Digital media literacy for youth employment and social realisation 608788-EPP-1-2019-1-BG-EPPKA2-CBY-ACPALA

Co-funded by the
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National Youth Workers and Trainers consultations

Report

Digital media literacy refers to an individual's ability to find, evaluate and compose clear information through writing and other media on various digital platforms.

In our research, we involved 25 people working with youth people in different contexts. They were coming from 13 different organisations, including high schools and vocational schools (BIC Ljubljana, SIC Ljubljana), organisations in the field of youth work (National Youth Council, Carlina, JZ Mladi zmaji, Socialna akademija, No Excuse, TiPovej!, Integrum, Zavod ZSB), adult education (Ljudska univerza Koper), psychological counselling (Drevo življenja) and employment agency (Adecco).

We gathered the answers from September 2020 to April 2022 on 4 different occasions.

- 15. 9. 2020 – online: Zoom meeting
- 15. 12. 2021 – Live meeting for youth workers and volunteers at Socialna akademija in Ljubljana
- 12. 4. 2022 – Live meeting for youth workers and volunteers at Socialna akademija in Ljubljana
- 14. 4. 2022 – Live meeting in Koper with cooperation of Ljudska univerza Koper
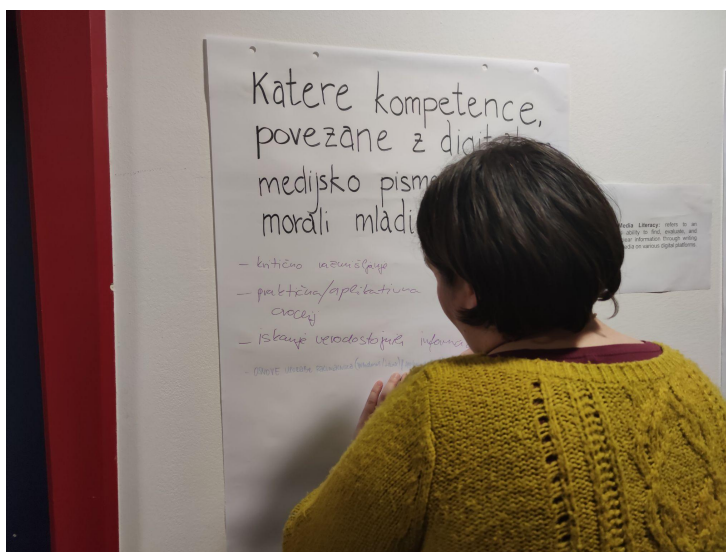
Which competencies related to digital media literacy should young people strengthen?

We can divide the answers into five different categories. The most frequently mentioned were answers that involved critical thinking and gathering information on the internet. It was followed by various technical competencies and skills that are connected with the use of computers, other smart devices and the Internet. In the third place are answers that are deeply connected with online safety awareness and building personal resilience (against trolling and other overwhelming influences).

- **Critical thinking and consuming of the information/news:** The biggest emphasis was on critical thinking, recognising fake news, identifying fake photos and videos (deep fakes), functional literacy, how to find useful and credible information, and verifying

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sources. Doubting narratives (categorical doubt) and online presentations of peoples' lives. Persistence in consuming and searching for relevant data. How advertising works on us.

- **Computer competencies:** The basics of using a computer (Windows/Linux) and applications (Word, Excel, PPT, Slack, Padlet, Miro etc). Using technology beyond social networks. Skills like graphic design, website set-up, and programming. Practical/applicative use of the tools.

- **Online safety and privacy** Online safety - how to safely use the internet. Protection against cyber crimes for example identity theft and cyberbullying. Understanding that words said online have a real impact. Understanding the concept of digital footprint. Cookies and other privacy-related issues.

- **Communication skills:** Principles of online communication (how to express your opinion in a cultural way).

- **Personal resilience:** Lower impact of influencer culture. Influence of social media uses on self-image. Being able to recognise and deal with trolling.

Which good practices connected with straightening digital media literacy competencies do you know?

Participants mentioned some websites and web-based initiatives:

- [Pobuda.si](#) – digital initiatives. A website for young people and others who want to get involved and participate. »Do you see problems, shortcomings or mistakes around you that can be corrected? Do you have an idea how to change the world - or at least your environment - for the better? Do you have a suggestion but don't know who to tell?"

- [Oštro.si](#) – Oštro, the Centre for Investigative Journalism in the Adriatic
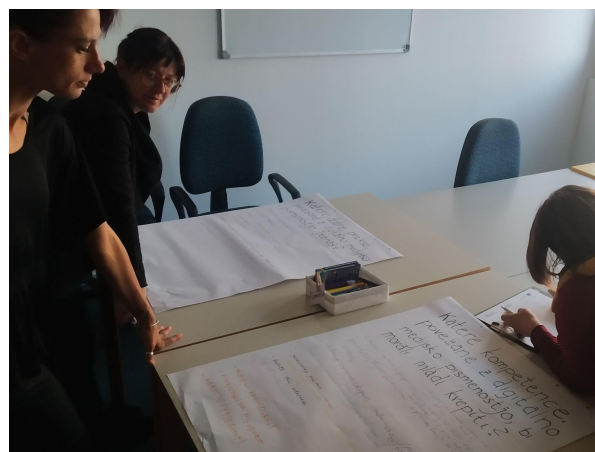
Region, was born out of the realisation that the space for quality journalism is shrinking. Traditional media in many countries are caught in a centrifuge of interest groups, and business models, begging for clicks and the constant production of shocking stories. Oštro cultivates investigative and data journalism, upholds the right to know as a fundamental human right, spreads journalistic knowledge and contributes to the education of future generations of journalists. It investigates issues of public interest to the people of the Adriatic region (Slovenia, Croatia, Italy) and its neighbourhood. One of their media projects is called Razkrinkavanje.

- Časoris.si - Časoris is an award-winning free online newspaper for children. Its mission is to guide and inspire children in making informed decisions and becoming informed, active, and responsible citizens. They offer them news they can trust – timely, relevant articles on current affairs. Information is put in context and presented in kid-friendly language.

Bigger projects and organisations are:

- Varni na internetu - The "Safe on the Internet" project is implemented by the National Cyber Security Response Centre (SI-CERT), which operates under the umbrella of the public institution Arnes. SI-CERT is the national contact point, which acts as a mediator and advisor and coordinates the public awareness project on information security. The project is a long-term project, addressing a fairly broad range of information security issues. Raising awareness of the safe use of the Internet is a key objective of the awareness-raising programme.

- Logout – The Internet safety help centre has multiple programs for children, youth, parents and other adults. About prevention and working with internet addiction, cyberbullying. They also have toolkits and learning materials for schools and educators and support groups for youth that are battling addiction as well as their parents.

Other good practices and smaller-scale projects that were also mentioned:

- Publication Digitalni domorodci - It contains the most useful and often overlooked knowledge of how to achieve the greatest possible effects in the digital world in the field of (online) communication, digital channel planning, and the basics of photography and graphic design.

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- Project Games against hoaxes (1. 9. 2020 - 30. 9. 2021) aimed to develop the capacities of educators and youth workers to apply the game-based approach to critical thinking and media literacy education in order to counter manipulation, propaganda and disinformation. Slovenian partner, Društvo D20, developed a card-based game »Follow me«. Players step into the shoes of a media conglomerate that wants to gain as many followers as possible.

- Bad news - The Bad News Game is a multiple award-winning fake news intervention aimed at building psychological resistance against online misinformation. The intervention is a theory-driven social impact game developed in collaboration with the Dutch media collective DROG and graphic design agency Gusmanson.

- Spletne face - The project is carried out by No Excuse Slovenia in cooperation with Logout. The contractors have many years of experience in working with young people, especially in the areas of teaching critical thinking and raising awareness on health-related topics. The workshop raises awareness among young people about the potential pitfalls of modern technology, with a focus on emerging forms of addiction and disorders related to the use of modern technologies.