



**COUNCIL FOR
MEDIA SERVICES**

**Report
of the Council for Media Services
to the European Commission
on measures to promote and
develop media literacy skills
pursuant to Article 33a (3) AVMSD**

Council for Media Services
March 2023

A. Legal and/or policy measures

A.1 Which legislative measures and other measures of a legal nature applicable to audiovisual media services and video-sharing platform providers does your country have in place or, where relevant, plans to promote and develop media literacy skills?

Act No. 264/2022 Coll. on Media Services and on amendments and supplements to certain acts (Media Services Act)

- **Legal framework**

Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on audiovisual media services (AVMSD), including provisions in the field of media literacy, was transposed by Act No 264/2022 Coll. on Media Services and on amendments and supplements to certain acts (Media Services Act). The amendment entered into force on 1 August 2022. The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic is the administrator of the Act. An overview of the relevant parts of the legal framework and the scope of competence of Council for Media Services is provided below.

However, due to the entry into force date of this legislation, its application is still at an early stage. This also applies to the new areas of competence for Council for Media Services. Nevertheless, where possible, we report on activities implemented in the past or started/planned since 1 August 2022. However, a more comprehensive assessment of the impact of the Media Services Act can only be described in the next reporting round on media literacy.

As regards the legal framework and competences until 1 August 2022 (Act No 308/2000 Coll. on Broadcasting and Retransmission), it did not contain specific provisions in the field of media literacy and its development. This applies equally to the obligations for audiovisual media service providers, but also to the competencies of Council for Media Services (until then called Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission). The only exception was "to provide the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic with the basis for a report containing an assessment of the state and level of media literacy" for the purpose of submitting an implementation report to the European Commission. Due to the lack of competences and capacity, Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission did not carry out systematic activities in this area and entrusted the task of empirically examining this issue to the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. The representative research was conducted in 2015 within the framework of the project

Implementation of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Strategies for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Level of Media Literacy in the Slovak Republic.¹

Competences of Council for Media Services

Accordingly, as of 1 August 2022, the Media Services Act provides for new areas of competence for Council for Media Services:

- **To initiate and carry out research and analytical activities in the media field for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating the state of the media environment**, in particular with regard to the dissemination of hate speech, misinformation, content that may seriously impair the development of minors, cyberbullying, **media literacy**, media commercial communication, political promotion, internal and external media pluralism and the level of media freedom (Art. 110(3)(g)).
- **Initiate and carry out activities to promote media literacy** (Section 110(3)(j)).
- In relation to the obligation below for video-sharing platforms to adopt media literacy measures, it is for the Council to assess the appropriateness of these measures on the basis of data submitted by the video-sharing platform on request. If the Council for Media Services finds that it is not possible to assess the appropriateness of the measures taken on the basis of the data provided, it may request additional information from the provider of the video-sharing platform (Art. 50(1) and (2)). In the event of infringement, fines of between EUR 100 and EUR 100 000 may be imposed on the video-sharing platform (Art. 145(1) and (2)).
- **Report** regularly to the Commission **on the promotion and measures taken to develop media education** (Art. 110(3)(g)).

¹<https://medialnavychova.sk/vyskumne-projekty-medialnej-vychovy/medialna-gramotnost-dospelej-populacie-v-sr/>

A.2 Are obligations imposed in your country on audiovisual media services and video-sharing platform providers to implement media literacy measures?

Act No. 264/2022 Coll. on Media Services and on amendments and supplements to certain acts (Media Services Act)

- **Obligations for service providers**

The Media Services Act, in accordance with the AVMSD, contains an obligation for the provider of a video-sharing platform to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to protect the public, including, inter alia, the provision of effective media literacy measures and tools, and to raise users' awareness of those measures and tools (§ 49(g)). In this respect, the Slovak legislation, as with the remaining provisions for video-sharing platforms, does not deviate from the wording of the AVMSD.

However, there is no similar provision for audiovisual media services. In the case of **private audiovisual media services**, the adoption of measures in this area is therefore voluntary. In the case of the **public broadcaster Radio and Television of Slovakia**, Act No 532/2010 Coll. on Radio and Television of Slovakia and on amendments and supplements to certain acts contains only general obligations for this public, national, independent, informative, cultural and educational institution. For example, it is obliged to *'broadcast a majority of programmes in the public interest in the transmission of each programme service; a programme in the public interest means a programme aimed at satisfying the information and cultural needs of listeners or viewers in the territory covered by the broadcaster's signal, in particular 1. a programme suitable for minors aimed at educational, upbringing or informative purposes ... 3. a programme aimed at education or science and technology ...*

A.3 Which broader policy measures does your country have in place to promote and develop media literacy skills?

Act No. 245/2008 Coll., the Act on Education and Training (School Act) and on amendments and supplements to certain acts

Although the Act does not explicitly mention the improvement of media literacy skills, individual competences that can also be understood as part of media literacy can be found in Section 4, which defines the objectives of education and training in (b) and (c).

The aim of education and training is to enable the child or pupil to:

(b) to acquire competence in communication skills, the use of digital technologies, communication in the national language, a foreign language and, in a national minority school, national minority classroom or national minority educational establishment, also in the language of the national minority,

(c) to acquire competences, in particular in natural sciences, humanities, technical sciences, mathematical literacy, financial literacy, reading literacy, movement and health, competences for lifelong learning, social competences, artistic competences, civic competences and entrepreneurial skills...

The law also allows schools to have a school digital coordinator in schools (kindergarten, primary, secondary). His/her role is to coordinate informatisation and education through digital technologies in order to support the transformation of education and schools for the 21st century or the digital future.²

Lifelong Learning and Counseling Strategy 2021-2030

The primary objective of the strategy is to ensure that every citizen has lifelong access to opportunities to learn, develop their skills and competences throughout their lives, at every stage of life and taking into account individual needs and circumstances, so that everyone can realise their potential in their personal, professional and civic lives. The strategy contains a total of 51 actions divided into thirteen thematic clusters. The individual objectives and corresponding actions are detailed in action plans.

Action Plan for the Lifelong Learning and Guidance Strategy 2022-2024³

The follow-up document to the Lifelong Learning and Counselling Strategy is the Action Plan 2022-2024. Of the 51 actions defined in the Strategy, this first Action Plan elaborates on and aims to address 45 of them, across all thematic areas. As with the Strategy, the main objective of the Action Plan is to ensure lifelong access to learning opportunities for every citizen, developing skills and competences at every stage of life, taking into account individual needs and circumstances. In developing this material, the Ministry of Education pursues the common goal of all citizens - to find appropriate solutions to the complex challenges of developing the skills of the population of the Slovak Republic, strengthening their competences needed to remain in the labour market, as well as developing existing educational activities towards digital, media and financial skills. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic cooperated closely with the Ministry of Labour, Social and Family Affairs of the Slovak Republic as well as with the Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatisation of the Slovak Republic in the development of the Action Plan for the CIL Strategy. The Action Plan was approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic on 20 April 2022.

² Competences and roles of the school digital coordinator: https://itakademia.sk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Kompetencie-a-u%CC%81lohy_Digita%CC%81lny-koordina%CC%81tor-s%CC%8Ckoly_web.pdf

³ <https://zakladnezrucnosti.sk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Akcny-plan-schvaleny-vladou-SR.pdf>

National strategy for the protection of children in the digital space⁴

The document reflects the needs of children, responds to the threats they may face in the digital space, and at the same time points to the opportunities that may arise from it. The Strategy provides information on both the risks in the digital space and the opportunities for protection. The document encourages the development of critical thinking in relation to assessing the relevance of information in the digital space. However, it also highlights online mechanisms for reporting crimes and illegal content on the internet, not excluding information on how to help and provide appropriate counselling for children. All relevant ministries, the Attorney General's Office and NGOs participated in the preparation of the document. The concept has been developed until 2025 and is followed by action plans.

Action Plan for the National Concept for the Protection of Children in the Digital Space 2022-2023⁵

It contains the tasks and coordinates the relevant actors in the field of protection of children in the digital space. Through the tasks of the Action Plan, activities aimed at a positive view of the digital environment and its possibilities, the development of critical thinking and media education, the education of parents and other persons in relation to children in the field of digital safety will be promoted. In the field of education, educational documents will be updated in relation to the protection of children in the online space. The Action Plan also aims to include the Slovak Republic in the INHOPE and Insafe networks. The entire document therefore primarily takes into account the needs of children, responding to the threats they may face in the digital space, but also pointing to the opportunities that may arise from it.

Strategy of digital transformation of Slovakia 2030⁶

The document is a supra-ministerial government strategic framework defining policies and priorities of Slovakia in the context of a digital transformation of economy and society under the influence of innovative technologies and trends of the contemporary digital age. The strategy represents a key document for Slovakia at a time of a decisive societal transformation: from industrial to information age. The document covers 11 years, from 2019 to 2030. The primary purpose of the strategy is to develop a strategic vision upon which concrete measures may be built. The vision is divided into two parts, short term (3Q/2019 – 2Q/2022) and long term priority areas (3Q/2022 – 4Q/2030). The measures introduced as part of the short-term strategy constitute the basis of the

⁴https://detstvobeznasilia.gov.sk/web_data/content/upload/subsubsub/2/narodna-koncepcia-ochrany-deti-v-digitalnom-priestore-1.pdf

⁵https://detstvobeznasilia.gov.sk/web_data/content/upload/subsubsub/2/akn-pln-k-nrodnej-koncepcii-ochrany-det-v-digitlnom-priestore-na-roky-2022-2023-1.pdf

⁶<https://www.mirri.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Strategia-digitalnej-transformacie-Slovenska-2030.pdf>

Action Plan for the Digital Transformation of Slovakia 2019 - 2022. The action plan puts emphasis on the development and promotion of media literacy skills in its first section titled *Digital transformation of schools and education for its enhancement, the improvement of employment prerequisites and acquisition of competences necessary for the digital age*. In regard to the long-term strategic vision, the strategy sets out a set of the so-called 'expected priority areas'. In particular, the second section of the long-term strategic vision, *Educated, healthy and secure society*, focuses on the development of media literacy skills in which it strives to "... put in place a mechanism that bolsters activities raising awareness of the negative impacts of misinformation and fake news, increasing media literacy as well as promoting independent media and quality journalism".⁷

Strategic vision for culture and the creative industry of Slovak Republic 2030

In 2022, Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic prepared a conceptual strategic document, *Strategic vision for culture and the creative industry of the Slovak Republic 2030*, which should have been submitted, at the time of writing, for scrutiny to the Government of Slovak Republic. Strategic goal 7, *Responsible culture*, contains measures aimed at identifying and addressing contemporary societal challenges as well as enhancing the cohesion and resilience of society. The rationale behind the measures is to improve the quality of life in Slovakia by promoting socially responsible cultural entities, building critical thinking and media literacy capacities and helping people acquire skills necessary for tackling disinformation.

A.4 What is your assessment of the appropriateness of media literacy measures implemented by video-sharing platform providers under the jurisdiction of your country, taking into account the media literacy toolbox?

The legal framework and competencies of Council for Media Services are already discussed above (see sections A1, A2). The assessment of the appropriateness of the proposed measures is as follows:

1. A video-sharing platform provider established in the jurisdiction of the Slovak Republic must, prior to providing access to the service, register,
2. Video-sharing platforms have an obligation to take appropriate measures to protect the public, including adopting effective media literacy measures and tools as well as raising awareness of them among their users,
3. Council for Media Services receives complaints and may initiate administrative proceedings against a video-sharing platform,

⁷<https://www.mirri.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Strategia-digitalnej-transformacie-Slovenska-2030.pdf>

4. Council for Media Services may request a video-sharing platform to submit relevant data,
5. Council for Media Services assesses the appropriateness of measures based on the data submitted by the platforms,
6. Where Council for Media Services finds it impossible to assess the appropriateness of measures, it may request the provider of the platform for additional information,
7. In the case of an infringement, Council for Media Services may impose fines on the platforms ranging between 100 and 100 000 euros.

Arguably, Council for Media Services has, in this regard, no regulatory experience at the moment (besides point 1 regarding the registration of a video-sharing platform). The absence of experience is the result of 1) a late entry into force of the Media Services Act (1 of August 2022), 2) the absence of a regulatory experience considering the fact that the first registration by a platform was filed only on 25 of January 2023, 3) the fact that all major video-sharing platforms are established outside of the jurisdiction of the Slovak Republic. In regard to international cooperation, Council for Media Services cooperates with other regulatory authorities with oversight and enforcement powers over the largest video-sharing platforms. In this regard, Council for Media Services has the legal competence to cooperate with other competent authorities.

B. Organisational measures

B.1 Which authorities or bodies in your country are responsible for promoting and developing media literacy skills as well as overseeing compliance with possible obligations imposed on audiovisual media service providers and video-sharing platform providers? Which specific tasks have been entrusted to them?

The development and promotion of media literacy skills is divided among several responsible actors. In regard to education, the task is carried out by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. In regard to the development of digital skills, the task is carried out by the Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatisation of the Slovak Republic. In regard to the protection of children in the digital space, the task is carried out by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. The transposition of the Audiovisual Services Directive (AVMSD) has resulted in a new set of competences for the Council for Media Services in the field of media literacy, including compliance oversight with the power to impose sanctions on audiovisual media service providers and video sharing platform providers. (See answer A.4).

Council for Media Services

The Media Services Act provides Council for Media Services with a new set of competences related to media literacy. Council for Media Services' task is to initiate, examine and analyse the media environment with regard to media literacy as well as to initiate and carry out activities to promote it. It is the ambition of the regulator to pool together relevant activities, building upon the outputs from its analytical and research activities. Considering its competences, Council for Media Services aims to: map the developments in the field of media literacy, including legislative processes, research activities and the activities of organisations; pool actors in the field of media literacy; inform about the developments in the field; represent Slovakia in expert groups focused on media literacy at the European level.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family - The National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children

The National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children, abbreviated NCC, is an organisational unit of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic since 2014. The centre leads the work on the National Plan for Child Protection in the Digital Space, and its task is to create and maintain communication with cooperating entities working in the field of child protection from violence. Within the framework of the Action Plan 2022-23 to the National Plan for the Protection of Children in the Digital Space, it is the centre's tasks to explicitly address the area of media literacy (6, 11) and be responsible for Task 12: *Engage the media, and in particular the public media, in the topic of protection of children in the digital space and raising the*

level of media literacy, to synergistically raise awareness of the topics and the possibilities of protection and assistance in cooperation of all responsible entities.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport is the responsible authority for Task 6, which reads as follows: *Support the training of teaching staff and professional staff of schools and educational establishments in the field of safety in digital space and in the field of media literacy and critical thinking.* As a result of the implementation of the task, an innovative training programme for teachers, *Developing Media Literacy and Critical Thinking* (See page 41), has been developed by the National Institute of Education and Youth in 2022 and included in the educational offer for schools for year 2022/2023.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for Task 11, which reads as follows: *Support activities aimed at the development of media education and media literacy, including the fight against disinformation, and the development of critical thinking.* The deadline for the implementation of the task is December 2023, which will be followed by an evaluation of the activities carried out.

Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatisation

The Digital Agenda section of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic for Investments and Informatisation was the authority responsible for monitoring the implementation of individual measures of the Digital Transformation Action Plan 2019-2022. The need to introduce media literacy into school curricula appeared in one of the measures, which prioritised the creation of conditions to increase mathematical, technical and digital literacy in schools as quickly as possible. The Ministry of Education was responsible for the implementation of this measure and is continuously fulfilling the task by introducing curricular changes in the field of education. (See question D.3)

B.2 Could you provide information on the stakeholder cooperation structure(s) and the different stakeholders cooperating with your country's authorities and bodies for the purposes of their media literacy activities?

Council for Media Services organised two roundtable discussions on media literacy during the reporting period. Both events were non-public online working meetings, primarily aimed at mapping activities in this area, identifying the biggest challenges and exchanging information on planned events and activities of the different actors. Participation in these events was open to all actors involved in the promotion and development of media literacy in Slovakia. Universities, non-profit organisations and representatives of government institutions were involved in the discussion. As a result of the joint discussions, the current challenges in the field of media literacy were identified and Council for Media Services initiated the establishment of a Platform for Media Literacy Development.

Within the framework developed by the Action Plan to the National Plan for the Protection of Children in the Digital Space 2022-23, the National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children coordinates a working group of experts, including entities focused on the promotion of media education and literacy (Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, Council for Media Services, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, o.z. Zvoľ si info...). The meetings of the working group allow for the assessment of the activities carried out under the action plan as well as facilitate exchange of information and cooperation between the group's members.

C. Public funding and other media literacy financing arrangements

C.1 Could you describe the extent and timeframe(s) of the public financial resources allocated in your country for promoting and developing media literacy skills and the funding instruments used to finance media literacy activities, including any that are aimed at attracting private financing?

The need to increase media literacy among different target groups is reflected in several of the above-mentioned strategic materials or tasks of the action plans. However, the implementation depends on adequate financial support in general and at the level of individual government entities. This issue should be the subject of strategic and systematic reflection. The following section provides an overview of the public resources earmarked for this purpose.

The Recovery and Resilience Plan⁸

The Recovery and Resilience Plan is a comprehensive package of reforms and investments to be implemented by 2026, built on the vision of Slovakia as an innovative economy that drives sustainable economic growth and guarantees the successful management of the green and digital transformation; Slovakia as a modern state that provides quality public services to its citizens; and finally Slovakia as a healthy country that creates the conditions for the full use of human and natural capital. It is based on several priorities focusing on key economic issues and major societal challenges. Each comprises thematic components, of which there are eighteen in total. These include reforms and investments with a precise financial allocation and a schedule by which they are to be achieved. They are subdivided into smaller parts, called milestones and targets, i.e. qualitative and quantitative indicators that can be used to track the outcome of a given action for the plan to be successfully implemented. Promoting and developing media literacy skills are not explicitly defined as part of the individual milestones within the Recovery and Resilience Plan. Therefore the exact scope and timeframe of funding cannot be defined; however, the funding allocated for the reforms of Component 7: Education for the 21st Century and Component 17: Digital Slovakia supported activities directly or secondarily contribute to the development of media literacy in Slovakia, e.g. curriculum reform in education, hackathon aimed at combating disinformation (See page 21).

⁸ https://www.planobnovy.sk/site/assets/files/1019/rrp_summary.pdf

Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatisation of the Slovak Republic

Grant in support of the digital transformation of Slovakia (2021)

The Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic (referred to as "the Ministry"), per Section 7(1)(c) of Act No 111/2018 Coll. on the provision of grants under the competence of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investment and Informatization of the Slovak Republic (referred to as "Act No 111/2018 Coll.") and the Scheme of Support for the Digital Transformation of Slovakia (de minimis schemes) - DM 17/2021, has announced a public call for applications for the provision of grants in the area of support for the digital transformation of Slovakia. The call aimed to combat misinformation and develop information literacy during the rise of information technology. It aimed to increase literacy in professional as well as everyday life, to acquire the skills necessary for working with information (critical thinking, media literacy, analysis of information sources, etc.), to develop and apply strategic communication and to become familiar with digital tools and techniques in the fight against the spread of disinformation. Eligible activities were educational activities aimed at raising awareness in information literacy and the fight against misinformation or creating and distributing educational materials focused on the same field. The target groups of the activities were secondary and/or higher education students, secondary and/or higher education teachers, government employees or the public. The most successful applicants received a grant of up to 40 000€ for projects implemented by 31 March 2022 at the latest. The call was open from 23 July to 23 September 2021 and involved 49 entities. The 7 most successful projects were approved for a total amount of **120 000 €**.⁹

Support for projects from the Prime Minister's budget reserve

Education Support Grant (2022)

The call aimed to support activities to increase the education of children and young people and the adult population in media, digital and financial literacy; projects aimed at combating information threats, bullying and cyberbullying were also supported. The call was open from 1 April to 13 May 2022. Overall, a budget of **300 000 €** was allocated from the Prime Minister's Reserve for this purpose, which was awarded to 44 projects.

Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

In July 2021, the Ministry adopted the *Scheme of State Aid granted in Slovakia by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic for the support and development of media education, including the fight against disinformation*, and the *Scheme of Minimum Aid for*

⁹ Evaluation of the results of the grants provided under the SDA Call 2/2021:
https://challenge.gov.sk/data/files/80_vyhodnotenie-vysledkov-poskytnutych-dotacii_sda-2-2021.pdf

the support and development of media education, including the fight against disinformation (DM-21/2021). The schemes in question define the provision of State aid and minimum aid in grants under the Subsidy Act to promote and develop media literacy and support the fight against misinformation through cultural activities. Directive No 5/2022 of 15 December 2022 on the provision of grants under the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic approved the provision of subsidies for Article 2(1)(f) of the Subsidy Act in the programme no. 5 Support and Development of media education and the fight against disinformation (referred to as the 'Subsidy Programme') in sub-programmes 5.1 Support and development of media literacy and 5.2 Support for the fight against the spread of disinformation. The forthcoming grant programme serves as an instrument of the cultural policy of the Ministry of Culture in the field of support and development of media education and the fight against disinformation. Also, it fulfils the relevant provisions of the Programme Declaration of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the period 2020-2024. **Launching the Ministry's grant programme and announcing the first call for proposals is expected in the first half of 2023.**

The private sector is a major contributor to financing media literacy activities in Slovakia. Through grant calls or by directly supporting the projects of organisations, foundations systematically invest funds that contribute to increasing the media and digital skills of different groups of the population.

Orange Foundation

One of the activities of the Orange Foundation is *the Digital Skills programme*¹⁰, which aims, among other things, to positively influence the development of new generations in the technological world and to contribute to the creation of the education system as a space that will not only provide children with knowledge but also educate them, teach them interpersonal skills, prepare them for life and develop their potential. Within the framework of this programme, the Foundation launched several grant calls in the reporting period and directly supported dozens of projects through strategic partnerships.

e-Schools for the Future Grant Programme 2020/2021 and 2021/2022

The aim was to support projects of primary and secondary schools and NGOs focusing on three areas:

- the development of digital skills of educators and their use in pedagogical practice,
- development of pupils' and students' digital skills in different subjects,

¹⁰ <https://www.nadaciaorange.sk/digitalne-zrucnosti-2/>

- development of digital safety and responsible behaviour in the online space, prevention of various risks of the digital world, development of critical thinking, character traits and sensitivity towards oneself and others.

Digital World for Everyone Grant Programme 2021 and 2022

The aim was to develop the digital skills of digitally excluded groups in society, to facilitate their life in the digital age and, last but not least, to reduce the digital divide in Slovakia. The programme supported projects of NGOs focusing on two areas:

- developing digital literacy and increasing the motivation of excluded groups to work with digital technologies,
- building the staff capacity of NGOs for digital inclusion.

No Traps Online Grant Programme 2022/2023 open in September 2022

The aim was to educate about the safe and responsible use of digital technologies and to protect against their negative impacts on children and young people. The programme offers primary and secondary schools and NGOs the opportunity to apply for funding to support inspiring projects thematically focused on the following areas:

- developing digital safety and responsible online behaviour,
- preventing various risks in the digital world and developing critical thinking.

Orange Foundation creates **strategic partnerships** with non-governmental, non-profit organisations that have a long-standing and significant contribution to developing digital skills and online safety for teachers, children and young people. Such partnerships in 2020-2022 are with organisations such as Zmudri, Pontis Foundation with the Future INAK and Generation 3.0 programme, Children's Act of the Year, Rozmanita, IPčko, Víčatá.sk, EduRoma, UNI2010, Connect with the Lab powered by Orange Foundation project and others.

Table 1 Overview of projects supported by Orange Foundation

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF SUPPORTED PROJECTS	ALLOCATED BUDGET	TIMEFRAME
e-Schools for the Future 2020/2021	75	101 213,00 €	October 2020 - June 2021
e-Schools for the Future 2021/2022	60	80 000,00 €	October 2021 - June 2022
Digital World for Everyone 2021	36	96 500,00 €	May 2021 - December 2021
Digital World for Everyone 2022	26	49 400,00 €	May 2022 - December 2022
Lab Powered by Orange Foundation	3	56 000,00 €	September 2020 - October 2022 (longterm partnership)
Strategic partnerships 2020	10	67 800,00 €	January - December 2020
Strategic partnerships 2021	9	98 167,00 €	January - December 2021
Strategic partnerships 2022	10	74 353,92 €	January - December 2022
No Traps Online 2022/2023	30	40 000,00 €	October 2022 - June 2023
Guide No Traps Online, portal beznastrah.online, Festival for Soul, 2 nd year	1	15 000,00 €	2021-2022
Total	260	678 433,92 €	

Fair Foundation of O2 Slovakia

O2 Slovakia, s.r.o. declares the need to combat misinformation and mitigate hate speech on the internet. It states that as a technology company, it is aware of the shady sides of its business, which is why it has long and strategically devoted itself to developing critical thinking and media literacy through its activities, Fair Foundation projects and partnerships with NGOs and educational institutions. In the period 2020-2022, O2 Slovakia has launched two grant calls through its Foundation.

Let's Together Return Reason on the Internet (2021)

The Fair Foundation focused on supporting digital learning platforms and initiatives for young people and their teachers. Aimed at cultivating the information space, debunking hoaxes, publishing verified information and curbing hate speech, the Fair Foundation supported 12 projects for a total of **60 000 €**.¹¹

Let's find common ground again (2022)

The Foundation supported projects intended to help resolve interpersonal or opinion divisions, thus reducing society's polarisation. Projects that aimed at mutual communication and understanding, communication courses, depolarizing educational projects for young people, digital education in media literacy and critical thinking formation, campaigns and activities to reduce hatred and polarization in society, and other activities aimed at increasing understanding in society, mediation, resilience or information hygiene were supported. In total, the Fair Foundation has supported 18 projects to which it has allocated **100 000 €**.¹²

Kooperatíva Foundation

The first activities of the Foundation were aimed at helping children and youth.¹³ Kooperatíva Foundation established a strategic partnership with the DigiQ civic society organisation and decided to support its activities focused on education in digital intelligence systematically. These are mainly projects increasing the education of children and youth for a better understanding of the laws of the online world and social networks and the training of young volunteers, who will be trained through peer-to-peer education in a special programme. In 2021 and 2022, Foundation Kooperatíva supported DigiQ projects with **45 000 €**.

ESET Foundation

The ESET Foundation's primary activities include developing education in the field of information technology and internet security, popularising science and research, as well as supporting projects related to civil society. Over the seven years of its existence, the Foundation has established long-term partnerships with organisations whose goals and outputs contribute to fulfilling its direction. Such partnerships in 2020-2022 are formed with organisations such as Pontis Foundation programme Budúcnosť INAK, Inštitút pre dobre spravovanú spoločnosť (Institute for a Well-Governed Society), VIA IURIS, Open Society Foundations, Inštitút pre aktívne občianstvo (Institute for Active Citizenship),

¹¹Supported projects of the grant Let's Together Return Reason on the Internet: <https://spolocnost.o2.sk/ferova-nadacia/podporene-projekty/podporene-projekty-grantovej-vyzvy-vratme-rozum-na-internet>

¹²Supported projects of the grant Let's find common ground again: <https://spolocnost.o2.sk/ferova-nadacia/podporene-projekty/podporene-projekty-grantovej-vyzvy-najdime-znovu-spolocnu-rec>

¹³ <https://nadacia.kooperativa.sk/tema/vzdelavacie-workshopy-cyber4kids/>

civil association Konšpirátori.sk, Social Impact o.z., Firts Lego League o.z., OZ Hack Slovakia, Preventista o.z. (Pteventist, a civil society organisation) and mMEDCON.

Table 2 Overview of projects supported by ESET Foundation

PROJECT	ALLOCATED BUDGET
Budúcnosť INAK (Pontis Foundation, 2020)	5 000 €
Demagóg (Institute for a Well-Governed Society, 2021, 2022)	10 000 €
Website MojaPetícia.sk (VIA IURIS, 2021, 2022)	10 000 €
Journalism Award (Open Society Foundation, 2021, 2022)	12 000 €
Schools that change the world (Institute for Active Citizenship, 2021, 2022)	18 000 €
civil association Konšpirátori.sk, 2021	659 €
First Lego League, o.z., 2022	10 000 €
Hack Košice 2022 (OZ Hack Slovakia, 2022)	1 600 €
Summer Academy KaSMED a Journalism for young scientists (mMEDCON, 2022)	2 400 €
Preventista, o.z., 2022	2 000 €
Total	71 000 €

Pontis Foundation

Pontis Foundation has been operating in Slovakia for 25 years and is one of the largest non-company foundations. During this time, Pontis Foundation has implemented dozens of projects that help to change Slovakia. The Foundation strives to create strong and meaningful connections between the corporate, civil and public sectors in three strategic themes - social innovation, philanthropy and responsible business. Between September 2020 and October 2022, Pontis Foundation has supported hundreds of projects aimed at developing media literacy skills through grant calls.

Digital Generation Grant Call (2020, 2021)

The grant call aimed to make the world of digital technologies and programming accessible to primary school pupils in a playful, interesting and interactive way through micro:bits.

Distance learning grant call (2021)

The grant call aimed to support children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds in distance learning by providing technical equipment and necessary accessories. In addition to justifying the need for support, one aspect assessed in the grant call was the thoughtful engagement of children in the classroom.

Mature for the digital age (2021,2022)

The grant programme aimed to support organisations and their activities that seek to improve older people's (65+) relationships with digital technologies. The goal was to contribute to the development of their digital skills and critical thinking while emphasising the connection between generations and actively engaging seniors.

Table 3 Overview of projects supported by Pontis Foundation

GRANTOVÝ SCHEME	NUMBER OF APPROVED APPLICATIONS	ALLOCATED BUDGET
Digital Generation 2020	251	236 445,76 €
Digital Generation 2021	146	137 555,39 €
Distance learning 2021	35	49 999, 94 €
Mature for the digital age 2021	17	50 547,78 €
Mature for the digital age 2022	13	51 391,92 €
Total	462	4750,85 €

D. Engagement and awareness-raising activities, including media literacy curricula

D.1 Which engagement or awareness-raising activities does your country have in place and which have been carried out by market players, scientific bodies or non-governmental organisations to promote and develop media literacy skills?

Given the fact that there is no institution in Slovakia that would cover and systematically map all activities in the field of media literacy, it is quite difficult to provide a complete overview of all initiatives and projects in this area. The activities in the field of media literacy often stems from the motivation of individuals who care about raising the level of media literacy in society. The following section presents an overview of the activities of different actors in the field. We report on activities aimed at teachers in question D.3.

Audiovisual media services

AVMS providers are not legally obliged in the field of media literacy. (See answer A.2) On the basis of available data, we note that broadcasters cover topics related to media literacy in news programmes, occasionally there are columns, such as Hoax of the Week (TV Noviny - TV Markíza), media literacy actors are invited as experts in journalistic programmes of both public and commercial broadcasters. In the field of education, the regional Creative Centre of the public broadcaster Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska - Banská Bystrica cooperated with the Catholic University in Ružomberok in the implementation of an educational module for journalism students, which included a lecture and a workshop focused on disinformation also in the context of the war in Ukraine. The Faculty of Mass Media Communication in Trnava also declared its cooperation with the RTVS Creative Centre.

Council for Media Services

Despite the fact that before 1 August 2022 the Council did not have the statutory competences to implement activities in the field of media literacy, it joined the European project **EduMediaTest**¹⁴ as one of the partners. It was covered by the European Commission and involved organisations from six other countries besides Slovakia: Croatia, Spain, France, Greece, Greece, Ireland and Portugal. The aim was to assess the level of media literacy and improve media education among European pupils and students aged 14 to 18. The project was implemented in May 2021. In Slovakia, 1317 pupils from seventeen schools took part in the testing; the largest group was students from gymnasiums. Although it was not primarily a research activity, the data obtained from the survey was useful for the Regulator to set further activities in the field of media literacy.

¹⁴ <https://edumediatest.eu/>

With the new competencies, the Council for Media Services started to develop initiatives aimed at mapping the environment and connecting actors in the field of media literacy. This initiative has resulted in regular meetings that aim not only to present the activities of the different actors, but also to jointly find solutions to current challenges in this field. The second activity of the regulator is the publication of a Newsletter¹⁵, which, also based on input from the roundtable participants, summarises a monthly overview of the latest news and inspirations in the field of media literacy. The regular publication of the newsletter aims at raising awareness among the general public about the need to raise the level of media literacy.

Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic

In early October 2022, the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic held a two-day pilot hackathon in Bratislava on the topic of exposing misinformation and strengthening critical thinking. The winning team brought a progressive web application designed for secondary and/or higher education students. The app, *Infomentor.sk*, contains tests with game elements that students can complete on a weekly basis and compare their scores with each other. At the same time, teachers are able to track the completion of tasks in the app. The application will facilitate teachers' preparation of teaching media literacy, critical thinking, etc., and the student will be able to learn to better distinguish information from relevant and irrelevant sources in a playful way. The launch of the app is planned by the operator in September 2023 and will be available to every teacher of Civic education / Slovak Language and Literature in the Media Literacy topic, and also to students.

In the timeframe of November - December 2022, the Ministry conducted a survey of the needs of secondary and/or higher education students in Slovakia as a tool for mapping the needs in the teaching process of individual schools in the field of media literacy. A total of 52 schools from all over Slovakia participated in the questionnaire survey. Respondents were introduced to the application and then answered three open questions. More than 90% of the schools in the survey confirmed their interest in developing critical thinking in students. They are taking the initiative to create space for the development of critical thinking and the ability to learn in context, introducing methods and forms of work that promote critical thinking and creativity in students. The survey confirmed an active interest for the use of a web application supporting critical thinking in the classroom. The app has great potential to develop critical and creative thinking. Teachers representing schools that participated in the survey perceive the development of critical thinking as an important aspect of education, especially

¹⁵ <https://rpms.sk/newsletter>

nowadays with the overload of information from different sources and the need to critically evaluate it.

In the preparation of the hackathon itself, but also in the subsequent development of the application, the Ministry collaborates with professionals who have contributed their professional qualities and suggestions from practice. These are Gerulata Technologies, Kempelen Institute for Intelligent Technologies, Council for Media Services, REVOLWARE, Faculty of Philosophy of the Comenius University of Bratislava and the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

National Cultural Centre

The National Cultural Centre (NCC) has long and continuously, as part of its specific activities in the field of education and social prevention, paid increased attention to the issue of activities aimed at raising awareness in the field of media literacy, promoting and developing skills in the field of media literacy, with particular emphasis on the prevention of risky behaviour in the online space. In 2020-2022, the activities were implemented simultaneously in three forms: thematic educational events for adults; publication of thematic professional/scientific papers in the scientific journal *Social Prevention*¹⁶; and thematic group work in educational activities for youth.

Within the framework of the **Citizen Activism** project, NCC implemented educational activities and elaborated professional outputs in the field of promotion and development of media literacy, citizen participation and activism. The materials are available on the NCC website in the form of electronic professional materials, manuals, presentations of lecturers, videos, podcasts, namely: podcast - *"Martin Kuštek: Participation and Civil Society"*; podcast - *"Ondrej Schutz: Critical Thinking"*; video material - *"Karolína Schwabová: Disinformation"*; *"Adam Dobrota: Handbook of Critical Thinking"* (presentation); *"Dušan Ondrušek, Zuzana Fialová, Lukáš Zorád: Consensus, Depolarization and Bridging Differences in Society"* (presentation); *"Adam Dobrota: Truth in the Age of Disinformation"*¹⁷; *"Marián Štermenský: Support and Development of Civic Activities in the Region"* (presentation).

Educational events for students of selected secondary schools in Bratislava were led by lecturers from the National Cultural Centre in an interactive and experiential way of working with the group, applying activation techniques and games. The thematic focus of each group primary-prevention activities was framed around the following areas: youth risk behaviour, substance and non-substance addictions, relationship addictions and their risks, psycho-hygiene of secondary school students - the importance of mental health, alcohol and legal drugs, the cult of the body and the emergence of eating disorders. All these events reflected the issues of the above mentioned risks in both

¹⁶ <https://www.nocka.sk/kategoria/vydavatel'ska-cinnost/casopis-socialna-prevencia/>

¹⁷ <https://www.nocka.sk/online-webinar-20210622-metodickymaterial/>

offline and online space. They were attended by six groups with a subsidy of two hours per group, for a total of 105 participants.

Slovak Film Institute

Film Cabinet in the cinema of the Slovak Film Institute - Kino Lumière is a popular-educational series about the history of the world and Slovak cinematography. It consists of screenings of selected works of early cinema, films from the pre- and post-war period, new waves and movements up to the present day, combined with film interpretation and an expert lecturer's introduction. The series is intended for students of secondary schools and art schools, students of related university disciplines such as art studies, aesthetics, philosophy, visitors of film clubs, as well as for other professional and general public. The Film Cabinet series was created on the basis of the lack of awareness of the history of cinema in Slovakia and its intention is to create a platform where the general public can also get in touch with experts and participate in film research. Its aim is not only to offer knowledge to the viewer in an attractive way, but also to awaken a deeper desire for media and film education.¹⁸

The Slovak Film Institute is a partner of the independent educational project **Film Cabinet for Children**, organised by the Association of Slovak Film Clubs. Informal education in audiovisual education is intended for the youngest viewers and is implemented as organised performances for the first grade of primary schools at Kino Lumière and in other selected cinemas. The aim of the project is to introduce children in a playful way to the basic principles of film language, animation and the methods by which film creates meanings and influences human cognitive-emotional perception. During the pandemic, screenings were held on the online platform Cinema at Home.¹⁹

The Slovak Film Institute is a partner of the international event **Young Audience Award**, designed for children aged 12-14. Through 3 films screened during one day, participants will have the opportunity to get closer to European cinema and at the same time discover the world of filmmaking. The project was initiated by the European Film Academy to stimulate the interest of the younger generation in European cinema and culture and to educate viewers and filmmakers about European cinema. The event takes place at the Cinema Lumière, and during the period under review the SFI participated in the promotion of the event, as it took place in online form due to the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁰

The Slovak Film Institute is a partner of the project **Cabinet of Audiovisual Performing Arts** - seminars that bring a modern and effective form of education about theatre and film as mutually interconnecting and influencing artistic disciplines. It combines an innovative educational approach with the experience of art through discussions,

¹⁸ <https://www.kino-lumiere.sk/klient-863/kino-241/stranka-9080>

¹⁹ <https://asfk.sk/filmovy-kabinet-detom/>

²⁰ <https://mladyfilm.sk/>

reflections by national and international artists, theorists, creators and audiences with high quality audiovisual screenings at Kino Lumière.²¹

Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology

The Institute participates in the research project **Influence of parental educational strategies on the extent and method of using digital technologies by young children (aged 6-9 years)** (Vliv rodičovských výchovných stratégií na míru a spôsob užívání digitálnych technológií malými deťmi (ve veku 6-9 let)), represented by Mgr. Michal Božíko, and is also collecting data in Slovakia in the area of parental educational strategies in relation to digital technologies.²²

Another activity of the Institute that can be included in the promoting of education in the field of media literacy are selected episodes of the podcast **Expertly on the Word** (Odborne na slovíčko)²³ for pedagogical and professional staff in the Department of Education and the podcast **Out Loud about Children** (Nahlas o deťoch)²⁴ for parents and the public.

The National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children

The National Coordination Centre organises an online event for the general public once a month, the **Evening School**. The aim is to explain in an accessible and interactive way the phenomena that many children come into contact with on a daily basis. Topics covered in the sessions included the spread of hoaxes and disinformation, video games, cyberbullying, and media literacy in a world of disinformation. The Centre is gradually publishing the recordings of the Evening Schools on the website **www.bezpecnyinter.net** together with methodological materials.²⁵

Representation of the European Commission

One of the activities of the Representation of the European Commission in Slovakia were lectures of EUROPE DIRECT centres for pupils and teachers of primary and secondary schools on the topic **How to detect and defeat disinformation**. The main aim was to inform young students/voters or third age university students about dangerous manipulation on the Internet, disinformation and fake news. In 2022, EUROPE DIRECT Centres held approximately 130 lectures in the regions of Slovakia.

Another activity was **workshops on media literacy and reading comprehension**, focusing on students' ability to understand text, to distinguish between information and disinformation, and to better navigate the internet and the media environment. Students

²¹ www.kadu.sk

²² <https://starfos.tacr.cz/cs/project/GA21-31474S>

²³ <https://vudpap.sk/prevencia-problematickeho-pouzivania-digitalnych-technologii-socialnych-sieti-a-videohier-2-cast/>

²⁴ <https://vudpap.sk/ako-nestratit-dieta-na-socialnej-sieti/>

²⁵ <https://bezpecnyinter.net/o-projekte/vecerna-skola/>

were introduced to practical examples of fake news, conspiracy theories, hoaxes and disinformation. They were able to directly experience how to identify disinformation, what signs to look out for and where fake news lurks. Approximately 80 lectures a year were given during the reporting period.

Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute of Experimental Psychology, Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences

The Institute of Experimental Psychology cooperates with other institutes of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in the educational programme **Creative Science**²⁶, which aims to develop scientific and critical thinking through a variety of activities and smaller projects in schools. The project included, for example, the development of a textbook and worksheets for the development of critical thinking in the teaching of physics for pupils in the 6th year of primary school.

Institute member Vladimíra Čavojová, in cooperation with the EDULAB Academy, developed an **online supplementary training course for teachers in the field of critical thinking**²⁷. Another activity of the members of the Institute was the development of educational materials, such as brochures within the framework of the SAV **Open Academy** programme.²⁸

Within the research projects *Exploring Unsubstantiated Beliefs in Relation to Controversial Social Issues*, *Psychological Contexts of Unsubstantiated Information and Beliefs Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic*, *Reducing the Spread of Disinformation and Unsubstantiated Beliefs*, one of the teams at the CSPS SAS Institute is primarily engaged in research on critical and scientific thinking and how to increase it, as well as on the psychological mechanisms and social impacts of being influenced by disinformation.

Psychological research on critical and scientific thinking and the possibilities of enhancing it

Research on critical and scientific thinking focuses in particular on the importance of scientific thinking in the general population - in terms of the ability to interpret available evidence correctly, the ability to recognise invalid conclusions drawn from evidence, e.g. inferring causal relationships from correlational data. In this area of research, members of the Institute are looking at how to measure scientific thinking in both adult and child participants, exploring the links between scientific thinking and falling for

²⁶ <https://www.kreativnaveda.sk/>

²⁷ <https://akademia.edulab.sk/course/kurz-kriticke-myslenie>

²⁸ <https://otvorenaakademia.sav.sk/vysvetlujeme/brozury/preco-potrebuujeme-vedu/>

different types of unsubstantiated beliefs, and also the possibilities of how to develop scientific thinking through different types of interventions.²⁹

Research on the psychological mechanisms and social impacts of being subject to disinformation

In this area, researchers are looking at different types of variables that are related to an increased tendency to fall for conspiratorial beliefs in particular (however, some of the research is also devoted to trusting pseudo-scientific beliefs or trusting fake news) - these are mainly categories of demographic, cognitive, emotional and value variables. They also explore experimental interventions with the potential to reduce the tendency to explain events in conspiratorial ways and their potential impact on the social consequences of trusting disinformation, e.g., in the form of low trust in institutions or increased intentions to engage in non-normative sociopolitical behavior (e.g., including violent behavior, slander, etc.).³⁰

In addition to scientific outputs in the field of critical thinking and disinformation, researchers at the CSPS SAS Institute of Research also engage in various types of popularization activities in this area for different types of audiences, e.g. **a series of popularization videos on coronavirus**³¹, a popularization lecture within the Researchers' Night 2021: Shattered Trust: crisis and unfounded information³².

University of Prešov, Faculty of Arts, Department of Communication and Media Studies

The research activities of the department are mainly focused on the field of analysis and production of media texts. In 2022, the project *Enhancing the Competences of Media Studies Students by Implementing the Learning by Doing Method* was completed, the output of which was the above-mentioned publication *ZVYK (HABIT)*. The main goal of

²⁹ Examples of published outputs: BAŠNÁKOVÁ, Jana - KURINCOVÁ ČAVOJOVÁ, Vladimíra - ŠROL, Jakub. Does Concrete Content Help People to Reason Scientifically? In *Science and Education*, 2021, vol. 30, 4, p. 809-826. (2020: 2.114 - IF, Q1 - JCR, 1.038 - SJR, Q1 - SJR, karentované - CCC). (2021 - Current Contents). ISSN 0926-7220. Dostupné na: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11191-021-00207-0> Typ: ADCA a KURINCOVÁ ČAVOJOVÁ, Vladimíra - ŠROL, Jakub - BALLOVÁ MIKUŠKOVÁ, Eva. How scientific reasoning correlates with health-related beliefs and behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic? In *Journal of Health Psychology*, 2022, vol. 27, no. 3, p. 534-547. (2021: 3.789 - IF, Q2 - JCR, 0.795 - SJR, Q2 - SJR). ISSN 1359-1053. Dostupné na: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105320962266> Typ: ADCA

³⁰ Examples of published outputs: ŠROL, Jakub - BALLOVÁ MIKUŠKOVÁ, Eva - KURINCOVÁ ČAVOJOVÁ, Vladimíra. When we are worried, what are we thinking? Anxiety, lack of control, and conspiracy beliefs amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. In *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 2021, vol. 35, no. 3, p. 720-729. (2020: 2.005 - IF, Q3 - JCR, 0.719 - SJR, Q1 - SJR, karentované - CCC). (2021 - Current Contents). ISSN 0888-4080. Dostupné na: <https://doi.org/10.1002/acp.3798> Typ: ADCA a ŠROL, Jakub - KURINCOVÁ ČAVOJOVÁ, Vladimíra - BALLOVÁ MIKUŠKOVÁ, Eva. Finding Someone to Blame: The Link Between COVID-19 Conspiracy Beliefs, Prejudice, Support for Violence, and Other Negative Social Outcomes. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2022, vol. 12, art. no. 726076. (2021: 4.232 - IF, Q1 - JCR, 0.873 - SJR, Q1 - SJR). ISSN 1664-1078. Dostupné na: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.726076> Typ: ADCA

³¹ <https://www.facebook.com/SlovenskaAkademiaVied>

³² <https://www.nocvyskumnikov.sk/program/prednaska/online-studio/365.html>

the currently ongoing project *Alternative and Community Media - Subject of Critical Analysis*, which involves five members of the department, is to present a comprehensive analysis of the latest trends in the functioning of alternative and community electronic media in Slovakia in concrete outputs. Another project currently underway is the research project *Media Sport in Interdisciplinary Contexts*. The output of the projects are a university textbook and a collective monograph.

In the period since September 2020, the members of the department have published a number of scientific studies presented at scientific events. The content of the papers is mainly analyses of texts focusing on children's audiences, sport in the media, pop culture, alternative and community media. In 2021, the department published a university textbook, *Introduction to the Study of Journalistic Genres in Print Media*, featuring analyses of media texts. In 2022, a university textbook aimed at the development of media competencies in radio production (*ZVYK - Increasing Competencies in Radio Production*) was published, which can be used, in addition to media students, by media education teachers. A university textbook on alternative and community media is being prepared for publication in 2023.

Catholic University in Ružomberok, Faculty of Arts and Letters, Department of Journalism

In the reporting period, the Faculty of Arts and Letters of CU conducted research for the National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children on the *Pastime and Behaviour of Children and Youth in Slovakia during the Pandemic* and *Pastime and Behaviour of Children and Youth in Slovakia in 2022*, which touched on several areas of behaviour and pastime of children aged 9-17 years, including the area of user habits and experiences in the online environment, such as Safe internet use, risky online activities, cyberbullying, extensive use of the internet and social networks.³³

In cooperation with the civic association *Network Slovakia - Community of Catholic Journalists*, members of the Department of Journalism of the Faculty of Arts and Letters created two publications *How to Make a School Magazine* and *How to Make a School Television*. Both publications are focused on the creation of school media in the environments of primary and secondary schools and are an output of the project *Improving language skills and communicative competences through journalistic production*.

Comenius University, Faculty of Arts, Department of Journalism

The most significant impact of the educational activities of the Department of Journalism towards the public is the organization of lectures at secondary schools, which are prepared by the students of the Department as an output of the subject "Media

³³ <http://euko.ku.sk/index.php/vyskumne-spravy-a-videa/>

Education". The target group of the lectures is secondary school students (15-18). Future journalists impart knowledge about the principles of media communication to high school students, teach them to distinguish sources and verify the truthfulness of the information.

In the reporting period, members of the department published several professional papers/studies focused on current phenomena in the Slovak media space, which could serve as a resource for activities aimed at developing media literacy. Among the authors who deal with the issue in detail are Anna Samelová³⁴, Marcela Belianska³⁵, Ján Hacek³⁶, and Mária Stanková³⁷.

The University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava - Faculty of Mass Media Communication (FMC UCM)

In 2018-2020, FMC UCM implemented the project *Material and didactic support of the teaching of media education through the media training centre at FMC UCM*. It aimed to facilitate the development of the process of teaching media education, especially reflective and productive learning about media in Slovak primary and secondary schools through the creation and provision of appropriate teaching conditions, modern material and technical equipment of teaching spaces and opportunities for students and teachers within the newly established media training centre at FMC UCM and its activities. Within the framework of the results of the project, it was possible to create conditions for comprehensive material and didactic support of media education teaching in Slovak primary and secondary schools. This was done primarily through the establishment of a Media Training Centre (MTC) at the FMC UCM aimed at supporting and developing media competencies of pupils, students and teachers of primary and secondary schools and other entities, as well as the development of lecturing and professional competences of students of the FMC UCM. Within the scope of the Centre's activities, three series of full-time one-day courses (workshops) on reflective and productive learning about media for pupils were organised, including excursions, focusing on the school magazine, school television, school radio, film, photography, and poster. 99 pupils from eleven primary schools and one grammar school took part.

A modern interactive multimedia learning platform³⁸ with an e-learning course for pupils and students of primary and secondary schools in media education was also created and put into operation, called *About media reflexively and practically*, consisting of 7 modules, 15 lessons and 34 sub-lessons, video tutorials and e-tests. The platform also provides methodological support to teachers in the field through an online methodological guide

³⁴ https://alis.uniba.sk:8444/search/query?term_1=Anna+S%C3%A1melov%C3%A1&theme=EPC

³⁵ https://alis.uniba.sk:8444/search/query?term_1=Marcela+belianska&theme=EPC

³⁶ https://alis.uniba.sk:8444/search/query?term_1=J%C3%A1n+Hacek&theme=EPC

³⁷ https://alis.uniba.sk:8444/search/query?term_1=M%C3%A1ria+Stankov%C3%A1&theme=EPC

³⁸ <https://smc.fmk.sk/>

for teachers entitled *Examples of good practice in teaching media education in primary and secondary schools III*. This manual has also been produced in a printed version. In the framework of the project activities, i.e. professional activities of the CAC, two-day online educational workshops for 21 teachers from 13 schools were also held, oriented on 7 modules (areas) of reflexive-productive learning about media. The institution also served as a training centre of professional practice for students of the Applied Media Studies and Media Communication study programmes at the FMC UCM, who participated in the educational activities.

The starting point for the implementation of the learning activities was the organization and evaluation of a competition for the best examples of good practice in teaching media education in primary and secondary schools (IMEC), which aimed to collect proven educational projects and identify schools where media education is taught specifically with a focus on its reflexive-productive form; subsequent content analysis of nine case studies; selected participants (class teams, teachers) were involved in the above-mentioned pilot two-year training programme in reflexive-practical (productive) media education as part of the follow-up activities, in accordance with the objectives and timetable of the project. The project partner was the Faculty of Communication of the University of Navarra, Spain, and its dean, Assoc. Charo Sádaba, co. Among other things, she developed selected e-learning lessons for students.

Slovakia and FMC UCM became part of the Euro-American network in the field of media competence research Alfamed as an associated country. The Alfamed network brings together 291 researchers from 19 countries in Europe and Latin America with the aim of fostering a space to strengthen academic, research, dissemination, creative and promotional activities in the field of media education. The coordinator of the activities for Slovakia is Assoc. Viera Kačínová, PhD.

In the years 2020-2022, the Department of Media Education of the FMC UCM is involved in the following research projects:

Critical Exploration of Media Related Risks and Opportunities for Deliberative Communication: Development Scenarios of the European Media Landscape

The project is focused on comprehensive international research of European media environment, challenges and trends and scenarios of the future development of the media industry in the countries of the European Union. This research addresses dimensions of policy-making, from legal frameworks to education, funding, research and good practice. The output is, among other things, a proposal for modeling current trends in media and information literacy in Europe, including proposals and new research directions in this area. Solution period: 2021-2023.³⁹

³⁹ <https://www.mediadelcom.eu/>

Needs of Critical Thinking

The project is focused on researching the issue of critical thinking in context media communication and adult education and creating strategic international partnerships in the subject area. Solution period: 2020-2023.⁴⁰

Mapping report on the rules applicable to video sharing platforms

An international project focused on the issue of implementation of European directives in the field of audiovisual media services. Solution period: 2020-2021.⁴¹

EU Kids Online IV.

The international scientific project focused on risks and opportunities in the Internet environment for children and teenagers. Solution period: 2014-2021.

Qualitative research on the topic of exploring the level of advertising literacy with an emphasis on critical thinking of Slovak 11-12 year old pupils in comparison with 15-17 year old pupils in relation to influencer marketing.⁴²

The result was a research study *Critical consumption of influencers by minors in Slovakia. Comparative study of primary and high school*. To be published: *methadodoss.revista de ciencias sociales* (2023) 11(2).

Since 2018, the Faculty has been publishing an international scholarly journal *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, which is indexed in the Web of Science database and focuses on academic reflection on issues of media and information literacy, media education, critical thinking, digital media, and new trends in related areas of media and communication studies. The journal addresses current issues and future developments in relation to interdisciplinary academic debate in the field of media and information studies, as well as its sociological, psychological, political, linguistic, and technological aspects.

Vícatá.sk

The civic association was founded in 2014. Their goal is to inform about meaningful games and technologies and to highlight the educational potential of games. Through their activities, they encourage and promote constructive discussion with parents, educators, psychologists and all those interested in the issue of the relationship

⁴⁰ <http://criticalthinkings.net/>

⁴¹ <https://rm.coe.int/mapping-on-video-sharing-platforms-2021-full-report/1680a43575>

⁴² It was carried out in the framework of the project PENSACRIGITAL - Critical thinking as a digital competence for the 21st century: an analysis of adolescents' ability to identify and recognize the origin and intent of informative, educational and persuasive content on social networks / Universidad Internacional de la Rioja, Spain.

between video games (technology) and children. In the reporting period, they carried out the following projects in the field of media literacy:

Creation of media content for the vlcata.sk website⁴³ and lectures at schools

The content of the portal consists of posts and reviews about educational games. The portal aims to provide parents and teachers with information about the latest educational games and their benefits for children. Five new posts and five reviews are added to vlcata.sk monthly. It also includes lectures in schools on topics related to the use of games in education. In total, they have held four lectures in schools and trained 40 people.

Video games education⁴⁴

A podcast about video games, careers in the games business, education through games, the benefits and risks of gaming and many other topics that together form a package that could be described as "gaming literacy". The target audience of the project is parents, teachers and the general public.

Game 112

A game designed to develop critical thinking, and cooperation and promote decision-making for children aged 9 to 12.

Zmudri

The civic association was founded in 2018 by six young people who decided to improve education in Slovakia. They create educational videos on practical topics for life, including, for example, media education and the development of critical thinking. The primary target group is primary school pupils (8th and 9th grade) and secondary school pupils, the secondary target group is primary and secondary school teachers.

Zmudri has a range of educational materials on offer, including a series of ten short entertaining video courses on critical thinking development *Learn to Spot Hoaxes and Manipulation*⁴⁵, and a series of seven short entertaining video courses on digital safety *How to Protect Yourself on the Internet*⁴⁶. For teachers, there is a short video course *How to teach digital safety*⁴⁷ with suggestions for classroom activities to promote digital safety and a series of videos on developing critical thinking in the classroom *How to teach students to think critically*⁴⁸. In addition, the association also offers an online *Wild*

⁴³ <https://vlcata.sk/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/@vvychova>

⁴⁵ <https://zmudri.sk/seria/seria-hoaxy-kriticke-myslenie>

⁴⁶ <https://zmudri.sk/seria/seria-digi-bezpecnost>

⁴⁷ <https://zmudri.sk/kurz/ako-ucit-digitalnu-bezpecnost-pre-ucitelov>

⁴⁸ <https://zmudri.sk/seria/seria-kriticke-myslenie-ucitelia>

*Web Survival Guide*⁴⁹ that focuses on the topics of critical thinking, digital safety, and media literacy.

In addition to video courses, they also produce methodological materials for teachers and have launched a teacher development programme, *Zmudri to Schools programme* (See page 43), which aims to work closely with selected teachers to develop critical thinking and media literacy. As part of this programme, a survey of a sample of approximately 1,000 primary school pupils and primary and secondary school students is currently being conducted on stances towards disinformation and access to information on the Internet. The aim is to find out what impact Zmudri's educational materials have on students' attitudes. The survey is conducted by questionnaire before and after the program to observe the shift in students' stances. The results of the survey should be available in May 2023.

Digitálna inteligencia – DigiQ (Digital Intelligence)

A civic association founded in 2017 with a vision to promote responsible digital citizenship, of which media literacy is a major part. From the beginning, it has directed its activities in three main areas: educational activities, expert activities, and awareness-raising activities. The main activities include the implementation of educational programmes and activities, participation in national and international activities aimed at protecting children and young people in the online space, and the implementation and participation in awareness-raising and information activities in the field of digital citizenship. DigiQ is also a trusted reporter of hate speech and cooperates with the Extremist Screening Centre of the National Crime Agency and the Police Force of Slovak Republic. It actively involves state and public administration institutions, business sector entities and other NGOs in its activities. Among the most prominent DigiQ programmes are the *Cyber4Kids* and *digiPEERS* programmes.

Cyber4Kids⁵⁰

Since 2018, DigiQ has been running practical and experiential workshops in primary and secondary schools across Slovakia. DigiQ works closely with IT and consulting companies such as KMPG, Siemens, Lenovo, Dell and IBM. They both provide their experts as tutors as part of corporate volunteering and also contribute financially to the running of the programme. DigiQ communicates with schools, provides expert tutors and peer tutors, and publishes educational and informational materials to distribute to schools. A website is set up for the programme. In the reporting period, they have trained more than 2500 children offline, more than 1800 children online and 47 tutors in tutoring skills and selected topics.

⁴⁹ <https://zmudri.sk/kurz/prirucka-prezitia-na-divokom-webe>

⁵⁰ www.cyber4kids.sk

digiPEERS⁵¹

Established in 2021, the programme is a youth development volunteering programme with a vision to create a nationwide team of young volunteers and to apply a peer-to-peer approach to education. It officially lasts for one year, during which time young people receive training on specific topics as well as skills needed for education. The aim is to reach more young people with educational activities, in a way that is close to them, in an authentic way, which is what peer education guarantees. DigiQ currently has 28 young volunteers in eight counties across the country who have delivered 146 peer education activities between 2021 and 2022. The volunteers have received 250 hours of mentoring support from their mentors, and have attended fourteen professional workshops, and three-weekend training sessions. They created 29 educational materials in the program. Social media reach of the programme: 19,000+.

In addition to the aforementioned programs, the civic association has implemented professional educational activities, lectures, discussions, and webinars for parents, educators, and professionals: in cooperation with the prevention officers of the Labour, Social Affairs and Family Offices of the Slovak Republic, Information Offices for Victims of Crimes (MV SR), cooperating third sector organizations and the business sector in Slovakia. In addition to educational activities, the civic association has published twelve educational materials, which are available on the website.⁵² Other activities included the realization of events: the *OpCode* (Open Code for Hate Free Communication) Online Hackathon 2020 and 2021, conferences *(Un)safely in the network* in Brno and Tatranská Lesná in October 2021, the conference *Year with digiPEERS*, the creation of the educational platform *Beznenavisti.eu*⁵³: an online simulator of hate communication followed by reflection, and the preparation of new educational tools: a drama-pedagogical or educational production *#generaciaZ* in cooperation with the White Theatre.

Another activity of the organisation was the campaign *Stop and Think*⁵⁴, on which DigiQ collaborated with the Facebook platform - a 23-second video aimed at increasing critical thinking and evaluation of information online. After Russia invaded Ukraine, there was a perceived increase in misinformation, so they partnered with Meta to deliver a video that appealed to a rational approach to receiving information online. The target audience was the general public on social media. The reach was 488,000 and 2.8 million impressions on Facebook and Instagram respectively.

⁵¹ <https://www.digipeers.sk/o-programe/>

⁵² <https://digiq.sk/category/kniznica/vzdelavacie-materialy/>

⁵³ <http://beznenavisti.eu/>

⁵⁴ https://fb.watch/jlc1CVM7r_/

Sebavedomé Slovensko (Confident Slovakia)

An informal project that started in 2017. Activities aimed at the development of critical thinking and media literacy are dominated by communication in the online space through the websites *Sebavedomé Slovensko*⁵⁵ and *Checkbot*⁵⁶ - a chatbot for Facebook Messenger that can detect disinformation on the Internet.

Another activities consist of lectures for schools with the educational project *Slobodovo*⁵⁷ - an interactive workshop for schools. Its aim is not only to increase pupils' interest in the history of Slovakia and civil rights and freedoms, but to inspire them and their teachers that learning can take the format of an interactive game. In addition, the project included lectures for schools on media literacy and critical thinking, combined with the distribution of educational comics about the Slovak general Milan Rastislav Štefánik, the HOPE town, and the history and present of Russian aggression in Ukraine.⁵⁸

Zvol.si info (Choose info)

The civic association was founded as a sister organization of the Czech Student Association, which operates at Masaryk University in Brno. It has been active in Slovakia since 2018. The main activities include lectures and workshops for youth and the public on the topic of media literacy with a focus on resistance to disinformation.

The most prominent activities of the civic association are lectures, webinars and workshops for schools, teachers and the public through the tool *FANTOMAS* - it focuses on eight basic areas to look out for when assessing the quality of information (facts, author, labeling, headlines, image manipulation, brain, reasoning, fear and emotions).

During the reporting period, Zvol.si.info managed to train approximately 3,500 participants in online and offline webinars, lectures and workshops and achieved more than 10,000 views of the lecture recordings on the social networks Facebook and YouTube.

In cooperation with the Informatika 2.0 civic association, they created model lessons focused on exposing disinformation for secondary school teachers (directed by Informatika 2.0).

The Youth Council of Slovakia

A platform of youth organisations dedicated to youth work and non-formal education in various fields, including media literacy. The Youth Council of Slovakia is also involved in youth research, which also follows the topic of media literacy.

⁵⁵ <https://sebavedome.sk/>

⁵⁶ <https://www.checkbot.sk/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/sebavedomeslovensko/videos/743774052689445>

⁵⁸ <https://projekthope.sk/downloads>

In 2022, the Youth Council of Slovakia conducted research *Climate crisis, global education, development aid*. The research was part of the project *Understanding Diversity: Promoting Youth Engagement and Development Awareness among the General Public in Slovakia*. The content of the research focused on young people's views and attitudes towards global issues, development aid, and climate change. The research also included questions on what sources of information about world events young people use, what is the attitude and practice of verifying information, and also, what is the trust of young people towards the media, given its importance in shaping the young generation on the topics under study. The target group consisted of young people aged 15-29 years.

ESET, s.r.o.

ESET is the technology company behind the portal *Bezpečne na nete* (Safe on the Internet). The target group is parents and teachers, and the authors of the posts intend to provide quality and useful information from the world of technology. Part of the content of the web portal is also dedicated to children, to whom the authors introduce selected topics through short educational videos under the title *Animália*.⁵⁹

Orange Foundation

Lab Powered by Nadácia Orange

In 2016, on the occasion of its 17th birthday, the Orange Foundation opened a unique space for meeting in the café, acquiring new digital skills in the educational-community workshop, freelancers' work in the coworking area, as well as for organizing workshops, discussions, press conferences, in cooperation with the Old Market Alliance and the Connect civic association. The high-quality technical equipment of the workshop allows for the organisation of annual workshops on 3D printing, laser, plotters for pupils and students, creative souls and the general public, and sewing courses in the sewing workshop. Lab powered by Orange Foundation also thanks to the continued cooperation with the Orange Foundation allows everyone to see and try out that creating with modern technologies and techniques is not difficult at all.

Festival pre dušu (Festival for the Soul)

The IPčko Internet Counselling Centre in cooperation with the Orange Foundation organised the Festival pre dušu, which was dedicated to the topic of a safe Internet. The aim was to teach parents, teachers and children how to cope with the pitfalls of the Internet. A recording of the entire livestream is available to view online.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ <https://bezpecnenanete.eset.com/sk/>

⁶⁰ <https://www.beznastrah.online/temy/zaciname-s-internetom/festival-pre-dusu-2022/>

Handbook *Bez nástrah online* (Without pitfalls online)

Psychologists from the IPčko internet counselling centre Zuzana Juránková and Marek Madro have published a guidebook entitled *Bez nástrah online* in cooperation with Orange Slovensko. It is a unique guide to the online world for parents and adults who want to explore the world of the Internet safely with their children.

www.beznastrah.online⁶¹

Information portal managed by Orange Slovakia for parents and teachers to inform and prevent the risks and pitfalls of the online space.

02 slovakia, s.r.o.

An awareness campaign *Zdieľaj s rozumom* (Share with Reason) to combat hoaxes, disinformation and fake news

The campaign⁶² was a follow-up to the previous campaigns *Nebuď pirát* (Don't Be a Pirate) or *Dátuj zodpovedne* (Give Data Responsibly). It differed in particular in its comprehensiveness and broad scope, with a survey preceding the campaign to help identify issues and areas that should be addressed. It kicked off with a deepfake video featuring Slovak presenter Zlatica Puškárová. Other campaign activities included the launch of a website⁶³ where visitors could take a media literacy quiz, but more importantly, find advice and guidance on what to look out for when checking news and how not to fall for false information. Slovak influencers Kristína Tormová⁶⁴, Fero Joke, Ján Koleník, as well as former authentic conspirators who have changed their minds based on the facts, spoke in the campaign. Personal testimonies were complemented by advice from psychologists.

D.2 Has your country established structured means of communication with the national hubs of the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) or explored this possibility?

Central European Digital Media Observatory (CEDMO)

Slovakia is part of the Central European Digital Media Observatory (CEDMO). The CEDMO consortium consists of eight partners and four subcontractors led by Charles University (Czech Republic). The team is composed by researchers, journalists and fact-checkers from the technical sciences and humanities. Within the consortium, the Athens Technology Centre (ATC) (Greece) is responsible for the development of the technical infrastructure. Experts from the international news agency Agence France-Presse (AFP) and the Czech platform Demagog.cz are in charge of quick response to disinformation

⁶¹ <https://www.beznastrah.online/o-programe/>

⁶² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zg0_bRoj1U&t=12s

⁶³ <https://datujzodpovedne.o2.sk/>

⁶⁴ https://www.instagram.com/p/C0u88DygPjF/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

and ongoing fact-checking. Researchers from the Kempelen Institute for Intelligent Technologies (KIIT) (Slovakia) and the Czech Technical University (CTU) who have extensive experience in artificial intelligence, NLP and machine learning, are developing methods and digital tools for more efficient and faster debunking of disinformation. Other members of the consortium are investigating the impact of misinformation on society. These members include Charles University, the University of St Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (UCM) (Slovakia) and the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (SWPS) (Poland). In doing so, Charles University links the technical and humanities branches of the consortium through interdisciplinary research initiatives.⁶⁵

The CEDMO Media Literacy Unit is coordinated by Lucie Šťastná from the Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University. The Slovak team from the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, led by Norbert Vrabec and Viera Kačínová, works primarily on media education activities for Slovak audiences.⁶⁶ The team produced a research report on media education projects related to misinformation in the Slovak environment.⁶⁷ A Czech and Slovak team are collaborating on a comparative study analyzing educational projects on misinformation. A team from the Kempelen Institute for Intelligent Technologies, led by Jakub Šimek, is developing an educational digital game called "Factology Checker". Players will have the opportunity to learn how to analyze and evaluate certain types of media news reports.

D.3 Which measures have been taken in your country to include the promotion and development of media literacy skills in formal educational curricula at different levels, teachers and trainers initial and continuous professional education, and to make relevant media literacy resources available to the public?

Curricular changes and the inclusion of media literacy in the framework of the new educational content

The framework of new learning content is being developed from 2020. As part of these changes, a Media Literacy Task Force was created in 2022 to develop "learning standards" that would become the basis for integrating media education content into subjects and learning areas. The media literacy document was developed as a working document between May and September 2022. The content was defined by four components: information sources and media, social networks, advertising and media effects, and communication. Subsequently, the components were developed into performance and content standards, the "core" of which was incorporated into the learning domains. Thus, media literacy content became part of the mandatory standards.

⁶⁵ <https://cedmohub-staging.eu/>

⁶⁶ <https://cedmohub-staging.eu/media-literacy/activities/#1667214532855-f02862d4-b729>

⁶⁷ <https://www.redalfamed.org/proceedings-vi-congreso-2022-arequipa>, str. 1109, in Spanish

At the same time, to define media literacy, core competences have been formulated as part of the main objectives of education and training (presented at the public consultation in December 2022).

Defining media literacy within the objectives of education and training:

- to develop and show a critical and discerning attitude towards the media;
- to interpret information and media content;
- ethical and appropriate media self-presentation;
- to expose and detect manipulative techniques and coping with information overload and the commercialization of the media environment.

The content of the cross-sectional literacies will be developed in the educational content in two ways:

1. As part of the content of the learning areas.
2. As part of the 'theme days' that will be organized by schools (4 days each term). Supporting methodological materials will also be produced for the thematic days in 2023 and 2024 in cooperation with the pioneering schools. The methodological material for media literacy will be based on the working document that was produced in summer 2022.

Media literacy as part of journalism and media studies programmes

- **Comenius University Bratislava - Faculty of Arts - Department of Journalism⁶⁸**

The Journalism programme includes a number of courses focused on the development of media literacy and critical thinking. Media education is one of the key subjects that provides students with a basic overview of the functioning of the media and the media environment home and abroad. After completing this course, students are able to perceive the differences between information sources and understand the basics of media education. In addition, they are prepared to pass on the knowledge they have gained to secondary schools in their home regions in Slovakia. The course is not limited in capacity, during the reporting period there were approximately 20 students enrolled from the Faculty of Arts of the UK for the summer semester of each academic year.

Other courses focusing on practical, creative media activities of students are Magazine Production and Media Studio. After completing them, students have information about what editorial practice looks like and become familiar with the job of a journalist. They are familiar not only with writing, but also with managing colleagues, the work of an editor and proofreader. Orientation towards open sources and working with sources are

⁶⁸ <https://fphil.uniba.sk/katedry-a-odborne-pracoviska/katedra-zurnalistiky/>

also an important part of the curriculum. Courses in Media on the Internet, Introduction to Media Studies, and Computer Literacy cover topics such as working with databases and sourcing, open sources of information, the misinformation scene, and issues related to fake news and hoaxes. Students will also learn about social networking and its impact on the media. The psychology of mass communication allows students to better understand how the media influences society.

- **Catholic University in Ružomberok - Faculty of Arts and Letters - Department of Journalism⁶⁹**

Within the study programme Journalism, students in the Master's programme are offered the subject Media Education with a subsidy of 2 hours of lectures and 1 hour of exercises per week. The aim of the course is, in addition to the development of knowledge in the field of media education and literacy, to facilitate the development of competences aimed at the activity of students as future creators of media communications in the implementation of educational workshops, lectures or texts aimed at the development of media literacy.

Within the general foundation courses, the course Faculty Seminar 2 - Media Literacy and Digital Technologies, which is compulsory for all first-year students of Bachelor programmes at the Faculty of Arts, was introduced in 2022 as part of the curriculum modifications. The aim of the course is to introduce the issue of media literacy to mainly students of teaching programmes and psychology, so that they have knowledge of the possibility of implementing media education as a cross-cutting theme within their courses or, in the case of psychologists, to incorporate the topic of media literacy into their future practice.

- **University of Prešov - Faculty of Arts - Department of Communication and Media Studies⁷⁰**

The Media Studies programme accredited at all three levels of study (BA, MA and PhD) provides students with the opportunity to develop media competences in the field of analysis, production and critical thinking about media content. At the bachelor's level, the issue of media education is addressed in the compulsory subject of media literacy and media education, within which students implement model lessons of media education in primary and secondary schools, mainly in the Prešov and Košice regions. At the Master's level, students in the final years take the course Development of Media Competences, in the framework of which they also follow active projects (mainly in Slovakia) and carry out an output aimed at a selected target group with the aim of developing selected media competences. Media literacy issues are also reflected in final bachelor and master theses (often with a practical focus and validation in a school

⁶⁹ <https://www.ku.sk/fakulty-katolickej-univerzity/filozoficka-fakulta/katedry/katedra-zurnalistiky/#submenu>

⁷⁰ <https://www.unipo.sk/filozoficka-fakulta/isms/katedry/komunikacne-medialne-studia/>

environment). The number of graduates at the first and second level of study is on average 20, which allows the teachers to have an individual approach to the students of the media studies programme. After completing their pedagogical education, several graduates work as media education teachers in primary and secondary schools.

- **University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava - University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava - The Faculty of Mass Media Communication⁷¹**

The Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava has received accreditation for a new doctoral study programme called Media and Information Competences in 2021. The study programme focuses on new and important dimensions of media and communication studies - media and information competences, critical thinking and media education. These are essential preconditions for a proper orientation in an environment of digital platforms using increasingly sophisticated strategies to attract and retain the attention of audiences. The study programme is focused on the development of media, information and digital competences with an emphasis on critical thinking techniques as tools to immunize individuals against online misinformation and other risky aspects of the media and information ecosystem. PhD studies are specialized in media education, media literacy development, and media and information competencies. The goal is the comprehensive development of their communication and analytical competencies, problem-solving competencies, critical thinking skills, and the ability to actively participate in the scientific investigation of current social trends related to media communication.

In 2022, the Faculty of Mass Media Communication successfully passed the re-accreditation of the study programme Applied Media Studies, which offers Bachelor's and Master's degrees. This study programme has been in existence since 2011, when the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at UCM became the first - and so far the only - faculty in Slovakia to establish a Department of Media Education. The staff of the Department of Media Education has a wide range of activities aimed at preparing graduates who are able to navigate in a media environment that is increasingly complicated and full of new challenges, opportunities and problems. The first is to work directly in media organizations, where they work as editors, dramaturgs, social media managers, as well as in other creative positions. The second, no less important profile is lecturing, consulting and advising in various forms of media education, as well as in the preparation of educational programmes and various media formats designed for children and youth audiences.

Teachers' training

Despite efforts in the past to provide support to teachers in the field of media literacy, there is still no systematic training for future educators in this field in Slovakia. Future

⁷¹ <https://fmk.sk/studijne-programy/ames-mik/>

teachers do not have the opportunity to choose an apprenticeship at pedagogical faculties, e.g. media education – aesthetics..., and at faculties with a media focus, the pedagogical dimension is lacking. In the following section, we present a list of educational support programmes for teachers being implemented in Slovakia or prepared during the reporting period.

- **Innovative education programmes and professional events for teachers designed by the National Institute of Education and Youth in 2022 and included in the educational offer in schools in school year 2022/2023**

Using debate and discussion to support the development of pupils' critical thinking

Participants in the training programmes will acquire the knowledge and skills needed to implement debate and discussion as tools for a guided process of developing pupils' critical thinking. In an experiential way, they will work with various examples of information disseminated among users of social networks and in traditional media in order to discover the degree of veracity of this information, to identify key ideas and assumptions in arguments, to recognise important connections, to correctly interpret and distinguish between data, facts and assumptions, to evaluate the reliability of evidence presented in support of claims, etc. Seven training groups have been formed, with 150 teaching staff enrolled in training in the 2022/2023 school year, 63 of whom have already completed the course.

Development of media education and media literacy

The programme's creation resulted from the 2022-2023 Action Plan on the National Concept for the Protection of Children in the Digital Space. The programme aims to develop the competencies of pedagogical and professional staff in the field of media education. The content of the training is to provide the participants with knowledge so that they can use it effectively in the educational process, to convey systemic tools for solving model situations through didactic methods and forms related to the orientation in the received information mediated explicitly and inadvertently. The educational content offered also includes the topic of how to prevent being subjected to false, misleading information from the available media and how to deal with problem situations arising from the issues above. The training programme was approved on 30 November 2022.

Workshop for teachers on media literacy of pupils and prevention of hate speech in online space (November 2022)

The United Nations Information Service in Vienna, the National Institute for Education and Youth and the Vienna-based NGO ZARA organized an interactive workshop for teachers to develop professional competencies in increasing media literacy related to combating hate speech in online space. The workshop was intended for teachers of

general education subjects in primary and secondary schools, regardless of the length of experience. The working language was English.

Digital technologies in prevention

Computer games and various online applications are mentioned more in the context of prevention as something to protect children and adolescents from. The webinar aimed to show how to make technology a useful ally in prevention. To look at how digital technologies can be used in prevention programmes. To show some projects that use different online environments or virtual reality to practice social skills and to create an online prevention escape game together.

- **Other training activities for teachers and media literacy resources**

In 2022, the Faculty of Arts of the University of Prešov (FF PU) received a grant from the Government Office of the Slovak Republic focused on the issue of propaganda and manipulation of information on the Internet. The project's content became a source for the innovative training programme for secondary and/or higher education teachers. The programme **Safety of Children and Pupils in Digital Space. Propaganda and Manipulation of Information on the Internet** has a scope of 50 hours and was approved by the Rector of the University, who granted the faculty the right to carry out innovative education until 2027. The implementers of the project are members of the Department of Communication and Media Studies of the Faculty of Arts of the PU. The output will be a website with materials from lecturers from PU, but also from teachers involved in the education (record - over 100 discussions with pupils and students on topics related to the project to promote critical thinking). In May 2023, 23 teachers, mostly from the Prešov region, are expected to complete the training.

The civic association Víčatá implements the **Spreading Awareness of the Positive Aspects of Games and Technologies** project, which aims to integrate games and technologies into education and upbringing. The programme is implemented through webinars or lectures at schools and pedagogical faculties. Accompanying activities include writing posts and reviews on games on the vlcata.sk web portal, where the Teaching Online section was created during the pandemic, and conducting webinars. During the reporting period, the civic association held 35 lectures at schools and faculties of education and managed to train 1250 teachers.

Another activity of Víčatá.sk is the **InoSchool project**⁷² - finding and rewarding innovative schools in Slovakia. An expert jury will select the best schools from the regions that know how to increase motivation, use technology, and increase interest in learning. The winning schools will then become a Regional Innovation Hub for a year - a kind of centre from where neighbouring schools can draw inspiration and adopt good

⁷² <https://inoskola.vlcata.sk/o-projekte/>

practices. An assigned assistant will help them organise the conference. In addition, they will be given some interesting tools that can take their innovativeness one step further. The project's target group are teachers, with around 50 activities and 1 500 teachers trained in the reporting period.

The Zmudri Civic Association implements the **Zmudri to Schools programme**.⁷³ It is a free-of-charge development programme for teachers and pupils of primary schools and all types of secondary schools. This programme extends the regular use of free-of-charge video courses on the online platform Zmudri.sk. It is currently a six-month programme during which teachers teach a selected thematic module in one class. The teacher chooses one module to be taught in one class. One module contains 10 video courses with which they have to teach about 10 hours. In selected schools across the country, Zmudri is running a 2x45-minute workshop on "Critical Thinking and Social Media". The selected 50 teachers will attend a series of 5 online workshops (1 workshop = 2 hours) on "How to teach critical thinking". The programme aims to deepen collaboration with teachers using Zmudri's materials, improve their skills, and systematically measure the educational impact of the video courses on students. Approximately 200 teachers and 4,500 students participate in the program annually.

In partnership with internet safety experts from iKeepSafe and the Online Family Safety Institute, Google has created the **Internet Heroes teacher programme**, which provides teachers with the tools and methods to teach the basics of digital safety and citizenship. They have developed training for primary school teachers to learn how to work in the classroom with a prepared curriculum and the Interland adventure game that makes learning about digital safety and citizenship a fun experience.⁷⁴

The Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology has developed a **content standard for preventing risky behaviour, specifically a section on preventing problematic use of digital technologies, social networks and video games**. The material is intended for pedagogical and professional staff in the Department of Education. It aims to improve and unify the provision of professional activities to children/children with diverse educational and training needs and their families throughout Slovakia. The creation of the standards increases the efficiency of the activities provided by professional and educational staff, school support teams and counselling and prevention facilities, which will also contribute to greater inclusion and unification of the professional activities provided to children/pupils and their parents.⁷⁵

Since 2010, **the International Media Literacy Centre** has been operating at the FMK UCM as a coordinating, research and training centre for activities in the field of media education. The Centre aims to provide the professional and lay public with

⁷³ <https://zmudri.sk/zmudri-do-skol>

⁷⁴ <https://www.hrdinoviainternetu.org/oprograme>

⁷⁵ <https://vudpap.sk/x/projekty/standardy/obsahove-standardy/>

comprehensive information and research materials on this issue. One of the crucial activities of the Centre is creating and operating a professional information portal on media education⁷⁶, which includes an extensive database of materials that educators can use to develop pupils' media competence. Research activities include various aspects of investigating the level of media literacy of the adult population and children and youth in the conditions of the Slovak Republic. In the past, the Centre has also carried out research on implementing media education in Slovak primary and secondary schools.

⁷⁶ www.medialnavychova.sk

E. Evaluation measures and methods

E.1 Does your country use or would it like to introduce measures to assess the impact of regional or national media initiatives, including performance measurement indicators to assess the impact of media literacy measures and methods? If so, please list and describe these measures and their outcomes.

Based on the available information, Slovakia currently has no systematic measures in place to assess the impact of regional or national media initiatives.