants filled out after the first training event in September, the majority of the 28 participants rated their knowledge of media literacy as good or very good. After the second training event in October, most of the 23 participants, 17 of them rated their knowledge of media literacy as good or very good, while as many as 6 respondents rated their media literacy skills as satisfactory, i.e. with a rating of 3, which is more than after the first education. This may point to the conclusion that the students stated that they did not strengthen their media literacy skills through the training sessions, but it may also point to the fact that the students are more aware of their media literacy skills after the training sessions than they were before.

2.9 Self-assessment of the gained media literacy skills

In the second part of the questionnaire, the participants gave feedback on the extent to which the education contributed to the improvement of their media literacy skills in certain areas through self-assessment of acquired media literacy skills.

After the first education in September, most participants assessed that the education contributed fairly or to a large extent to their safe use of social networks, their ability to critically access media information, the ability to recognize manipulative communication in the mass media, the ability to recognize media messages that encourage negative prejudices and ideas in society and the ability to recognize that not all information on the Internet is true. Regarding the behavior that can signal cyberbullying, 1 out of 28 participants assessed that education contributed to a lesser extent, and 1 participant could not assess whether education contributed to the improvement of knowledge related to such behavior. Although most participants estimated that the education greatly or fairly contributed to their recognition of inappropriate content for sharing via social networks and the ability to see patterns in the content that users reveal about themselves on the

Internet, 3 respondents expressed that they could not assess this. 2 participants also cannot assess whether and to what extent the education contributed to their ability to distinguish media messages according to whether they are "fact" or "fiction".

After the second education in October, 18 out of 23 participants believed that the education contributed to their safe use of social networks to a fair or large extent, while 3 were undecided and 1 participant believed that it contributed to a lesser extent to their safe use of social networks. As for the behavior that can signal cyberbullying, the majority of participants, 20 of them believe that education contributed to a great extent or fairly to the recognition of such behavior, while 3 participants could not assess this. Most of the participants, 21 of them estimated that education contributed to a large extent or fairly to their recognition of inappropriate content for sharing via social networks, and only one respondent believed that it contributed to a lesser extent, while one respondent was undecided. The majority of participants believe that education contributed to a great extent or quite a bit to their ability to notice patterns in the content that users reveal about themselves on the Internet, the ability to critically access media information, the ability to recognize manipulative communication in mass media, the ability to distinguish media messages according to whether they have the character " facts" or "fiction" and the ability to recognize media messages that encourage negative prejudices and ideas in society. Most of the participants, 21 of them are of the opinion that education contributed to a great extent or quite a bit to their ability to recognize that not all information on the Internet is true, while only 2 respondents could not assess this.

2.10 General satisfaction of the participants with the quality of the pilots

From the results of the questionnaire, we can conclude that the students and teachers were both very satisfied with the media literacy trainings conducted in their school. Both the student and the teachers are very satisfied with the educator's performance and believe that she did the education very professionally, established excellent interaction with the students, approached them directly, warmly, with a smile on her face, which is very important for the students. They both liked the capacity building tools for strengthening media literacy and active citizenship very much because they teach media literacy through interesting, current and student-friendly topics and are interactive and fun with lots of attractive audiovisual elements. Both students and teachers find them very useful and applicable in practice and teachers would recommend them for teaching media literacy to their colleagues.

According to the overall assessment of the teachers, the curriculum of the training program for media literacy and active citizenship for high school students is good in general, because the topics chosen for teaching are very interesting and current, and the concrete objectives of the training, competencies obtained and intended learning outcomes are well defined for each topic if we consider the defined standards of knowledge. They elaborated though that standards of knowledge and teaching methods should be elaborated and defined in more detail and more clearly.

They would recommend the curriculum for teaching media literacy as an extracurricular activity within the existing curriculum, or possibly as an optional subject, for which some of its elements, such as knowledge standards and teaching methods, should be further refined and more clearly defined.

After the second training, more participants expressed a neutral opinion on as many as 11 questions, which may indicate a certain increased degree of freedom in evaluation, i.e. a feeling of less pressure to evaluate the training and materials in accordance with expectations. Only 4 participants expressed some dissatisfaction in 4 questions of the questionnaire. Questions, where at least one student expressed dissatisfaction, can indicate which topics should have been given more attention in the training materials, and those are topics such as fake news, hate speech, cyberbullying and safe use of social networks. Those topics and media literacy, in general, are of particular interest, but they also worry this age group.

2.11 Conclusions and recommendations for improvement of media literacy in the target audiences

After the Pilot 2 implementation with high school students from selected vocational school in Croatia, and collecting the feedback from students, we can conclude that students and teachers are very interested in media literacy and active citizenship to be taught more in school, as a separate optional subject. Within the existing curriculum, media literacy is taught as a cross-curricular topic within the framework of the Croatian language and possibly Informatics, and active citizenship within the framework of the new elective subject Civic education, which in some parts of Croatia was only introduced to secondary schools this year. However, students and teachers are interested and believe that these very important topics should be given more attention in the curriculum.

They particularly liked the concept of these educations and the curriculum, which envisages teaching media literacy through very interesting and current topics and by using well-designed and visually attractive interactive educational materials whose basic task is the active participation of students in education.

Until the policy makers include media literacy more in the school curriculum, according to the recommendation of the teachers who participated in the pilot testing, school librarians, teachers and all others who carry out education of young people can use the educational materials of the MELIA Observatory project for media literacy education as extracurricular activity.

3 Pilot 2 in Czech Republic

In this phase of the project implementation (Pilot 2 - High school students - vocational schools) a pilot testing of the created educational materials (interactive online presentations, handbooks and brochures), which were translated into Czech for the target group (DT.4.2.2 Translated training tools - Pilot 2), was carried out. The first training session (Lesson 1 Behavior on social networks and Lesson 2 Critical thinking skills) took place on 9 September 2022, the second training session (Lesson 3 Manipulation and propaganda and Lesson 4 Politics) was implemented on 13 October 2022. Both sessions were attended by the students of Střední odborná škola Jarov – High school for Building Industry and Horticulture, which was invited to participate by MUP. The sessions took place in MUP building and were held by MUP media literacy specialist Mgr. Eva Niklesová, Ph.D.

The main objective was to obtain feedback from the target group (students and teachers of secondary vocational schools in the Czech Republic). The feedback included the following: the quality of the prepared lessons, their preparation and organization, the applicability and usefulness of the created educational materials and the overall quality and level of the lessons for future teaching of media education in other secondary vocational schools.
Other objectives of the pilot testing included the analysis of self-assessment of the acquired knowledge and skills in the field of media literacy after the completion of both trainings, the appropriateness and necessity of the presented topics, and the opinion on the quality and relevance of the acquired information. Furthermore, the extent to which both trainings contributed to improving skills in specific areas that formed the core content of both pilot trainings was investigated.

From the methodological point of view, both quantitative (questionnaire for the target group of secondary school students) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews with three teachers of the participating secondary school who actively participated in the first and second training) methods were used. The questionnaire survey was conducted twice - the first round of data collection was organized after the first training (Lessons 1 and 2 on 9 September 2022), the second round after (Lessons 3 and 4 on 13 October 2022). Semi-structured interviews with three teachers were conducted on 13October 2022, after the second training session (12:00-13:00).

For participation in the pilot testing (Pilot 2 - High school students), the students of High school for Building Industry and horticulture, field Management in sport, was chosen. The choice of this particular secondary vocational school was made with the assumption that these are students who – as stated on the school's website – "are actively engaged in sport". Therefore, in their regular school and extra-curricular program, there may not be enough opportunities and time for debates on content related to media, civic participation, media literacy development, democracy, etc. Testing on this group of students was recommended to the researchers by Ing. Zuzana Švábenská (head teacher for theoretical teaching at High school for Building Industry and Horticulture and one of the deputy directors at the school).

The pilot testing of all the lessons took place in the building of the participating organization (Metropolitan University Prague, Učňovská 100/1, Prague 9, 190 00,

classroom No. 602). The first and second training sessions were taught by a member of the Department of Media Studies at Metropolitan University Prague, Mgr. Eva Niklesová, Ph.D., who also professionally focuses on media education and media literacy. The timetable for Pilot 2 testing (9/9/2022 + 13/10/2022) is attached below.

A laptop was prepared for each participant (students of the secondary school and three teachers), on which both interactive presentations and methodological manuals were installed. Mgr. Eva Niklesová, Ph.D., projected the interactive presentation on the screen and the students watched it on their laptops. At the same time, all students and teachers disposed with the printed copies of all relevant educational materials.

3.1 Description of the tools for collecting data for evaluation of the pilots

A combination of the following tools was used to evaluate the pilot testing (Pilot 2 - High school students - vocational schools):

1. quantitative method: questionnaires to provide feedback on the educational materials developed, the quality of the lessons, the relevance of the topics and the improvement of the level of media literacy (secondary school students),

2. qualitative method: semi-structured interviews with the participating teachers of the secondary school and

3. interviews of the lecturers of both pilot trainings with the students of the Secondary School and their teachers between and after the lessons.

3.2 Evaluation of pilot management and main actions undertaken

Lesson 1 - Behaviour on Social Networks (9/9/2022)

The first lesson of the pilot testing (the topic Behaviour on Social Networks) took place on 9 September 2022 in the building of the participating organization (Metropolitan University Prague, Učňovská 100/1, Prague 9, 190 00, classroom 602). This session was attended by 21 students and three teachers.

Before the beginning of Lesson 1, the coordinator (Mgr. Jana Tokarská) introduced the MELIA project, its goals and vision.

At 10:00 Dr. Eva Niklesová started the lesson on the topic of behaviour on social networks. The students showed great interest in the topic, actively participated in the discussions, answered questions and demonstrated excellent orientation in the issue of behaviour on social networks. Overall, the students were close to the focus of the lesson, they were able to talk independently about various aspects of influencers' lives and critically reflected on the possible influence of influencers on the formation of opinions, values and lifestyle of

their audience. They also gave specific examples of photo editing in the social media environment and talked about the different motivations for this manipulative self-stylization. It became clear that they are familiar with this aspect of privacy visualization, and were able to critically evaluate it etc. The passages about the modification of faces and places (photo samples I, II and III) were reflected by the students as unnecessarily extensive, they have been encountering such photo modifications for a long time (the essence of this type of manipulation was also sufficiently familiar to them). However, according to their opinion, we can currently observe a partial departure from this "artificial" self-stylization (e.g. BeReal application). The students were interested in the issue of the physiological consequences of excessive use of technology, especially in relation to young children who are exposed to these technologies at an early age. In the opinion of the target group, this aspect of the use of social media would be a very important issue for the children and to this issue more attention should be given. Greater attention should also be paid to the so-called digital footprint; some of the participants were not familiar with the term and did not pay much attention to it in their lessons. In the opinion of the target group, the level of information on the contractual conditions for the use of social networks should be given more attention.

Lesson 2 - Critical thinking skills (9/9/2022)

After a break, Lesson 2 Critical thinking skills started on the same day, 9/9/2022 (again at MUP Prague, room 602). Students spontaneously gave examples of cognitive distortions from everyday life and from the media (esp. stereotyping, blaming, belittling and exaggeration and black and white thinking) and emphasized that the concept of "critical thinking" is familiar to them, that they have already encountered it in their teaching, etc. In the second part of this lesson, some argumentative fouls (e.g. oblique surface, emphasis on novelty) were explained in more detail, as this was a substance that was quite new to some. According to them, more attention in the teaching should be given to the analysis of argumentative fouls should – – . After explaining specific argumentative fouls, students did not had problem giving relevant examples of the following, in particular: personal attack, hasty generalization, flattery, deceptive appearance, appeal to fear, appeal to pity (from the media and everyday life). Students would welcome more practical examples of cognitive distortion and argumentative fallacies (e.g. examples of mediated messages).

After the first training session (Sessions 1 and 2), questionnaires were distributed to the students. Below is an evaluation of the answers in section 10 (Questions to evaluate the gained media literacy skills - pupils and students).

10.1 Safe use of social networks

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			12 students	8 students	1 student	

10.2 Behavior that can signal cyberbullying

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
	2 students	4 students	11 students	4 students		

10.3 Identification of inappropriate content to be shared via social networks

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
	1 students	2 students	7 students	8 students	3 students	

10.4 Ability to generalize what users reveal about themselves on the Internet

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			6 students	11 students	4 students	

10.5 Ability to critically approach media information

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			8 students	9 students	4 students	

10.6 Ability to recognize manipulative communication in the mass media

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
		2 students	1 student	12 students	6 students	

10.7 Ability to distinguish individual media messages according to whether they have the character of "fact" or "fiction"

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent

		2 students	10 students	8 students	1 student	

10.8 Ability to recognize media messages that reinforce negative prejudices and ideas in society

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			7 students	12 students	2 students	

10.9 Ability to realize that not all information on the internet is true

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			6 students	10 students	5 students	

Lesson 3 – Manipulation and propaganda (13/10/2022)

Lesson 3 on Manipulation and Propaganda took place on 13 October 2022 from 10 to 10:45 (MUP Prague, classroom 602). This lesson was attended by 20 students and three teachers.

At the beginning, the head of the Department of Media Studies, Prof. Jan Jirák, welcomed all participants, thanked them for their participation in the project and talked about its mission and goals. The students were also given MELIA Observatory promotional items (thermos, pen, notebook, mug, flash drive, cloth bag).

Already at the beginning of the lesson, the students gave numerous examples of manipulative behaviour in the field of media (e.g. advertising manipulative strategies) as well as interpersonal communication without media. It was clear that they were familiar with the nature of manipulation and could reflect and recognize some of the strategies. After the explanation of the selected manipulative techniques, students gave a number of relevant examples, which were primarily related to manipulation in the family, in relationships, etc. (especially the strategies of lowering/raising demands, changing the topic and familiar face). The recording with the demonstration of the verbal strategy of the technique of changing the topic – personal attack: D. Trump and the reporter) was evaluated positively and very beneficial. The subtopic of photo manipulation was familiar to the students and they gave other similar examples, but they had difficulties with the timing of the photo from which Nikolai Yezhov was removed. Some students were surprised that this kind of manipulation was already possible in this period. The issue of propaganda and censorship in the media was not very familiar to the students, and these

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two topics would have possibly deserved more time (separate lessons, etc.). For example, the students had problems with giving specific forms of propaganda; no one could think of an example of a propaganda song. Thus, it was evident that the students were not yet very familiar with the historical context of the topics covered (political manipulation and propaganda).

Lesson 4 - Politics (13/10/2022)

The pilot training concluded with a fourth lesson on Politics. Some students had already announced before the lesson that they were not actively interested in politics, but they were already able to explain the nature of political power and come up with common examples of election promises. In their answers to the question "What do you think an ideal politician should look like?" it was said several times that the ideal politician should represent adequately abroad, and that moral integrity and correct conduct are a matter of course. They themselves mentioned the concentration of politics, economic wealth and media opportunities as a problem. They considered information on fact-checking to be useful. The term "hate speech" was familiar to the students. The students considered M. Zeman's statement (at the time of the project of the President of the Czech Republic) about transgender people to be completely unacceptable and strongly condemned this style of commenting from the mouth of the Czech President. The inclusion of an excerpt from a Czech TV political debate was positively evaluated by students and teachers. This style of demonstrating a certain phenomenon with a concrete example would have been welcomed by students in other topics presented. When asked whether they were familiar with political TV programmes and debates, students answered positively, including giving specific examples, but only naming programmes that they watched marginally or selectively (in the run-up to the elections, or only virally disseminated excerpts for entertainment purposes). More time should have been devoted to the concept of active citizenship and political participation, as students had only a limited and general knowledge of the possibilities of political participation, they were not able to define how they could get involved in the political process, etc.

Note: After this lesson, one of the students was actively interested in the current subsidy scandal concerning Andrej Babiš and other persons (the so-called "Čapí hnízdo" /Stork nest/ case).

Also after the second training session (Lessons 3 and 4), questionnaires were distributed to the students. Below is an evaluation of the answers in section 10 (Questions to evaluate the gained media literacy skills - pupils and students).

10.1 Safe use of social networks

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
		4 students	5 students	9 students	2 students	

10.2 Behavior that can signal cyberbullying

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
	1 student	5 students	3 students	9 students	2 students	

10.3 Identification of inappropriate content to be shared via social networks

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
		2 students	7 students	6 students	5 students	

10.4 Ability to generalize what users reveal about themselves on the Internet

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
		2 students	4 students	11 students	3 students	

10.5 Ability to critically approach media information

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			6 students	8 students	6 students	

10.6 Ability to recognize manipulative communication in the mass media

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			6 student	8 students	6 students	

10.7 Ability to distinguish individual media messages according to whether they have the character of "fact" or "fiction"

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent

		3 students	6 students	8 students	3 students	

10.8 Ability to recognize media messages that reinforce negative prejudices and ideas in society

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
		1 student	4 students	7 students	4 students	

10.9 Ability to realize that not all information on the internet is true

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			1 student	11 students	8 students	

3.3 Assessment of the quality of preparation of the pilot testing

Question Nr. 2: Please evaluate the quality of the preparation of the training in which you have participated (quality of the teaching materials, etc.).

Initial capacity building session (9/9/2022)

Very bad	1	2	3	4	5	Very good
			5 students	11 students	5 students	

Follow up capacity building session (13/10/2022)

Very bad	1	2	3	4	5	Very good
			2 students	5 students	13 students	

3.4 Assessment of the quality of organization and implementation of the pilot testing

Question Nr. 3: Please evaluate the organization and implementation of the training in which you have participated.

Initial capacity building session (9/9/2022)

Very bad	1	2	3	4	5	Very good
			4 students	11 students	6 students	

Follow up capacity building session (13/10/2022)

Very bad	1	2	3	4	5	Very good
			1 student	4 students	15 students	

3.5 Description of the education tools tested (handbook and presentations) and evaluation of their usability

Question Nr. 4: Please evaluate the relevance of the topics that have been covered in the training that you participated.

Initial capacity building session (9/9/2022)

Completely irrelevant	1	2	3	4	5	Very relevant
			5 students	7 students	9 students	

Follow up capacity building session (13/10/2022)

Completely irrelevant	1	2	3	4	5	Very relevant
			1 student	6 students	13 students	

Question Nr. 8 How would you evaluate the applicability of the presented training materials on media literacy, particularly for you?

Initial capacity building session (9/9/2022)

Not applicable at all	1	2	3	4	5	Fully applicable

				7 students	7 students	7 students	

Follow up capacity building session (13/10/2022)

Not applicable at all	1	2	3	4	5	Fully applicable
		1 student	2 students	7 students	10 students	

Question Nr. 9: How would you evaluate the usability of the presented training materials on media literacy, particularly for you?

Initial capacity building session (9/9/2022)

Not useful at all	1	2	3	4	5	Fully useful
			6 students	9 students	6 students	

Follow up capacity building session (13. 10. 2022)

Not useful at all	1	2	3	4	5	Fully useful
			4 students	9 students	7 students	

3.6 Self-assessment of the level of media literacy by participants in the pilot

Question Nr. 1: Please evaluate the level of your media literacy (your perception of the information and knowledge on the topic).

Initial capacity building session (9/9/2022)

Very bad	1	2	3	4	5	Very good
			7 students	9 students	5 students	

Follow up capacity building session (13/10/2022)

Very bad	1	2	3	4	5	Very good
		2 students	8 students	6 students	3 students	

3.7 Self-assessment of the gained media literacy skills

Question Nr. 5: Did you receive valuable information about media literacy?

Initial capacity building session (9/9/2022)

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
		3 students	6 students	9 students	3 students	

Follow up capacity building session (13/10/2022)

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	To a great extent
			4 students	8 students	8 students	

3.8 General satisfaction of the participants with the quality of the pilots

Question Nr. 7: Would you advise a close friend of yours to attend a training on media literacy like one that you participated in?

Initial capacity building session (9/9/2022)

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	Definitely
			8 students	6 students	7 students	

Follow up capacity building session (13/10/2022)

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	Definitely
			1 student	7 students	12 students	

3.9 Conclusions and recommendations for improvement of the medial literacy in the target audiences

After the second training session, members of the Department of Media Studies (Mgr. Martin Charvát, Ph.D., prof. PhDr. Jan Jirák, Ph.D. and Mgr. Eva Niklesová, Ph.D.) conducted semi-structured interviews with three participating teachers of the Jarov Secondary Vocational School (Ing. Zuzana Švábenská, Ing. Karolína Machová and PhDr. Nina Dobruská).

Ing. Zuzana Švábenská said that the topics of the first and second lessons were closer to the students because they are in the social networking environment, they deal with it and everyone has experience with social networks. Topics #3 and #4 Manipulation and Propaganda + Politics is a topic more "distant" to the students for various reasons - either they do not follow politics or they are not motivated to actively participate in the political process. In her opinion, it is for this reason that these topics should be (more) introduced into the curriculum. Zuzana Švábenská also mentioned that parents talk about politics with some students, but in her opinion, this is often not the case with students in the teaching fields. They often do not know on what basis they should "make a picture", they have various distorted ideas and opinions based on what their classmates tell them. In relation to apprenticeships, Zuzana Švábenská emphasized a greater inclination towards so-called extremist political parties, which may be due to a lack of information about political events.

Ing. Karolína Machová spoke about the fact that students of the given field (Sport Management) have relatively little interest in politics, which in her opinion may be caused by the fact that they are "focused" on sport, as they are often active and successful athletes and have less time for other things. However, it always depends on the particular family background. Like Zuzana Švábenská, she considers it necessary to intensify the teaching of political topics in relation to media literacy. She was very positive about the connection between politics and the media and would like to see a more intensive connection between political science and "media" topics in future teaching. Kateřina Machová also mentioned her experience from teaching, when students answered the question "What do politicians do?" "They lie", "They steal", "They do nothing". etc., which again demonstrates the need for educational emphasis on political topics.

PhDr. Nina Dobruská also stated that existential problems (poor socio-economic situation) are strongly reflected in the education of students of apprenticeship fields and thus in their possible interest in politics, or their opinions on politics. In her opinion, politics is marginal for these students and media notoriety plays an important role in their

views on politics, which is supposed to be a guarantee of the credibility of the politician in question (shorthand thinking like "I've seen this guy before" = he is a decent person).

In relation to students' non/interest in political topics, the semi-structured interview generally revealed that:
- existential problems, poor socio-economic situation, especially of apprenticeship students, and distorted ideas about politics that they may bring with them from their family background may be reflected in their interest in political events,
- more attention should be paid in teaching to the relationship between the media and politics or matters of public interest, not least because some students tend to have a confirmation bias, favouring information, interpretations and memories that support their own view.

In terms of future methodological and didactic recommendations, the participating teachers recommended the inclusion of:
- more practical examples from the media (see above - mentioning the appropriateness of including an example of a Czech TV political debate),
- interactive elements (educational games, QR codes in presentations, surveys, polls, so that all participating students could actively participate).

The inclusion of examples from a specific participating country was identified by both teachers and lecturers as a simultaneous positive and negative, as the interpretation of the examples may differ depending on prior knowledge of the context, the specific politician, his/her media image in the country, etc.

Based on students' responses to Lessons 1 and 4 (Social Media Behaviour and Politics) in particular, two distinct trends emerged:
- More attention should be paid to historical aspects of manipulative strategies not only in politics,
- on the contrary, less attention could be paid to topics that students encounter on a daily basis (photo editing in social networking environments, the influence of influencers on possible lifestyle changes, etc.).

3.10 Conclusion

The pilot lessons and interviews indicated that the design of the project foresees potentially active students who are interested in political events, basically familiar with them and able to think deeply about them. This was followed by the idea that the implementation of media education can deepen this interest, enrich it with elements of reflective/critical thinking and lead to better democratic participation of young people. The pilot project clearly showed that it is necessary to count on politically indifferent young people and to put more emphasis on the motivational component of the whole educational process. The need to strengthen this dimension of the project was confirmed by the results of the interviews with teachers. Based on the experience with the pilot courses and the interviews conducted, the key problem of strengthening democratic processes and young people's participation in them is the low level of motivation for such actions.