SCHOOL FOR JOURNALISM
AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA LITERACY IN MACEDONIA:
EFFORTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
IN THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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Content

Introduction

The research report "Media Literacy in Macedonia – Effort for Implementation in the Elementary Education" is continuation of the research on "Media Literacy in Macedonia: a missing tool for active citizenship" from 2016 when the School for Journalism and Public Relations analyzed the media literacy situation in the secondary education, the civil sector and the mass media.

The purpose of this research is to identify the situation in the implementation of the media literacy in the elementary education in Macedonia. The analysis defines the media education as process and the media literacy as an outcome of that process. It explains the concept of media education in accordance with the international and European standards and documents, the various models for practicing of the media education and special focus was put on analysis of the Slovenian model of media education.

Key questions asked in the document are: how is the media literacy treated in the curricula and programs in the elementary education, what abilities the students acquire in the area of media literacy, what forms for acquisition of media literacy knowledge are used (didactic materials, equipment, premises, school activities and extra-curriculum activities) and what is the education of the media literacy teachers.

The methodological approach is based on analysis of international documents, the domestic and international educational policy regulation, focus groups with teachers from the eight planning regions in Macedonia (Eastern, North-Eastern, Polog, Pelagonia, Skopje, South-Eastern, South-Western and Vardar region) and interviews with representatives from the Bureau for Development of Education, Ministry of Education and Science, pedagogical faculties in the country, civil society organizations, media and the Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Media Services. The Bureau for Development of Education, in the frames of the Ministry of Education and Science, supported the research process by organizing the focus groups with teachers, textbooks, and it also had consultation role in the analysis of the teaching programs. The research and analysis of the data collected was implemented in the period June – December 2018.

The research is part of the project: "Media Literacy in the Ear of Influx of Information: Establishing Coalition for Media and Information Literacy" which is implemented by the School for Journalism and Public Relations, the team of which also implemented this research. The Project is funded by the European Union.

1.

Media literacy education

No child's education is complete without media literacy education and skills of the 21st century literacies. (Wan and Gut, 2008)

The radio, TV, computers and Internet are the dominant cultural tools used for search, selection, collection, storing and transfer of knowledge. There is no differentiation today between the traditional and digital media – today you can read newspaper, watch TV or movie on a computer or mobile phone. However, the increase of knowledge that results from the use of the mass media and communications has both advantages and disadvantages. While we are adopting their good sides, we need to try to avoid the negative sides. We therefore need the development of media literacy, especially among the children – they are born with, and they are growing up, with the new information and communication technologies that are present both in our homes and at school.

We need media education in order to have media literacy. The 'media literacy' term was defined in 1992 at the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy) in Aspen, United States. The consensus today about the meaning of this term is that it is *the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate the information in all their forms* (Aufderheide, 1993:6). It provides for acquisition of various skills: technical (ability to access the media), critical (understanding of the media content, ability to interpret them and to critically assess them) and practical (ability to create media messages). It can be even said that the essence of the media literacy is the research principle. Later on, the European Charter on Media Literacy will provide wider definition in order to include all possible elements of the media literacy. It includes: *Use media technologies effectively to access, store, retrieve and share content to meet their individual and community needs and interests; Gain access to, and make informed choices about, a wide range of media forms and content from different cultural and institutional sources; Understand how and why media content is produced; Analyze critically the techniques, languages and conventions used by the media, and the messages they convey; Use media creatively to express and communicate ideas, information and opinions; Identify, and avoid or challenge, media content and services that may be unsolicited, offensive or harmful; Make effective use of media in the exercise of their democratic rights and civic responsibilities* (Bachmair, Bazalgette, 2007:84)

In other hand, in accordance the Recommendation on media literacy of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (from the year of 2000), the media education is defined as *Teaching practices which aim to develop media competence, understood as a critical and discerning attitude towards the media in order to form well-balanced citizens, capable of making their own judgments on the basis of the available information. It enables them to access the necessary information, to analyze it and be able to identify the economic, political, social and/or cultural interests that lie behind it. Media education teaches individuals to interpret and produce messages, to select the most appropriate media for communicating and, eventually, to*

have a greater say in the media offer and output."[1] In other words, the media education deals with teaching and learning about media and not with learning via media and their use at the teaching hours as a teaching aid. It covers a wide spectrum of media, including movies, TV, videos, radio, printed media (especially the newspapers and magazines) and the new digital communication technologies in social and political context, production, dissemination of information, growth of the media industry, development of the commercial media, the role of the advertising… The purpose is for the young people to acquire knowledge in order the understand the characteristics, needs and issues of the media, to develop critical analysis ability, evaluation and interpretation of the content, format and context of the media messages, including ability to use the digital, visual and electronic tools for creating own communication and presentation messages (Buckingham, 2001).

It is about merger between the (media) education as a process and the (media) literacy as an outcome of that process. Therefore, it is common today to talk about *media literacy education*. To be media literate in the 21st century means to be aware of the influence the media have on the individuals and society, understanding of the mass communication process, ability to analyze and discuss the media content, development of strategies for critical analysis of the media, independence from the media influence and open mind for acceptance of, and experimenting with, new tools for teaching and learning provided by the information era. Most of the academic public agrees that the media literacy depends both on the knowledge and abilities. The individual must have knowledge about the mass media and their nature, and also to be able to use that knowledge when accessing, analyzing or valuating different media content. The media literacy learning process includes a wide range of students, their individual preferences, their realistic needs, creativity, mutual respect. It does not only include reading and comprehension, but also work, experience, experimenting and understanding. Here it is the student who creates, produces and understands the information through his/ her personal experience, interpretation, imagination and work. By doing so, he/ she improves and strengthens the understanding of oneself, as a prerequisite for adaptation to the global world and functioning as an active citizen in the society. (Kupiainen, Reijo & Sintonen, 2010).

It goes without saying that the media education and media literacy are not, and cannot be, "protection" for the children from unwanted media messages. Although there is great number of entities calling on the families, for example, to switch off the TV or to limit the time their children spend on a computer, it is a fact that the media have become so entrenched in our cultural space that they are becoming part of our culture. Hence, the media literacy is supposed to help students to become competent, critically literate in all media forms so they themselves will be the ones that will control the interpretation of what they hear or see, instead allowing the interpretation to control them. In order to become media literate person it is not sufficient to just remember

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1   Source: Council of Europe: Recommendation 1466 (2000) Media Education, http://www.assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=16811&lang=en

the facts or statistics about the media, but to learn how to ask the correct question about what is seen, read or heard. Len Masterman is the first person who proposed serious studying of the mass media in the schools and has become international sensation when he published the book *Teaching about Television* in 1980. He calls this *critical anatomy* or ability to think independently. Without this core ability the individual cannot be considered to have full dignity as a human being or to practice citizenship in a democratic society where, being a citizen also means to understand and to contribute towards the debates of the current time (Thoman, Jolls, 2003:21).

In addition, the media education and media literacy cannot be treated neither as remedy from various manipulating content, although presently it is exactly the media literacy that became the center of gravity in the fight against the *fake news* that literally flooded the entire world and provoked the educators, legislators, phylantropists, technologists. There is even greater need these days for media education of children and strengthening of the critical and cognitive abilities when comprehending media content. If one of the objectives of the media education is develop autonomous and critical individuals in order to oppose the media manipulations and rhetoric, we must also not forget the *active audience,* which means that the meaning of the media texts is not only simply sent out to the public, but that the audience is also their creator. The audience uses video cameras and other media equipment to freely create their meaning and own media presentations. The focus has been shifted to digital technology, games and the Internet, and the new digital media (rich in pictures, text, sound, videos, animation) require also new competencies. *The future of development of the media literacy must include development of the traditional reading and writing skills, in combination with new literacy practices that include talking, watching, listening and designing* (Thomas, Jolls, 2003:21)

The story of media literacy education began in the 1970s when the focus was on reduction and prevention of the negative influence of the media, mainly the movies and television.[2] However, in time, the focus shifted from protection towards active and responsible attitude towards media and education, hence more and more attention is paid on development of the communication abilities of the children i.e. development of skills and knowledge required for safe use of the media, including critical understanding of the media content and manner of work of the actual media. Special attention is paid today to the Internet (Internet literacy), to promotion of the safe use of the Internet by suppressing illegal and harmful content as well as fake news. Historically, the media education developed first in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, South Africa and United States. Australia was one of the first countries to establish media literacy studies and the first textbooks were developed in the course of the 1980s and 1990s. The Interest continued to increase in other countries as well, such as Holland, Russia and Italy, and today almost all European Union countries have included the media literacy education in their education systems, either as a separate subject or as inter-curricular approach in different programs.

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2   Mainly the Convention for Cross-border Television of the Council of Europe and the Directive on Audio-Visual Media Services of the European Union that regulates the broadcasting of content not intended for the wider audience.

The UNESCO organization will set the path for entry of the media education in the educational systems of many countries in the world, by adopting the Declaration on Media Education in Grünwald, Germany, in 1982. This Declaration emphasizes the omnipresence of the media and their significant influence, but also the fact that they are part of the culture of today's world and tool for active participation of the citizens in the society. It is also emphasized that most of the formal and informal education system do not instigate media education and the schools and parents share the responsibility for preparation of the young people for life in a world of powerful images, words or sounds. There is advocacy for integrated approach in the language and communication teaching and it also emphasized that the media education will be successful if the parents, teachers, media workers and decision makers identify their respective role in that process. The greater integration of the media education in the teaching process would be an important step towards more effective education.

2.

International and European standards and documents

UNESCO: MEDIA EDUCATION CONCEPT

One of the most relevant documents, which is still valid today in the area of media education, is the *Declaration on Media Education[1]* adopted by UNESCO in 1982 on the International Symposium in Grunwald, Germany. It emphasizes the necessity to have coherent and systematic form of education about the mass media as prerequisite for modern society. In that regard, the relevant authorities of the countries are called to do the following:

(1) *Initiate and support comprehensive media education programs - from pre-school to university level, and in adult education* - the purpose of which is to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will encourage the growth of critical awareness and, consequently, of greater competence among the users of electronic and print media. Ideally, such programs should include the analysis of media products, the use of media as means of creative expression, and effective use of and participation in available media channels,

(2) *Develop training courses for teachers and intermediaries* both to increase their knowledge and understanding of the media and train them in appropriate teaching methods, which would take into account the already considerable but fragmented acquaintance with media already possessed by many students,

(3) *Stimulate research and development activities for the benefit of media education, from such domains as psychology, sociology, and communication science*, and

(4) *Support and strengthen the actions* undertaken or envisaged by UNESCO and which aim at encouraging international co-operation in media education.

There will be many other additional conferences that will expand, further specify and develop the concept, theory and practice of the media education. For example, in 1990 in Toulouse in France, the *New Directions in Media Education* Conference specified the concept of media literacy as a *knowledge about the structure, economy and functions of the mass media system in the society, including analytical skills for reading and of the aesthetic and ideological content of the mass media messages* (Thoman, 2000). It was established that the modern society has transformed itself from linguistic literacy era into electronic literacy era, therefore the media literacy is not a luxury but necessity. What is even more relevant is the fact that the understanding of the role of the media consumers is changing. If they used to be seen as *tabula rasa* in 1950s and 1960, now they are becoming active creators of meanings, therefore the question now is not what the media do with people, but what the people do with the media. In other words, the purpose is to make the citizens capable for active relation with the media, instead of protecting them from

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1   Source: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/MEDIA_E.PDF

the potentially harm impact of the mass media (through the mediation, ideology, commercialization, paid advertisements and content with low aesthetical and educational values). The elements required for development of the media education are the following: a) introduction of directions for teaching programs (on national or regional level) by relevant educational institutions; b) programs for training of teachers at university level (this is not about journalism programs but education with specific specialization); c) support for the teachers – educational programs in the course of the work, summer courses, etc. through which the teachers will progress and advance in the selected specialization; d) educational teaching resources – textbooks, teaching plans, lists of activities, videos, posters, brochures that are required for the teaching process.

The Conference on *Educating for the Media and the Digital Age* that took place in 1999 in Vienna, Austria, emphasized the media education as part of the basic rights or every citizen of every country in the world, including the freedom of expression, the right to be informed and his/ her role in building and maintaining the democracy. In that context, the media education: a) pertains to all communication media and includes the printed word and graphics, sounds, still images and movies, delivered on any kind of technology; b) enables people to gain understanding of the communication media used in their society and the way they operate and to acquire skills in using these media to communicate with others; c) ensures that people learn how to analyze, critically reflect upon and create media texts; identify the sources of media texts, their political, social, commercial and/or cultural interests, and their contexts; interpret the messages and values offered by the media; select appropriate media for communicating their own messages or stories and for reaching their intended audience; gain, or demand access to media for both reception and production.[2] It is recommended the scope of the media education to expand into the teaching plans whenever possible (not only with regards to the language) and also to be part of the lifelong learning. The necessity for access to electronic and digital technologies for persons with special needs and those facing difficult social and economic situation is mentioned for the first time, as well as the special role of the media education in specific situations such as social and political conflicts, wars, natural and environmental disasters.

The Congress in Paris in 2007 confirmed the relevancy of the Grunwald Declaration adopted in 1982, and will even evaluate it even more important 25 years after. The Congress emphasized that everything that was said back done, is even stronger today in an era of information society and spreading of the knowledge in global context. The place and role of the media is greater and greater in our societies, and the citizens, now more than ever, must have ability to critically analyze the content, regardless of the symbolic system used (picture, sound, text) in order to adapt themselves to the social needs. Hence, there is an urgent need for inter-

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2   Source: Recommendations addressed to UNESCO Adopted by the Vienna Conference „Educating for the Media and the Digital Age", 1999, Available at: http://www.nordicom.gu.se/en/clearinghouse/recommendations-addressed-unesco-media-education

national mobilization for increase of the media education and involvement of all stakeholders in the process. The Congress will produce 12 recommendations about four priority activities: development of comprehensive media education programs at all education levels, teacher training and awareness raising of the other stakeholders in the social sphere, research and its dissemination networks, international cooperation. The first two are especially relevant in this context and they include the following eight recommendations:

1. *To adopt an inclusive definition of media education* with three main objectives – access to all kinds of media that are potential tools to understand society and to participate in democratic life; to develop skills for the critical analysis of messages, whether in news or entertainment; to encourage production, creativity and interactivity in the different fields of media communication,

2. *To strengthen the links between media education, cultural diversity and respect for human rights* by adapting the curricula to the diversity of the cultural, educational, social and economic contexts,

3. *To define basic skills and evaluation systems*. They have interdisciplinary nature and they should be specified for each level of the school system. Their evaluation should take into account students as well as teachers in training and they would help to structure media education and improve the relevance and effectiveness of its curricula.

4. *To integrate media education in the initial training of teachers*. It is a key element of the system and must include theoretical dimensions and practical skills; it needs to be based on a good knowledge of young people's media uses. In times of rapid change, this training must rely on institutional actions and self-training, using teaching aids that have been tested and validated by teachers and students.

5. *To develop appropriate and evolving pedagogical methods*. The main purpose is to set up new "active" methods that are incompatible with ready-to-teach and evolution of the teacher's role and greater participation by students.

6. *To mobilize all the stakeholders within the education system*. The integration of media education in the education system has to mobilize all stakeholders. The awareness of curricula managers, school directors, chief education officers, etc., must be increased in order for them to assume the responsibilities that legitimize these actions.

7. *To mobilize the other stakeholders of the social sphere.* Media education cannot be limited to the school environment; it is also the concern of families, associations and media professionals. Media education should be integrated in the professional training of journalists and include legal and ethical knowledge. It also applies to all media professionals, content producers, editors, broadcasters, etc.

8. *To place media education within the framework of lifelong learning*. Media education is not only for young people but also for adults whose main information and knowledge sources are media. In this context, media education is a process of quality lifelong learning. It is important to provide adults who did not have this opportunity with continuous training modules that will help them to become freer and more active citizens in society. The continuous training and self-training of adults have to be implemented at the local level with the support of civil society associations, NGOs and experts.[3]

Several years afterwards, and following a long period of improvement, work and cooperation with many scholars, teachers, academics, prominent teachers, in 2011 UNESCO published the *Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers* which is a practical tool to assist Governments meet the objectives from the Grunwald Delaration for Media Literacy and Education by taking into account the current development of the information and communication technologies and the convergence of the media. In 2012 initiation will be raised for regular implementation of the Global Week of Media and Information Literacy.[4]

European Union – Actions and directions for media education. The bodies of the European Union have published a number of strategic documents and recommendations for more intensive involvement of the media literacy in different areas such as industry and digital market, media regulatory bodies, economy and development of the digital technology and information-communication technologies. In 1989 the *Directive on Cross-border Television* of the European Parliament which, inter alia, regulates the core principles for protection of the children from inappropriate content (pornography) is actually also reflecting the understanding of the media literacy. By changing the name of this document into *Directive for Audio-Visual Media Services* in 2007, the media literacy gets the prominent relevancy and role i.e. it is now clearly defined as *…skills, knowledge and understanding that allow consumers to use media effectively and safely. Media-literate people are able to exercise informed choices, understand the nature of content and services and take advantage of the full range of opportunities offered by new communications technologies. They are better able to protect themselves and their families from harmful or offensive material. Therefore the development of media literacy in all sections of society should be promoted and its progress followed closely*.[5] The Directive also refers to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe from 2006[6] on protection of juveniles and human dignity in the audio-visual and information services, which includes a series of measures for promotion of the media literacy such as, for example, continuous training of the teachers and educators, in

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3   Paris Agenda or 12 Recommendations for Media Education, https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Parisagendafin_en.pdf

4   For example, in 2016 the topic of the Global Week of Media and Information Literacy was Media and Information Literacy: New Paradigms for Intercultural Dialogue and in 2017 the topic was Media and Information Literacy in Critical Times: Designing New Ways of Learning and of Information Environment.

5   https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2007/65/oj

6   https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reco/2006/952/oj

cooperation with the associations for protection of children, on the use of the Internet in the education process, introduction of specific training on Internet intended for early age children, including sessions open for the parents, as well as integrated educational approach as part of the curricula of the schools and the media literacy programs for the purpose of more responsible use of the Internet.

In this context we should specially emphasize the ***Recommendation on Media Education*** of the Parliamentary Assembly[7] from the year of 2000. This document explicitly and in details deals with the issue of media literacy. It specially emphasizes the impact the media have on the children – sometimes they are not able to differentiate the media reality from actual reality, so emphasis was put on the necessity to develop media education in order to actively, critically and reasonably use the media. The document defines the media education as a mean for exercising the rights to free expression and informing, which is useful not only for the personal development of the individual but also for greater involvement in the society and better interaction. Although the media education is part of the curricula in several European countries, its practical implementation is still problematic, especially in terms of the teaching methodology, the objectives it needs to follow and the evaluation of results. Hence the recommendations for the Government and relevant authorities of the member states to instigate the development of programs for media literacy for children, adolescents and adults, to promote development of programs for teacher training in the area of media education, to involve the educational institutions, parent organizations, media professionals, Internet service providers, the NGOs and other stakeholders in active dialogue on these issues, and to examine the possibilities for support of the educational programs of different media for the purpose of promotion of the media education.

From that time onwards, the media literacy is present in almost all media related documents, but the focus is gradually shifting towards the new media and communication services. For example, the Conference on *Integration and diversity: the new frontiers of European media and communications policy* that took place in Kiev in 2005 adopted the Resolution No.3 on *Human Rights and Regulation of the Media and New Communication Services in the Information Society*, requiring from the member states to *increase the efforts to ensure efficient and fair access for all individuals to the new communication services, knowledge and skills, in order to prevent the digital exclusion, and stimulation of the media education for the wider public,* especially the *training for children in the area of media literacy so they can benefit from the positive aspects of the new communication services and to avoid exposure to harmful context*. Media literacy is also part of the Action Plan adopted at this Conference that requires from the countries to *support the steps for promotion of the media literacy in all levels of education also as part of the learning process*.[8]

In 2007 the European Commission adopted a Communication – *A Europe-*

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7   http://www.assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=16811&lang=en

8   https://rm.coe.int/16806461fb, p. 46

an approach to media literacy in the digital environment[9] in which, in addition to the definition, different levels of the media literacy are covered. In includes: feeling comfortable with all existing media from newspapers to virtual communities; actively using media through interactive television, use of Internet search engines or participation in virtual communities and better exploiting the potential of media for entertainment, access to culture, intercultural dialogue, learning and daily-life applications (for instance, through libraries, podcasts); having a critical approach to media as regards both quality and accuracy of content (for example, being able to assess information, dealing with advertising on various media, using search engines intelligently); using media creatively, as the evolution of media technologies and the increasing presence of the Internet as a distribution channel allow an ever growing number of people to create and disseminate images, information and content; understanding the economy of media and the difference between pluralism and media ownership; being aware of copyright issues which are essential for a "culture of legality", especially for the younger generation in its double capacity of consumers and producers of content. Undoubtedly, the concept the European Commission is developing about the media literacy includes a number of 'individual' literacies which are significantly in use today, such as information literacy, digital literacy, audio-visual literacy, movie literacy, culturological literacy...

Further on, *The European Commission Recommendation on Media Literacy in Digital Environment*[10] from 2009 clearly stipulates that the diffusion of the digital creative content and the multiplication of the online and mobile distribution platforms generate new challenges for the media literacy. In today's world the citizens need to develop analytical skills that provide for better intellectual and emotional understanding of the digital media. Therefore, we have the requirement for the media literacy to be included in various manners and on different levels in the society. It is fundamental skill not only for the young people but also for the adults and more senior people, for the parents, teachers and media professionals. Therefore, the primary responsibility of the member states is development of modalities for inclusion of the media literacy in the teaching programs on all levels. Media literate society is the one who is both stimulation and prerequisite for pluralism and independence of the media. In that regard, the European Commission is proposing systematic research of various aspects and dimensions of the media literacy in the digital environment, including opening of debates and various public events for inclusion of the media literacy in the mandatory curricula.

Many other research and implementation studies will follow, for evaluation of the media literacy level (with criteria and indicators) in the European Union member states and beyond. The transfer of the media literacy responsibility from the General Directorate for Information Society and Media towards the General Directorate for Education and Culture in 2010 is an effort to connect the media literacy with the education on even more fundamental level. Since 2012 the focus has been

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9   https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM%3A2007%3A0833%3AFIN%3AEN%3APDF

10   https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32009H0625

especially on implementation of the media literacy as mandatory part of the curricula and educational programs. In that sense we have the *Conclusions on developing media literacy and critical thinking through education and training[11]* of the Council for Education, Youth, Culture and Sports of the European Union from 2016. The Council calls on the member states to:

(1) *Encourage sufficient attention to be paid to developing media literacy* and critical thinking in education and training at all levels, including through citizenship and media education,

(2) *Seek to increase digital competence levels among learners of all ages*, as an important precondition for strengthening their ability to participate actively in the democratic life of our modern societies as well as for enhancing their employability,

(3) *Encourage socially safe learning environments, both online and offline*, in which controversial issues can be openly discussed and freedom of speech preserved, and empower teaching staff to initiate and moderate such discussions,

(4) *Support teaching staff and school leaders at all levels of education and training* in developing through initial training and continuous professional development their own digital competence, as well as the pedagogical skills needed to use new technologies and open educational resources in their teaching and to address the issues of media literacy and critical thinking in an effective manner with learners of all ages and backgrounds,

(5) *Engage with parents and other stakeholders in society at large,* with a view to reducing the digital gap between generations and fostering a shared culture of dialogue and mutual understanding,

(6) *Reinforce dialogue, cooperation and partnerships between the education and training sector and the media sector* – including journalists - as well as all other relevant stakeholders, including civil society and youth organizations, given that the effective development of media literacy and critical thinking calls for a multi-disciplinary approach and recalling the important role that non-formal and informal learning can play in this regard,

(7) *Encourage innovative, creative and participative ways of developing media literacy and critical thinking* in education and training, for instance by carrying out research and by exploring the potential that culture and arts, intercultural approaches and school media production can offer, as a means of strengthening openness towards other cultures and active citizenship.

The media literacy continues to be key part of the European Union policies

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11   http://www.eunec.eu/sites/www.eunec.eu/files/attachment/files/conclusions.pdf

related to audio-visual area, media and the program for safer Internet, including educational policy and lifelong learning. It is integral element of several leading initiatives and of the EU 2020 Strategy, such as the digital agenda or new skills for new jobs.[12] In the future, the task of the European Union will also be further strengthening of the media literacy role, the requirements for media education, encouraging those who are interested from both public and private sector to show greater initiation in the process of adaptation of the new results from the media literacy research efforts or the development of new technologies (Ding, 2011:7).

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12 EUROPE 2020 , A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/ COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%20%20007%20-%20Europe%202020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf

3.

Practicing the media education — the Slovenian example

The knowledge society in which Europe functions requires that media literacy has a place at the core of education. (EAVI, 2009:85)

The education about the media literacy in Europe appears in various contexts, depending on the different traditions of the school systems, and there are many different models in reality. Commonly it is about the media literacy either as separate subject, or integration thereof, through different methodological units, in a number of different teaching subjects. Each model has its advantages and disadvantages. This approach is still occupying the attention of the experts today, especially because of the leads that the media education, as separate (and in most of the cases optional) subject is low on the priority lists of the schools and teachers. On the other hand, its integration in other school subjects makes it "invisible"; so it is more difficult to learn i.e. each teachers "little by little". There is no consensus, although there is a dominant approach of the so called "inter-curricula" approach.

Finland is a country most commonly mentioned as "success story" in relation to media literacy. The term *media literacy* (Mediakasvatus) is defined as education with the media and education about them. The purpose is acquisition of skills useful when creating media, understanding the media production and media informing, thinking about the relation towards the media and application critical thinking and self-expressing. What is being used is inter-curricular approach in the elementary education with the thematic area on: *media skills and communication* and on secondary level there is *communication and media competencies*. Commonly, the media education is taught in the frames of the mother tongue and the focus is on learning to understand the text and language from the aspect of media influence, which requires practice, analysis and knowledge. The curriculum explicitly mentions that the students must improve their literacy in order to be able to correctly interpret different messages they are getting from the media, to evaluate the context and function of those message and to realize in what manner those messages can influence the individuals in the society as a whole.[1] Here we could mention *Norway* and *UK* where the media education is also integral part of the mother tongue and has key role for the present and future of the society. *Denmark* includes the *Media and ICT education* in the elementary and secondary education in three ways: their integration with didactic tools in all teaching subjects, as part of the mother tongue education as well as optional courses related to media (word processing, visual arts, photography, movie studios and electronic data processing).[2]

The media education in *Ireland* is defined as *Critical Media Literacy Education* with primary goal of wider education, mainly because of the media intermingling with the professional, civil and personal life of the people. The focus here is two-fold: *citizen-*

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[1]   https://www.mediawijzer.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2013/10/rapport_media_onderwijs_EU.pdf and http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/75280/OKM13.pdf

[2]   http://ppemi.ens-cachan.fr/data/media/colloque140528/rapports/DENMARK_2014.pdf

ship development and *media education*, i.e. double focus is put on the protection and empowerment. The teachers need to encourage the children to critically reconsider the media and investigate how they can impact the attitude and the opinions but also to be able to research the range of information available to them through the information-communication technologies.[3] In the *Czech Republic*, the media education is included in the elementary education program since the year of 2000, and since 2007 it is taught as inter-cultural subject. Its objective (defined in the Elementary Education Program) is to enable the students to acquire elementary level of media literacy, which includes getting acquainted with the elementary information about the function and the role of the media in the modern society (history, structure), acquisition of skills facilitating the active and independent interaction of the individual with the media message. It also includes ability to analyze the messages, to evaluate how authentic they are and what is their purpose, including the ability to select relevant medium for meeting various needs – as source of information, education, free time activities.[4]

In that regard, the media education in *Holland* has been on the agenda for decades, but it is not included in the curricula and programs as separate subject. In fact, the media education is "left" to the dedication and enthusiasm of the school teachers and managers, and can be also found in the extra-curricular activities. It exists in the secondary education but as *audio-visual education* which includes art education and emphasizes the aesthetic aspect of the media content, the sources of which are drawn from audio-visual arts, like photographs, movies, videos.[5] In *Bulgaria*, preference is given to the information, computer and digital literacy as opposed to media literacy. The media literacy is primarily taught at the universities, while in schools it is left to activities by guest lecturers. Although the schools are technologically equipped to a satisfactory level, there is no special teaching plan on media literacy.[6] Same is the case in *Spain* where the teaching programs in the schools do not include specific courses focused on the media literacy, although there are isolated cases of teachers including media content in the teaching process. On the other hand, the information and digital skills are integrated in all levels of education.[7]

THE SLOVENIAN MODEL OF MEDIA EDUCATION

Slovenia is the first country in Central and Eastern Europe that introduced media literacy in the educational system. The educational processes started in 1990s i.e. they became integral part of it in 1996 which matches period of transformation of the educational system in the country (1990-1998). The media education, defined as *process of learning about the media and with the media* officially becomes part of the teaching programs of the elementary, secondary and higher education (with special subject for teachers) in 1999, and since the year of 2000 it became non-mandatory part

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3   https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ889203.pdf

4   https://www.shs-conferences.org/articles/shsconf/pdf/2016/04/shsconf_erpa2016_01092.pdf

5   https://www.mediawijzer.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2013/10/rapport_media_onderwijs_EU.pdf

6   http://oaji.net/articles/2016/2466-1462764572.pdf

7   http://ppemi.ens-cachan.fr/data/media/colloque140528/rapports/SPAIN_2014.pdf

of the preschool education for children ages 4 to 6 years. In the elementary schools this process is starting with the introduction of nine-year education and the media literacy is included in the mandatory teaching (inter-curricular) as well as in the optional teaching (separate subject), while in the secondary education it is inter-cultural with teaching topics in a number of subjects (Slovenian language, sociology, psychology, history of arts). In fact, it is about a **combined model** of education by including the media literacy in the mandatory teaching (mainly in the frames of the mother tongue), in the optional teaching and various extra-curricular activities. The media literacy is not only part of the formal education but also of informal initiatives, usually taking place in the youth organizations, in order to develop the ability of the young people to critically use the media but also to instigate their creativity for media production. No significant changes have been introduced since, nor there have been any upgrades or modernization of the established model for education in media literacy.

1. The media literacy is part of the mandatory teaching. The media education is present in the elementary schools with various thematic content in two mandatory subjects – Slovenian language from 1st to 9th grade and Civil Education and Ethics for 8th grade. Indirectly, some media content is also included in the teaching programs for teaching subjects of History, Geography, Arts and Music.

The students encounter the media literacy already in the initial educational period (1st to 3rd grade) in the Slovenian language teaching. According to the latest (updated) teaching plan that will start with use with the 2019/202 school year, the purpose of the subject, in addition to teaching and writing, is also the talking, the critical comprehension and interpretation of various texts, development of linguistic abilities, interpretation, evaluation, assessment and active development of the communicational, cognitive and imagination abilities, experiences and interests by creating various texts, two-way communication, creation of printed and electronic announcements, acceptance, understanding, perceiving and valuation advertising texts, etc. This approach provides for systematic development of all components of the communication abilities, in the same time increasing the knowledge about successful creation, acceptance, understanding, experiencing and evaluation of the texts in the new media forms that exist in digital age of today.

In operational terms, special emphasis is put on "theater, radio play, animated cartoons and movies", in the area of literature, which comes in the first educational period. Here the students are getting acquainted with the following:
- Theater or puppet play – they recognize the main and other characters, they experience the surrounding and other elements of the theater play, they develop the awareness about the similarity/ diversity of the theater play and a known tale; they recreate the event and relate it with their experiences; they talk about what attracted them/ repelled them from the play; they are involved in the role play,
- The radio play – they express their experience, understandings and evaluation of the radio play; they create imaginary picture about the people on the basis of the specificity of their language and audio-equipment of the radio text; they

talk about the elements of the audio equipment and the radio play;

- Animated cartoon – they express their experience, understandings and evaluation of the animated cartoon; they compare their understanding of the story in the cartoon with the understanding of their peers; they identify the differences between the animated cartoon made in accordance with literature proposal and the source (original) text; they get acquainted with the basic characteristics of the media,
- The movie – they express their experience, understandings and evaluation of the children movie; in a movie made in accordance with literature proposal they talk about the similarities/ differences between the text and the movie; they identify the differences between the animated cartoon and the movie; they identify the characteristics of the media.

In the second educational period (4th to 6th grade), the focus is on "theater, radio play and the movie". Awareness is developed among the students on the characteristics of the media adaptation, realization and actualization of the literature texts, recognition of the basic characteristic of the individual media, comparison of the theater, radio and movie performances with the literature texts, expressing own experience, understanding and valuation of the theater performance/ radio play/ movie. More specifically:

- Theater or puppet play – they understand the drama event, they distinguish the main and the secondary characters and their abilities and attitudes, they identify the specifics of the theater, event, director, actors, specific roles, stage, lights, costumes, music, types of puppets; they present their conclusions, compare them and explain;
- The radio play – they create picture about the characters through the sound information (external looks, personal characteristics, the motives for their behavior), about the space and time, they evaluate the radio play – the visual identity of the characters and space, the relevancy and efficiency of the audio equipment;
- The movie – they experience, understand and evaluate the trivial/ entertaining and artistic movie;
- Comparison between the theater/ movie with literature text (selected examples of texts and shows) – they compare their imagination (about the character, space and time) with the people, stage and costumes, they monitor the behavior motives of the characters, they monitor and stipulate the differences between different media.

The third educational period (7th to 9th grade) operationally resumes with the "theater, radio play and the movie", where the students, either verbally or in writing, express their experience, understanding and evaluation of the theater play, radio play and the movie, they identify the characteristics of the adaptation, realization, actualization of the artistic texts i.e. the core characteristics of specific media, and they compare the theater play, the radio play and the movie with the literature text.

The didactical recommendations at the end of the program dedicate special part on the information technologies. It is recommended to the teachers to plan the use of

the information technologies to stimulate the activity of the students, their motivation and digital literacy. The joint learning through the use of various online environments is considered relevant method. These various online environments include forums, use of surveys and other forms of verification, video conferences for networking with students from other schools, use of the social media, etc. The work with information technologies also includes dealing with high quality e-content (e-materials, e-books, e-textbooks, online dictionaries) and e-services. In addition, the teachers need to inform the students about responsible use of the information technology and how can they contribute to the web.[8]

The *Civil Education and Ethics* subject is taught in 7th and 8th grade. The overall purpose of this subject is development of political literacy, critical thinking about specific attitudes and values, including active involvement in the social life. The media related topics are studied in the 8th grade (the teaching plan is from the year of 2011), in a separate chapter on *The Democracy Up-close[9]* (from a total of four teaching chapters). The students here learn not only about the democratic government, referendum, elections, political parties, but also about the relevancy, role and influence the media have on the society, with specifically defined objectives about which the teachers themselves decide whether they will implement them in a manner that is recommended by the Program. Specifically, it is about the following content: well-informed and critical citizens and media: the Government must act publicly (identification why is it important for the Government to act publicly), the media control the government, plurality of the media (relating the terms democracy, public and responsibility) and the rules and norms of the public discussion, the limits of the media (with examples by getting familiar with the role of the media in identifying the abuse of power, getting familiar with the key media from Slovenia in this respect and developing critical literacy towards them).

2. The media literacy as part of the optional teaching. The elementary education teaching program includes the mandatory but also a large number (more than 80) optional subjects[10], of which the schools (the director and the teachers) choose five and "offer" those to the students. In addition to different languages (German, French, Chinese, Macedonian, Croatian, Russian and others) they also propose Astronomy, Ethnology, Genetics, Logic, all the way to Apiculture, Keyboards and computers, Dances, Chess and others. Several subjects are related to the media literacy such as *Computer literacy* (for 9th grade) through which cognitive strategies for acquisition, analysis, selection, synthesis, evaluation and creative use and presenting of information on all levels and areas are developed. The subject includes understanding and creative use of information via the modern technology

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8   For more information check out the Program for Slovenian Language: http://www.mizs.gov.si/fileadmin/mizs.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/os/prenovljeni_UN/UN_slovenscina.pdf

9   http://www.mizs.gov.si/fileadmin/mizs.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/os/prenovljeni_UN/UN_DDE__OS.pdf

10   http://www.mizs.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/direktorat_za_predsolsko_vzgojo_in_osnovno_solstvo/osnovno_solstvo/program/abecedni_seznam_izbirnih_predmetov_v_osnovni_soli/#c17860

and modern computer and communication resources.[11] This is followed by *Artistic Design I, II and III* (for 7th, 8th and 9th grade) through which the students develop abilities for observation/ imagination of the artistic expression, interest for various forms of arts, ability for critical evaluation of own work, of the work of peers and artists and ability to understand and evaluate different media of the visual culture.[12] Another example is the *Computers* subject (for 7th, 8th and 9th grade) where the students are not only familiarized with the basic definitions and meaning of the computer technology in the modern society and acquire habits and skills for its efficient use for meeting of their needs, but they are also developing attitudes towards the information acquired, including correct attitude towards protection of the ownership (copyrights) and personal data protection.[13]

Separate optional (mandatory) subject on media literacy is the ***Upbringing about the media*** (teaching plan from 2006)[14], with three themes – press, radio and TV that complement each other, but the students are also free to choose only of these themes if they like. This subject is studied in the last three year-year cycle of education (7th, 8th and 9th grade) with a total of 35 hours per year or one hour per week. The goal is for the students to critically analyze, evaluate and create different media forms, to be informational and functionally literate, to analyze own habits of perceiving media, to correct the eventual addiction from media, to learn to select media in a creative and critical manner, to be active citizens and not just passive consumers, to acquire communication skills, ability to differentiate between fiction and reality, ability to express attitudes and ability for discussion, to acquire knowledge about the way the way of work of the media institutions, media categories, technology, media language, the audience, to realize that the media construct the reality, that they act in accordance with own rules, to mediate ideological and valuable information, act primarily in relation to market principles; and in reality – how is news created, how is the knowledge constructed, what is the business routine of the journalists.

In the first theme (press) – the students are acquainted with the phenomenon and development of the mass press, the characteristics of the printed media publicity, actuality, universality), division of the press (daily, weekly), the work of journalists in the printed media. At the end of the teaching process the students publish their own magazine. ***In the second theme (radio)*** – the students get familiarized with the phenomenon of the radio, its properties, division of the radio stations (national, local, commercial), the work of journalists in a radio station, the media public. The students create their radio programs. ***In the third theme (television)*** the focus is on the phenomenon of the TV, its characteristics, division of

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11   http://www.mizs.gov.si/fileadmin/mizs.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/os/devetletka/predmeti_izbirni/Informacijsko_opismenjevanje_izbirni.pdf

12   http://www.mizs.gov.si/fileadmin/mizs.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/os/devetletka/predmeti_izbirni/Likovno_snovanje_izbirni.pdf

13   http://www.mizs.gov.si/fileadmin/mizs.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/os/devetletka/predmeti_izbirni/Racunalnistvo_izbirni.pdf

14   http://www.mizs.gov.si/fileadmin/mizs.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/os/devetletka/predmeti_izbirni/Vzgoja_za_medije_izbirni.pdf

the TV stations (cable, satellite), the journalist work in television, the Internet, the impact of the mass media, the media and the idols, the media and the violence, the media and the stereotypes. The program ends by writing letters to the TV editors along with initiatives for change of the media content. All three themes include several joint methodological units: characteristics of the media, journalist ethics, advertising and propaganda, construction of the media reality and how to become individual who is critical towards the media.

3. Challenges and perspectives in learning about the media literacy. The established model of media education, without any upgrades, is still in use today in the educational process in Slovenia. However, the implementation of this process in reality depends on several key factors: *placing* the media literacy in the category of optional subjects and the discretion of the schools whether, from the wide list of those subjects, they are going to offer this one as well to the students; the learning about partial segments of the media literacy in other subjects; the readiness of the teachers for this type of education as well as the interest of the students to get involved in the non-mandatory extra-curricular activities that will also include media literacy. In addition, there are many questions and dilemmas in the domestic professional and scientific public – starting with the fact that the term *upbringing* is used (according to the optional subject *Upbringing about the media)* and not *literacy* and also when the media literacy needs to be taught in the schools, regardless whether it is media and digital literacy, including the need for media literacy for all categories of adults.

> *"It is media literacy and we need to think about the fact that, instead of books, the children can acquire information using other platforms as well. And we are now starting to talk about digital literacy! What will happen after ten years when the people will have integrated chips? What are we going to talk about then? "*[15]

The media literacy is necessarily important in the educational system but as a mandatory subject, instead of the existing *Upbringing of media* which, because of being optional subject, was not valid for all schools and has not been modernized for almost 20 years, especially if we consider that:

> *"In the recent years there is no interest for this subject. It is marginalized and the attention is focused more on subjects that have practical values, for example the foreign languages. The media literacy is seen as relatively abstract philosophical subject that does not have practical values. "*[16]

However, we must not stop here. The media literacy education should include not only the students but all categories of adults, especially the adult people that have

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15 Interview with d-r. Sandra Basic-Hrvatin, professor at the Faculty of Humanistic Studies in Koper, Republic of Slovenia.

16 Interview with d-r. Marko Milosavlejevic, professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Journalism Department in Ljubljana, Republic of Slovenia.

no technological (pre)knowledge like the young people do. With regards to the question when should the learning of this subject start, the empirical experience says that the last three years (7th, 8th and 9th grade) of the elementary education is the time period when the students are ale to comprehend this concept, and optimum time period for this study is the secondary education. On the other hand, the question is whether and how much by learning parts of the media literacy in other subjects (Slovenian language or Civil Education) the desired results can be achieved. Namely:

"The children will go to theater and will review the play afterwards. However, these is no theory present – that is journalism, how the media work, the media and the democracy, the difference between the media and democracy, the different between the commercial and public media. The essence is that the children are not getting the full picture in this manner and at the end they are missing some the pieces which prevents them from having the full picture. "[17]

There is significant number of recent research activities about the *informatization* of the schools, the e-competencies of the teachers and students (how to handle information and how to resolve problems), e-materials, electronic textbooks, e-school board (for digital literacy), innovative pedagogy and others in which the media literacy is present directly or indirectly. These include both teachers and students in a form of seminars, debates, school work. However, it seems that:

"The activities last until the projects last. The moment the projects end, the activities also end. However, it is still a good basis for modernization of the teaching programs, regardless of the fact that the process is not continuous. When a new project starts, what is missing is relating it to the previous work. "[18]

In this regard, the Agency for Communication Networks and Services of the Republic of Slovenia (AKOS) has almost no activities – instead, this area is left to the Ministries and civil society organizations. However, they see their role specifically as informative and as stimulating the media literacy. Therefore:

"The first phase is to establish website, similar to the Internet portal for media literacy in the neighboring Croatia. The things are moving slowly, step by step, The issue here are primarily the weak human and financial capacities we have. "[19]

On the other hand, the civil society sector is very active in the schools, and no endorsement from the Ministry or the Institute for Education is required for that – on

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17 Interview with Domen Savik, Head of the "Drzhaljvanin D" in Ljubljana, Republic of Slovenia.

18 Interview with d-r. Fani Nolimal, Head of the Department for Elementary Education at the Bureau for Education of the Republic of Slovenia

19 Interview with tomazh Gorjanc from the Agency for Communication Measures and Services of the Republic of Slovenia.

the contrary – they support their work. The common themes are Internet bon ton, Internet violence, the dangers on the Internet, privacy protection, use of the social networks, fake news. These are usually workshops, seminars and various (journalist) sections based on discussions with the children:

> *"We are discussing their problems, what is going on on the Internet, we provide them with advice and assistance. They work on specific real-life examples, they are given tasks they present and discuss afterwards. This, of course, is not enough and these topics would have to become integral part of the curricula in the schools. "[20]*

However, the issue that remains is the training of teachers. Formally, when the educational system was reformed, each teacher underwent training that was delivered through a special project, and the activities died off when the project ended. There is no staff education program and it is very difficult to design who will be delivering that teaching process. There are also no media literacy standards i.e. who can be a media literacy trainer with permit from the Ministry of Education. Will that be parallel studies at the Faculty of Journalism and Pedagogical Faculty, where the journalism students in the third and fourth year would be doing the mandatory practice not only in the media but also as media literacy staff in the schools. If there were many media literacy lectures in the beginning, today this is usually implemented through contacts between the Director of the school with individuals, experts, usually on private basis.

Today, twenty years after the introduction of the media literacy, there are more and more discussions in Slovenia about the digital literacy. We can even say it is a Government priority, same like on European level, and significant funds for research activities are allocated in this respect. In other words:

> *"The media literacy intermingles with the information technologies. What is relevant for the media literacy on the Internet is being done within the digital literacy and the acquisition of digital competencies. "[21]*

The question is it a trend where everybody studies information and software coding so that "everyone can become software developers" in this time of digital revolution that is supported by the digital industry. Nobody explains, for example, what is Facebook, how it works, where does it get all the data from. There are already initiatives in the schools for separate subject, *Digital Upbringing*, with three modules – media literacy, digital literacy and protection of privacy and personal data for 4th grade children, but in a sense of acquisition of technical skills but in a sense of how to be safe online, how to think and observe in critical manner:

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20 Interview with Marko Pushner, Network for Awareness Raising on Safe Use of the Internet established within the EU program for safe Internet, Ljubljana.

21 Interview with Borut Champelja MA from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Slovenia.

"Same like the reading (lingual) literacy, we must also start with digital literacy – it is a school obligation. The children come from different environments, from parents with different social status, they have different affinities and our task is to equalize that. We all assume the children know everything, but that is not quite true. Some indeed know everything, others do not even know how to turn on a computer. We are teaching the children how to stop at red light but we are not teaching them what to do online, how to use the smartphone.[22]

The thing that seems crucial is the absence of systemic solution for media literacy. The documents and programs include everything, there are a lot of experts, the teachers have opportunities to attend seminars and that is what they do. However, nothing is systematically integrated – "If you want, you can. If you do not want, you do not have to":

"The lobbying here plays significant role, especially the natural-technical lobby about the fact that everyone needs to study technical sciences. This is now mainstream, in a sense that we are missing engineers."[23]

The children today have access to media and media technologies that are not appropriate for them so they need to be explained about what is going on. The industry that created all of that never starts from the fact that it is exactly the children who will be the greatest beneficiaries. For the first time in history of humanity, the older generation would have to learn the technology while the young people live with that technology since they were born. Therefore, there are very intensive requests from the expert and scientific public about the necessity to develop "serious and comprehensive media literacy policy is Slovenia wants to become a country of active citizens". The promotion of this issue trough projects or programs initiated from academic and public institutions, or from civil society organizations on local and national level, is not enough.[24] In that regard, the draft National Strategy on Media for 2016 of the Ministry of Culture dedicates special chapter to the media literacy, primarily related to the school curricula, and emphasizes that the media and digital literacy should become mandatory subject in the education, instead of being optional, including the establishment of system for continuous media education of the media users, including adults, publishers, journalists, creators and providers of online services and key stakeholders.[25] These guidelines are also included in the latest Strategy for Media Development in the Republic of Slovenia by 2024 (of the Ministry of Education), emphasizing the need for introduction of media upbringing as mandatory subject in the education and development of system for media literacy for adults. Due to the widespread presence of the media or websites that provide wide range of information, video content, web-

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22   Interview with Barbara Kompjut, Director of the "France Bevk" elementary school in Ljubljana.

23   Interview with Gregor Delej, Director o the "Celje" gymnasium in Celje, Slovenia.

24   https://rm.coe.int/media-literacy-mapping-report-en-final-pdf/1680783500

25   http://www.mk.gov.si/fileadmin/mk.gov.si/pageuploads/Ministrstvo/Fotogalerija/2016/junij/MED-STRAT_Strategija5-2_26.5.2016-L.pdf

sites, it is necessary to ensure that the users to acquire relevant knowledge and ability to critically comprehend the information, their evaluation and active shaping of rapport with the world, the society and with oneself.[26]

It is also worth mentioning the Strategy for Development of the National Program for Film Education of the Ministry of Culture – 2016, which proposes the inclusion of film and audio-visual content in the teaching plans as well as in the educational process. In addition to *Film Education* (as separate optional subject for elementary and secondary schools), the proposals is also to include this content in the *Media Upbringing* subject. The Strategy emphasizes that the film and media education have same objectives of acquisition of knowledge necessary for education of individual capable of integrating him/herself in the modern social life. "In the era of digital technology which is essentially impacting the manner of distribution of the film, the audio-visual arts and media services, it is impossible to talk about media literacy and not to include fundamental knowledge and understanding of the principles of the film speech".[27] It remains to see at the end whether, in accordance with the strategic determinations, the optional subject of *Media Upbringing* will enter the group of mandate subjects in the educational process with new and modernized program, and whether and how will the media literacy be delivered also for other categories of citizens, mainly for the adults.

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26   http://www.mk.gov.si/fileadmin/mk.gov.si/pageuploads/Ministrstvo/Fotogalerija/2016/junij/MED-STRATStrategija_razvoja_medijev_v_Republiki_Sloveniji_do_leta_2024_-_v_1.0_junij_2016.pdf

27   For more information see: Strategoja razvoja nacionalnega programa filmske vzgoje" 2016 of the Ministry of the Republic of Slovenia, http://www.mk.gov.si/si/zakonodaja_in_dokumenti/sprejete_strategije_in_politike/

4.

Media education regulation in Macedonia

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The term *media literacy* is almost unknown in the Macedonian legislation that regulates the education, culture and the media, which does not mean that the various aspects of media and information literacy are not included in the legal decisions. On the other hand, some areas, such as the freedom of expression and media freedom, ethical behavior of journalists and editors, protection of children from inappropriate content and protection of the public are not explicitly included as parts of the media literacy but they are regulated with special legal provisions or bylaws. What are the laws specifically referring to?

The Law on Elementary Education, originally adopted in 1995, has been changed many times (most of which in 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015) and the recent changes were in April 2018 (abolishing of the external assessment of the students). One of the key changes is the introduction of mandatory nine-year education (2007) that will initiate reforms in the teaching plans and programs. Many textbooks will be revised (for example, the textbooks in mother tongue and social education) and new mandatory subjects will be introduced (such as Work with Computers and Basics in Programming, IT, Civil Society) and optional subjects (such as Ethics of Religions, Religions Introduction, Classical Cultural in the European Civilization). These subjects, among other things will include the media, the media culture, the online living and the Internet with clearly defined objectives, content, definitions and activities. Although the law explicitly does not mention the media literacy, essentially it is becoming part of the entire educational process. This is also corresponding to one of the models by Masterman on inclusion of the media education in the elementary schools – media literacy as part of various teaching subjects[1] i.e. the model of inter-curricular form of integration of the media studies in several different subjects, which is commonly practiced on European level.[2]

Other legal act pertaining to media literacy and directly concerns the elementary students is the Law on Audio and Audio Visual Media Services (since 2013). This Law has no definition or definition of media literacy, as it is done (Article 3) for other definitions included in the Law (for example, on audio-visual program, audio-visual medium service, provider of audio or audio-visual media services, independent producer, own production program, re-broadcasting of program services, advertising, sponsorship, teleshopping and similar). However, the media literacy is still present in several Articles of the Law. It is first mentioned in Article 2 where the objectives of the Law are defined, such as the development of audio and audio-visual media services, development of independent production, instigation, improvement and protection of the cultural identity, language and tradition of the ethnic communities in the Republic of Macedonia, stim-

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1   Masterman talks about four types of inclusion of the media education in the elementary schools: media education as specialized subject, media education as integral part of the entire curriculum for the mother tongue subject, specific parts of the media education included in various subjects (mother tongue, history, geography) and media education as free activity in the school.

2   Find out more in the EMEDUS research on the formal media education in Europe from 2014, https://eavi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Media-Education-in-European-Schools-2.pdf

ulation of the public dialogue culture among the citizens, stimulation of the creativity, education and scientific development, protection of the interests users, especially of minors…, and there is special emphasis and provision of "media literacy development". Furthermore, the Law sets that the Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Media Services is a body that takes care of "stimulation of the media literacy" (Article 6), "undertakes activities for stimulation of the media literacy" and therefore "cooperates with the civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and other stakeholders and publishes them on its website" (Article 26). The public broadcaster (Macedonian Radio Television) also has obligations in relation to media literacy, in the programs and program services it broadcasts. The public broadcaster is, inter alia, required to "produce and broadcast programs pertaining to stimulation of the media literacy" (Article 110).

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The strategic documents (the strategies and national programs) of the relevant institution in the state include many elements on the need and necessity for promotion of media literacy in the educational system. However, the focus is more on the information and digital literacy.

The National Program for Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015[3] of the Ministry of Education and Science emphasizes the relevancy of the *computer literacy* for young people and adults i.e. the knowledge in, and work with, the ICT technology as essential part of the competencies of young people and adults and prerequisite for their efficient manifestation in the area of labor and social and political life. The chapter on "Program for Development of the ICT in Education" includes the directions for development of education towards supporting the information society i.e. technical equipping (with computers) of the educational institutions, professional training of teachers using IT technologies for delivery of the teaching process by embracing and using ICT as a tool for improved implementation of their working tasks. It is also noted that keeping up with global trends imposes the need to use the ICT not only in the elementary, secondary and higher education but also in the pre-school period so the precious opportunities that exist in this period of personal development are not lost. The commitments are towards *revision of the teaching programs depending on the scientific disciplines and teaching areas, designing of goal-oriented teaching programs as basis for efficient preparation of the children/ youth in developing abilities for independent creative and critical thinking and judgment, including quality life.*

The Ministry of Information Society and Administration developed two strategies that directly pertain to the benefits from inclusion of the information-communication technologies in the teaching process of elementary and secondary schools. The first one is the "National Strategy for Development of e-Content 2010–2015"[4], fo-

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3   http://fvm.ukim.edu.mk/documents/Nacionalna-programa-za-razvoj-na-obrazovanieto-vo-Republika-Makedonija-2005-2015.pdf

4   http://www.mio.gov.mk/sites/default/files/pbl_files/documents/strategies/strategija_e-sodrzini_2.pdf

cused on modernization of the education process and improvement of teaching quality primarily by integrating the digital technologies in the teaching process. The Strategy emphasizes that the "Modern education enables the students to acquire two information literacies. The 'first literacy' is about the ICT knowledge of students and the 'second literacy; is about the ability of the individual to increase own efficiency and work productivity by using ICT technologies". The Development Plan specifically defines the methodology for selection of subjects that include e-content in the natural sciences and mathematics, social and humanistic sciences and learning languages in the elementary education (as well as secondary education). It mentions the teaching subjects of mother tongue (Macedonia, Turkish, Serbian and Albanian), Getting to know the environment, History, Geography, Music and Arts. A framework is also proposed – criteria for efficient selection of teaching content for which e-content will be developed as well as detailed description of the e-content development process (technical specifications, scenario development specification, following the flow of development, criteria for acceptance of the final products). The Strategy identifies also the key factors for efficient realization and development of e-content, especially the teachers, for correct use and implementation of digital content in the delivery of the teaching program.

The second document, which is the National Strategy for e-Inclusion 2011-2014[5], where carrier is the Ministry of Education and Science, emphasizes the relevancy of the *digital literacy,* in line with the European Union recommendations for information society, especially the Europa 2020 Strategy on the importance of education of the European citizens in the use of ICT and digital media, including attracting of young people to use these technologies in the education process. The main purpose of the Strategy is to "reduce the digital gap and establishment of inclusive information society for all citizens, in the same time ensuring increased and more quality use of ICT in the everyday life of the citizens, facilitated requirements for access to ICT and increasing of citizen skills". The key priority of the Strategy is "increase of the overall digital literacy and competency of the citizens", which includes measures for digitalization of the formal educational process, especially in the elementary and secondary education (computerization and introduction of Internet in the schools, provision of electronic content available on the Internet and introduction ICT tools in the teaching process) and further education of the adult persons, unemployed and persons with special needs by providing courses for computer skills, Internet, email...).

A document that opens up for the first time the issue of media literacy is the draft Strategy for Development of Broadcasting Activity in the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2013 – 2017 (this document was not adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia)[6], proposed by the Broadcasting Activity Council (today known as Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Media Services). The daft strategy dedicates entire chapter to media literacy and clearly emphasizes the need for its promotion as something of greatest interest for the Macedonian society – a process which needs to involve the educational institutions with mechanisms that will check the impacts

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5   http://www.mio.gov.mk/sites/default/files/pbl_files/documents/strategies/Strategija_za_e-vklucuvanje.pdf

6   http://avmu.mk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Predlog-Strategija-i-Akciski-plan.pdf

of the media education in the teaching programs, the media professionals by developing self-regulatory codes related to respect of the professional standards towards increase of their responsibility when creating media products, the regulatory bodies in the media area with the development of separate programs with a number of activities related to media literacy, the civil society organization representatives with different initiatives and projects as well the scientific institutions with researches in this area. In the Action Plan, the Strategy is proposing to include the media literacy concept in the media policy of the Republic of Macedonia as well as ensuring further development of the media policy of the Republic of Macedonia. This also includes provision of further development of the media literacy in the educational process by doing research on the impacts the media education in the teaching programs has, as well as development of program for further development.

The latest Strategy for Development of Education 2018 - 2025 and Action Plan[7] of the Ministry of Education and Science is focused on quality of the education, the infrastructure of the educational system, the capacities of the human resources as well as on "development of the generic and core competencies among the students so they can develop into critical subjects who are active and relevant stakeholders in the social life". It is therefore said that it is necessary to develop steps and tools for incorporation of: *generic competencies* for critical thinking and making argument-based decisions, ability to solve problems and use of the knowledge in real practical situations, for inter-personal and intra-personal social and emotional skills; including *key competencies* – learn how to learn, innovations and entrepreneurship, civil and social responsibility, cultural awareness and expressing, simultaneously with the core competencies for communication in mother and foreign language, for mathematics, natural sciences and technology and digital competency. Definitely these are competencies acquired also through the media education but that is not noted in the Strategy. Attention is again put on the *information literacy*. The goals, in addition to rationalization of the teaching plans and programs (i.e. relating the topics into integrated programs), adaptation of the teaching programs to the age of the students, improvement and adaptation of the quality assurance instruments to the age of the students, improvement and adaptation of the tools for ensuring quality where the student and his/her best interest is in the center, the consistent implementation of the concept for inclusive and multicultural education with emphasis on the democratic values, human rights, gender equality, respect for diversity... emphasize the need for *intensified use of the ICT in the education by establishing e-learning portal, system for learning management and continuous training of the staff* in the use of new technologies and ICT tools in the education. It is noted in this context that, although personal computers were made available for all students in all elementary and secondary schools, the implementation of ICT in the educational process is not sufficiently effective. In other words, what is missing are standards on the use of UCT in the educational process and not all teachers are well trained. The available software is not sufficient to meet the existing needs and on top of that the ICT is not necessary for delivery of some content, but on the contrary – the computers are more hurdle than useful tool, they occupy the space and make the student-teacher

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7   http://mrk.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Strategija-za-obrazovanie-MAK-WEB.pdf

communication difficult. However, it is important to emphasize that one of the Strategy objectives is the establishment of new basis for design and "development of integral reform which will encompass the entire education", from pre-school to higher education, as a process and lifelong learning opportunities in which there will be a logical flow of the educational levels.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Information Society and Administration adopted a number of national strategies and action plans, but the focus is not anymore on information-communication technologies. We should also mention the Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Media Services i.e. the draft Strategy on Development of the Broadcasting Activity in the Republic of Macedonia 2018-2022 (which is still not officially adopted) focused on six key areas: professionalism and editorial independence of the media, development and protection of the media pluralism, protection of human rights in the media content, regulatory framework that provides for development of media, provision of conditions for growth and development of the market and competition; and development of the media literacy. The emphasis in the area of media literacy will be on supporting the critical perception and understanding of the media content among the citizens and on the increased role of the media in the development of the media literacy.

5.

Media literacy in the elementary education teaching programs in Macedonia

The term „media literacy" does not exist in any teaching program for any subject taught in the elementary education. However, that does not mean that the elementary education students do not learn about the media, about their role in the society, the right to freedom of expression and informing, media types, etc.

The essential question is what are they learning and what are the results from that learning?

Same like in other efforts for defining of criteria for analysis of the media literacy in the elementary education curricula (such as, for example, in the European Study on Media Literacy and Education EMEDUS[1] which analyzes the teaching programs in the elementary education in 27 member states of EU), followed by debate on identification of the methodological approach and conceptual framework on which this type of analysis is based[2], this particular research also opened the dilemma which segments and aspects of the elementary education can be interpreted in relation to the media literacy.

However, the starting point was the conceptual framework for development of criteria for evaluation of the media literacy level that was developed by EAVI[3] in 2010 and the Expert Group on Media Literacy that was established by the European Commission. According to the EC study for evaluation of the media literacy levels, the media literacy concept has two dimensions: **(1) individual competencies and (2) environmental factors. The individual competencies** are defined as "individual capacity to apply certain skills… that are using wide range of abilities and include growing levels of awareness, critical thinking capacity and ability to create and transfer message "[4].

On the other hand, **the environmental factors** are a "package of contextual factors (they all impact the individual competencies) that impact the wide range of the media education, including information availability, the media policy, the education and roles and responsibilities of the participants in the media community[5]."

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1   Report on the formal education in the schools in 27 EU member states. https://eavi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Media-Education-in-European-Schools-2.pdf

2   Chris Worsnop in Media Literacy Through Critical Thinking summarizes the most important efforts for identification of conceptual framework for media education. https://depts.washington.edu/nwmedia/sections/nw_center/curriculum_docs/stud_combine.pdf

3   Civil society organization on media literacy from Brussels, www.eavi.eu. For more information about the structure of the media literacy assessment criteria check out https://eavi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/assessing.pdf

4   Final Report of the Study on Criteria for Evaluation of the Media Literacy Levels", page 7. http://ec.europa.eu/culture/media/media-content/media-literacy/studies/eavi_study_assess_crit_media_lit_levels_europe_finrep.pdf   Ibidem, page 7.

5   Ibidem.

Media education	Presence of the media education in the teaching plans and programs
	The manner in which the media education is treated in the teaching plans and programs
	Education of the professors
	Didactic materials
	Presence of the media education in the national education strategies
Media policy	Presence of the media literacy in the laws and bylaws
	Existence of regulatory bodies and their mandate
	Activities of the regulatory bodies
	Existence and activities of self-regulatory bodies
Media industry	Activities of the daily newspapers
	Activities of television and radio stations
	Activities of the movie festivals
	Activities of the telephone companies and Internet service providers
	Activities of the information technologies industry
Civil sector	Existence of civil society organizations dealing with improvement of the media literacy
	Activities of society organizations in the area of media literacy
	Cooperation with media

Table 1 – Overview of environmental factors impacting the levels of media literacy

The following questions are the starting points when identifying the treatment of the media literacy in the Macedonian education:

1. What is the presence and the treatment of the media education in the teaching plans and programs?

2. What didactic materials are used in the teaching process?

3. How is the education of professors for that area regulated?

4. What is the presence of the media education in the national strategies for education

Since the analysis of the teaching programs and their application in practice is also related to the use of different didactic means, both issues are summarized in item 5.1.

5.1. What is the presence and treatment of the media education in the teaching plans and programs

On the basis of the teaching plans and teaching programs available on the website of the Bureau for Development of Education www.bro.gov.mk, the discussions with the focus group teachers in the eight planning regions (Eastern, Northeastern, Polog, Pelagonia, Skopje, Southeastern, Southwestern and Vardar region) and the analysis of the existing regulation and relevant documents, the initial conclusion is that the media literacy is included in inter-curricular model of media education in the Macedonian educational system. This means that there is no subject dedicated solely to media literacy. There are pieces of this area being taught in a number of different

subjects, in all years of elementary education. Usually in the following teaching subjects (although media topics are also covered in other subjects – compulsory or optional – from various aspects:

- **Mother tongue and literature** (in all languages in which the elementary education is delivered: Macedonian, Turkish, Serbian and Albanian)[6] from first to ninth grade.[7]
- **Life skills** in the three development periods (from first to third, from fourth to sixth and from seventh to ninth).
- **Computer skills and basics in programming** in third, fourth and fifth grade,
- **Society** in the fourth grade,
- **Informatics and basics in programming (optional subject)** in seventh and eighth grade)
- **Civil education** for eighth grade (new program) and Civil Education for ninth grade (old program).

Mother tongue. In our educational system the term *media literacy* is not used, but in the subject of *Mother Tongue,* within the program area of *Media Culture,* different media aspects in the society are taught during all years and development periods, usually with recommendation to allocate for this area some 10 to 12 hours (between 144 and 180 hours on annual level, depending on the actual grade)[8]. This means that in this subject, in which the students usually learn about the types of media (radio, television, press, online newspaper), the specifics of various media content and expressions (radio dramas, TV programs, film, drama, etc.) and programs (news, entertaining, educational) some 5 to 7% from the entire teaching program in Mother Tongue and Literature are dedicated to this topic. Depending on the actual development period and actual grade, the Bureau for Development of Education has introduced different objectives, content, themes, activities and methods. The key didactic recommendation of the Bureau for Development of Education to the teachers is to use integrated program what will include theme which is common for two or more subjects (for example: the students are producing news or report about an event taught in the History teaching subject).

What is missing in the teaching programs is relating the objectives set with the specific learning outcomes (such as, for example, in the new teaching program in Civil Education for eighth grade for the 2018/2019 school year), a paradigm that is being insisted on in the Strategy for Education 2018-2025 on complementarity with the expected competencies foreseen with the Law on National Qualifications Framework from 2016. This is primarily due to the fact that the existing teaching programs in Mother

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6   According to the Strategy for Education 2018-2025, Macedonia has 347 elementary schools (around 1,100 if we also include the satellite schools). Since 2010 experimental teaching in Bosnian language was introduced and it can be applied in schools where prerequisites for its implementation will be secured.

7   The textbooks for same subjects in different languages are not identical but the content follows the teaching program.

8   Teaching plan for nine-year elementary education for the school year of 2018-2019, Bureau for Development of Education, available at: http://bro.gov.mk/docs/nastavniplanovi/nastaven%20plan%20devetgodishno%202018%20-2019.pdf

Tongue and Literature were adopted around a decade ago and have been updated very little, if any.

In terms of different language in which the teaching process is taking place, the idea of the Bureau for Development of Education is the following:

Program area on "Media Culture" in the teaching subject for Mother Tongue

In the *first grade* the students are getting acquainted with different types of programs (television, radio), types of animated cartoons (puppets and animated), film and series for children, they acquire elementary knowledge about theater and drama arts, they are also getting acquainted with children magazines, the library.

Similar are the objectives and content in the *second grade* (selective watching of television content is stimulated, interest is instigated for following children press (magazines and newspapers). In the *third grade* the emphasis is put on the radio as a medium, the children are listening radio programs, they watch television programs in order to be stimulated to retell events and characters. Internet searching is also foreseen to be covered in this teaching programs.

"First we are going to the library, afterwards we are watching television programs, documentary programs, movies. We are listening children radio dramas that I have in my archives."[9]

"We are watching the 'Macedonian Folk Tales' programs and some of the compulsory reading books we also watch them as movies, and we discuss the differences. The most difficult it is with the printed media because we used to read newspapers at home but not anymore. The children have nobody to learn from about the culture of reading newspapers."[10]

In the *fourth grade,* the objectives and content in the *Media Culture* are on a higher level, expecting from the students to "differentiate between types of television programs (educational, scientific and popular, folk tales, children quiz programs), to watch and differentiate types of movies (major screenplay, animated, acted) and independently use information from children and daily press. What is peculiar is that in this grade the media are also taught in the teaching subject of Society within which the students are expected to identify their connection with the society through different ways of informing. The Bureau for Development of Education proposes activities to be implemented during the teaching hours related to reading magazines, listening to radio, documentary program, extracting basic information and discussion about those, investigating the positives and negatives in the use of newspapers, radio, television and Internet.

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9   Extract from focus group with teachers in Shtip, 21.11.2018.

10   Extract from focus group with teachers in Kumanovo, 31.10.2018.

"Some year ago we visited the publishing company 'Prosvetno Delo' and saw how to prepare a daily newspaper, what is editor and what is author. When we worked on this topic I divided the children in groups. The 'Drugarche' magazine features mathematics page, language page, hence the children were divided accordingly. They named their publishing house and did magazine-like of their class. Last year, again in the Macedonian Language subject, the students were supposed to make report from something so they chose to play the role of journalists. I placed them to report live from the actual location. This was all done as television presentation so I requested from them to have the same but in writing. This is also interesting for the students from the fourth and fifth grade."[11]

In the *fifth grade,* the students learn to identify the order of events in the film and theater play, to get familiarized with terms such as scenography and costume design in a film and theater play (what it inspires, how they experience it), they discuss about the music in the movie.

In the *sixth grade* the intention is for the students to be able to name the process of book creation; to recognize sections in newspapers and magazines, to differentiate between media: electronic and printed, to know the role of the director, actor, costume designer and scenographer; to differentiate between actor and artist; to know the role of the media library. The Bureau for Development of Education recommends visits to theater plays to be often used in the teaching process, often adapted to the personal engagement and possibilities of the teachers.

"In our elementary school "Kiril Pejchinovic" from Tearce the sports hall is well-equipped so sometimes there are plays staged with free admission. The children hardly wait for something like this. There are many projects, even visits from actors from Skopje."[12]

Major objectives in the development period from seventh to ninth grade, *inter alia*, are the efforts "for the student to be trained for interpretation and valuation of literature, stage, movie, television and other type of media production" and also "to be trained for application of the information he/ she comes into contact with through the ICT".

Hence, in the *seventh grade* the student is expected to "differentiate between the types of movies, according to the purpose and content"; "to know how to concisely retell the content of a movie he/ she watched, of any type"; "to be able to identify the positives and negatives in the acts of the movie characters"; "to identify the techniques and development periods of the animated cartoon and the puppet theater play"; "to be able to identify the positive and negative characteristics in the characters behavior (from animated movies and puppet plays)"; "to be able to identify the educational role

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11 Interview with a teacher in class teaching from Skopje, 03.11.2018.

12 Interview with a teacher in class teaching from Polog region, 19.11.2018.

of these movies in the culture of living"… In the same subject but in other program area (*Expression and Creation)* the announcement and news as communication tools are covered as topics, including exercises for their production, comparison and presentation.

In the *eighth grade*, all teaching hours in Media Culture are dedicated to the film and auxiliary elements: screenplay, characters, speech in the movie. This content is further upgraded in the *ninth grade* where the students are expected to know the means of expression and definitions in the film: speech, makeup, acting, music, effects, masks, etc.

> *"Since I don't have CD player when it comes to the Macedonian film topic, so I say to my students to find some movie at home, from the Internet, to bring it here, and I'm telling them which movies: "Volchja Nokj", "Miss Stone", "Frosina", but they will bring me movie with Jackie Chan. When I ask them why you didn't bring the ones I requested, some said that did not manage to find any and others that it was boring and odd to them to listen to the Macedonian speech. These students are different generation, they demand more to learn. In our subject (Macedonian language and Literature) there is no digital content and almost nothing has been changed in that regard."[13]*

The teachers are complaining about the obsolete textbooks in all languages in which the teaching process is delivered. For example, the textbook in Macedonian language for fourth grade proposes exercises to analyze the front pages of "Shpic", "Vreme", "Dnevnik", etc. – daily newspapers that do not exist for years.

Mrs.Sonja Jovanovska was one of the participants in the focus group of teachers from the Skopje region. She is a subject teacher in Macedonian language and Literature and also a co-author of the textbooks for Macedonian language from sixth to ninth grade.

> *"The textbooks were adopted in 2008. Myself, together with other colleagues who were co-authors, after five years of adoption of these textbooks, reacted to the Bureau for Development of Education that the textbooks need to be updated as the teaching program is supposed to evolve as the society is moving forward. The Bureau for Development of Education did not react to this request. We signed new agreement, additional five years have passed and the textbooks were not changed."[14]*

It seems that the most alarming is the situation with the textbooks in Turkish Language and Literature so the teachers are literally left on their own:

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13   Subject teacher in Macedonian Language and Literature from Bitola, 20.11.2018

14   Extract of the statement by Mrs.Sonja Jovanovska, subject teacher in Macedonian Language and Literature in the focus group from Skopje, held on 02.11.2018.

"I work with first grade pupils and we did not have had any books for two-three years. Yes, the teacher will be trying but for me to maltreat myself for all five teaching hours because there are not textbooks even in Natural Sciences, Society, language, to have to look for worksheets for all subjects is simply not fair. It is also not fair for those that have literature and for those who do not have. There is no translation for Turkish language, number of the copies available is very small and they are not translated. Even those that are translated include a lot of mistakes so we have to correct them. With regards to "Media Culture", we have 9 hours and the textbooks are very old and they have no section about the media."[15]

Updated textbooks are also needed in the teaching process in Albanian language.

We are missing textbooks, the printing of new textbooks was stagnant with the reforms (when the nine-year education was introduced). Textbooks were not made for all classes. The "Media Culture" is present in the textbooks in Albanian language in accordance with the program – for example: theater, news, library, film… This content is there but it very little, 3-4 sentences. [16]

Civil education. The *Civil Education* subject which is being taught as compulsory subject in the eighth and ninth grade is present with one hour per week and it was the most debated subjects when it comes to reforms in the educational system from 2016. The disputed content in the textbooks were the reasons for withdrawal of the textbooks from the teaching process and the changes in the teaching program started in the most diligent manner exactly from this subject and from the programs for first grade.[17] In the course of 2017 and 2018, the Ministry of Education and Science established a number of work groups consisted of representatives from different institutions (Ministry of Education and Science, Bureau for Development of Education, university professors, practitioners) who started the work on updating of the teaching programs for the subjects in the first development period, including the *Civil Education* subject. The research period coincided with the just-recently approved new teaching program for the *eighth grade*, without textbooks and with partial themes, which were submitted to the teachers in a form of brochures several times during the school year.[18] The teachers are/ were trained during the first semester.

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15 Interview with subject teacher in Turkish Language from the Polog Region

16 Subject teacher in Albanian Language and Literature, Tetovo

17 Significant reforms in the first grade programs were announced at the beginning of 2018 by the then Minister of Education and Science, Mrs. Renata Deskoska: http://www.mon.gov.mk/index.php/2014-07-23-14-03-24/vesti-i-nastani/2231-golemi-promeni-vo-osnovnoto-obrazovanie-novi-nastavni-planovi-i-programi-za-prvoodelencite

18 By December 2018 three brochures were developed which are, in fact, the first three topics of the new textbook for the Civil Education subject. These are available on the Bureau for Development of Education website www.bro.gov.mk

"According to the information from the colleagues – advisors for this subject, trainings were implemented on delivery of the Civil Education teaching program. More than 400 teachers attended the training, in all teaching languages in which the teaching process is delivered."[19]

There are six topics in this subject and the *media* are covered in just one of them (the fourth one): *The religion, arts and media in the civil society".* From the total of six teaching hours foreseen for delivery of this topic, only two hours are dedicated for the *Media in the democratic society* topic in which the students are expected to achieve the following outcomes: "to recognize the role of the media in creating the public opinion through specific examples"; "to analyze the possibilities for use of modern media in his/ her environment (school newspaper, school radio, Internet, portal, blog, video blog – vlog) towards advancing of the civil values". In a lack of textbook, the Bureau for Development of Education recommended to teachers to use references and handbooks which are compatible with the teaching program.[20]

"The topic of Media is the last topic. Since the textbook for eighth grade has been withdrawn, we are getting brochures now only from the Bureau for Development of Education. We are getting these topic by topic, but I personally think that these new concepts for Civil Education use very expert language and are highly theoretical. Secondly, we don't know whether the Media topic will appear again or it will be in some other form. Thirdly, this topic is covered in April and May and the students are not very interested in it because the end of the school year us coming. Fourthly, I think that this topic is not sufficiently present but it is relevant, especially for our society, which is a society of pluralism and were everyone needs to have standpoint, to select and filter information."[21]

However, even the proposed literature has no textbooks and handbooks solely about the media and their role in creating the public opinion, nor forms for media production. The closest as it gets is the recommendation in the *Practicum for Integration of the Multicultural Learning in the Teaching Process for Elementary and Secondary Education*[22] in the topic of "Journalist Article about the Cultural Communities", proposed for the Mother Tongue teaching subject in the ninth grade.

In the moment of the research, the program for *Civil Education* for ninth grade from 2007 is still in use, although the relevant Ministry of Education and Science announced revision of the teaching programs. The recommendation of the Bureau for

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19 Extract from interview with Blaga Peneva, advisor in Macedonian Language and Literature in the Bureau for Development of Education

20 "Proposed list of handbooks for delivery of the teaching subject of Civil Education in eighth grade from the none-year elementary education, in accordance with the teaching program topics, available at www.bro.gov.mk

21 Extract from interview with teacher in Civil Education subject from Kumanovo, 31.10.2018.

22 Practicum for Integration of the Multicultural Learning in the Teaching Process for Elementary and Secondary Education http://pmio.mk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Praktikum-za-integriranjena-na-multikulturnoto-ucenje-vo-nastavata-za-osnovno-i-sredno-obrazovanie.pdf

Development of Education is still valid – to have six hours for the *Media* topic, with which the student is expected to achieve the following objectives: "identify different types of mass media"; "to explain the role of the mass media in the modern society"; "to explain the characteristics of the mass media"; "to identify the sources of information and assess their quality"; "to understand the consequences from incorrect informing"; "to understand the need for media culture".

Computer skills and basics in programming/software coding. According to the Teaching Plan of the Bureau for Development of Education, the subject on Computer Skills and Basics in Programming is introduced in the third, fourth and fifth grade, with two hours per week. The objectives of the teaching are consisted of three parts: computer sciences, IT technology and digital literacy. The subject is designed in seven topics focused towards acquisition of basic knowledge, skills and competencies for computer and digital literacy.

In the third grade program, the fourth topic on *Online Living* has 12 hours recommended by the Bureau for Development of Education in which student is expected to: "get acquainted with the Internet as a mean of getting and sharing information/ content"; "to be able to know how to open a website and to navigate in it"; "to know how to move from one website to another i.e. how to identify the hyperlinks"; "to know how to find information on the Internet for a relevant purpose, to select and save content"; "to be able to find and use video content on the Internet"; "to be able to identify the consequences from sharing private information on the Internet ".

In the frames of this subject, the students are essentially learning to practice three components of the media literacy: *access, analysis* and *production* of media content in any form.

However, it seems that the delivery of the program is facing difficulties, especially because of the weak technical equipping of the schools, including computers, which is a challenge noted in the Strategy for Education 2018-2025:

> *"...Most of the schools are insufficiently equipped with subject teaching means, including additional ICT equipment (such as LCD projectors, smart boards, etc.). The modern teaching methods and techniques are not used sufficiently in practice. There is still no electronic educational platform for learning."[23]*

This statement is shared by almost all teachers who were consulted.

> *"We are still using those small computers. But they are so obsolete, the batteries are dead, they have so small memory capacity, so I waste a lot of time during the teaching hour just to create technical conditions and*

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23 Strategy for Education 2018-2025 and Action Plan", Ministry of Education and Science, page 37

much less effective time in actually working with the children."[24]

"Our school is still using septic pit. There is no sewerage and let alone permanent Internet."[25]

"We are trying to find workarounds. If there is no Internet, we are using the hotspots on our mobile phones to work online. I very often ask the children to connect to the Internet on their phones in order to watch some video we are supposed to cover, although the Bureau for Development of Education says that no mobile phones are to be used on the teaching hour."[26]

Life skills subject. It seems that the teaching program in <u>Life skills</u> is the most complementary one with the media literacy concept. The overall objective of this program is to "contribute towards the personal, emotional and social development of the students, in a way that assists the development of psycho-social skills, enabling the students to successfully deal with the challenges of the everyday life". The teaching program includes three development periods, each with three grades. Five program topics are repeated in each period. This program is delivered at the Class Community Hour, once a week (a total of 36 hours).

The teaching program for first to third grade, the third topic on "Myself and others: social relations", the content on "Developing critical attitude towards the media" includes, *inter alia*, objectives related to acquaintance with different types of media. The purpose of this program is for the students "to identify that not all content is intended for children", "…is trained to differentiate between useful and non-useful programs/ information (the program does not categorize what is useful and what is non-useful programs/ information – out note), "accepts there is useful and non-useful programs ".

In the next development period, from fourth to sixth grade, in the same topic and content, the program foresees that the student "is capable of knowing about media and programs that are appropriate for his/ her age", "to be capable of consulting different media and looks for different information", "to be trained to compare information about same event from different media", "…to be stimulated to identify the importance of complete and comprehensive informing ".

In the third development period, from seventh to ninth grade, in the same topic and content, there are quite ambitious objectives in the teaching program. The students are expected to "identify the objectives and limitations of the media", "to be capable of relating information in the context of human rights", "…to be able to verify the information they receive from the media", "to be capable of identifying mistakes in the media reporting",

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24   Statement of a class teacher in Macedonian language, Veles, 27.11.2018.

25   Statement of a class teacher in Albanian language, Kumanovo, 31.10. 2018.

26   Statement of a subject teacher in English language, Ohrid, 26.11.2018.

"to be capable of having their own standpoint on the basis of information from different media", "to be able to identify the negative consequences from certain information in the media" and "to realize the consequences the media reporting has on the people".

However, in reality it seems that this teaching program is not delivered partially or in full, because the Class Community Hour is usually used for discussion on the existing activities and issues in the class.

> *"The experience is telling us that on Mondays, during this first hour, commonly known as the "class hour", is very often used to determine which of the students was justifiably or non-justifiably absent in the course of the previous week, or for other current activities."[27]*

The students do not have textbook for this subject and the teaching is delivered primarily in a form of discussion. Although the teaching program says that "there is handbook prepared that includes examples of workshops from there the teachers are able to source ideas for direct implementation of the objectives" for each development period, the Bureau for Development of Education proposes the "Handbook for the Teaching Process for *Life Skills* Teaching Subject" (Chonteva, Zh., Koceva, S.)[28], that includes only one topic dedicated to *Advertising and Commercials* which is expected to develop "critical attitude towards the advertisements" among the students".

Free student activities (journalist, drama club...). The Ministry of Education and Science offers the schools template for development of Annual Program for Work which is then used by each school to independently develop its program, and is approved by the School Board and the Municipality[29]. There are different clubs offered (young librarians, citizen culture, journalist, drama, theater, chess club, etc.). It seems that the journalist and drama section are quite appropriate for learning the basic of journalist and public speech. Usually these clubs are managed by the class teachers or subject teachers in Mother Tongue and Literature, or the librarians. The successful results of these clubs, as seen from the publishing of student medium in different form (wall newspaper, printed newspaper, website), organizing theater performances or visits to media are mainly thanks to the enthusiasm of the teacher.

> *"We have electronic newspaper: "Zeleni Jabolchinja". I am proud to say that we are working with colleagues in three languages: Macedonian, Turkish and Albanian and we've been doing that for the last five years. The teachers are sending in content from the children, either songs or drawings. Children from Kirgizstan and Serbia emailed us picture and we are very happy."[30]*

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27 Interview with Blaga Paneva, advisor in Macedonian Language in the Bureau for Development of Education

28 This Handbook is for teaching of the Life Skills subject, which is optional subject in the seventh, eighth and ninth grade. http://bro.gov.mk/?q=mk/priracnici-za-nastava-po-izbornite-predmeti

29 For more information: http://www.mon.gov.mk/index.php/2014-07-24-06-34-40/pravilnici/194-pravilnik-forma-sodrzina-programa

30 Class teacher from Tetovo, 19.12.2018.

"Several years ago we had cooperation with the Macedonian Television, in the "Zvon" program. We were going there for an entire week and shooting New Year program, and the students also visited the backstage so they can get familiarized with the way the program is prepared. A large group of students was involved in this. Afterwards they were coming here, video shooting the students and they were able to see how the video shooting and the sound are technically made. This was a planned three-year program of the school in which there were students involved from all classes with dance performance, literature corner, stage events: we prepared the drama "Divo Meso" by Goran Stefanovski. But this is finished. Now we are not doing it, we don't have finances. However, this is the way to learn about media."[31]

Some 10 years ago, at the Day of the School, the Director asked me to make a newspaper if possible. In order to celebrate the jubilee for the first time, I wrote drama dedicated to the patron. It was very demanding to work in parallel, to deliver teaching, to write text for the newspaper, to be director and screenwriter, to be scenographer, and everything. There were also rehearsals with the children. It is pity that everything is left only to the enthusiasm in the education, when nothing is paid. The enthusiasm is diminishing when you see that everybody around you have the same salary and you have more work.[32]

5.2. How is the education of the professors about this area regulated?

The general conclusion from the discussions with the elementary education teachers is that there is a lack of continuous trainings for media education, regardless of the fact that the professional improvement of the teachers is a requirement foreseen in the Law on Elementary Education. This is probably because the technology and the new media are living beings and the teachers must always catch up with the developments. Similar like in other countries, the educators in Macedonia can sense the gap in the knowledge and skills the students and teachers have (especially when it comes to computer and digital literacy), acquired usually outside the formal education. This requires new and contemporary learning methods that will be able to catch up with the modern online living.

"In this abundance of tools, information bombarding, I have impression that the children forgot how to listen. They react only to visual sensations. What happens to me is that, while they are working on a computer, when I ask them something or talk to them, they do not even register me… We as teachers must train them for skills that will help them identify manipulation, fake information, how to select accurate, inaccurate, harmful and useful information."[33]

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31 Interview with teacher in class teaching from Kumanovo, 31.10.2018.

32 Subject teacher in Macedonian language and literature, Strumica,

33 Ibid.

The teachers still remember the media literacy training implemented by the Macedonian Institute for Media (MIM) in cooperation with the Bureau for Development of Education in the period 2009-2011. This project covered 1,100 teachers in Mother Tongue in elementary and secondary education and offered handbooks and online resources, but it seems that the implementation of all this content simply died off when the project finished.

> "Although there was a positive reception by the teachers for inclusion of the content offered in the teaching programs in mother tongue, unfortunately we failed to do evaluation of the project results."[34]

In the meantime, the project on *Inter-ethnic integrated education* that was implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science, in cooperation with USAID, the Macedonian Center for Civil Education and other civil society organizations in the period 2011-2015[35] delivered trainings for teachers and students in media production.

In this regard we should also mention the involvement of the Ministry of Education and Science as member of the Media Literacy Network, established by the Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Media Services (AVMU) in 2017. The Ministry of Education and Science was mediator in a dissemination of a DVD titled Information, videos and other documents in MEDIA LITERACY. This product unites different materials that can help the elementary school teachers to plan and implement teaching hours in media literacy. The Bureau for Development of Education provided positive opinion about the materials included in this DVD and approved the dissemination of the same in the schools.[36]

In reality, the teachers (individually as a group) are included in smaller or larger project activities related to media literacy:

> In 2014 a Norwegian civil society organization delivered training exactly on the media and how to work with that. It was very interesting and I still feel regret that we failed to implement that. The purpose was to teach the children to think with their head, to stimulate them to be creative and open. We have problems with the kids to speak openly. They had problem to read news, especially the children from the ninth grade – they are kids at the age of fourteen years and they still had problems reading. Their process of thought is still not activated as it should be."[37]

The Bureau for Development of Education admits that there is irregular

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34 Interview with Blaga Paneva, advisor in Macedonian Language and Literature in the Bureau for Development of Education

35 For more information: http://mk.pmio.mk/archive/usaid-interethnic-integration-in-education-project-iiep/

36 Statement of Emilija Petreska Kamenjarova, Head of the Unit for Human Rights and Media Literacy in the Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Media Service

37 Extract from the statement of Sonja Jovanovska, subject teacher in Macedonian Language and Literature at a focus group in Skopje, held on 02.11.2018.

monitoring of the needs of the teachers. One of the reasons is the reduced number of advisory expert visits in the school by the Bureau advisors.

"Until 2-3 years ago we had regular inspections in the schools. Then some legal changes happened followed by a period of stagnation, which essentially meant lost contact with the things happening in the field."[38]

It is therefore necessary to plan the advisory expert visits to the schools in timely and strategic manner, in the course of the entire school year, in order to obtain more realistic picture about the needs of the teachers.

How the teachers acquire media literacy?

The study programs at the pedagogical faculties in Macedonia deliver segments in media culture but they are usually implemented as additional content within a given subject. For example, the Pedagogical Faculty at the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in Bitola has several study programs that include a number of these subjects. Such, for example, is the study program *Teacher in Class Teaching* where one of the objectives set in the *Macedonian Language* subject (compulsory subject) is "development of critical attitude towards the media and development of language culture", similar like in the subject *Spelling and Proper Pronunciation of the Macedonian language* where the objective is "development of language culture and of critical attitude towards the media; in the *Sociology of Education* subject (in the first year of studies), the students are getting acquainted with the "…role of the education in prevention and remediation of the deviant behavior, as well as the impact of the mass media", "Knowledge about the role of the computers and the computerization of the education and their positive benefits and consequences; in the *Methodics for Teaching in Macedonian Language* there is "analysis of *Media Culture* as a program area". At this same faculty, the study program on *Social and Rehabilitation Pedagogy*, the *Media Literacy* is offered as optional subject in the fourth year.[39]

The media are also studied at the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of "Goce Delchev" in Shtip, in the frames of the study program on *Class Teaching*, in the subject on *Education and Media Culture*, which is optional subject in second year.[40]

What remains as an issue is how much these teaching events correspond to the needs of the child from the so called Generation Z – born in the era of new media and smartphones. The teachers and some of the university professors agree that the study programs are only part of a "stiff system", resistant to changes, and the study programs are pure formality.

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38 Interview with Blaga Peneva, advisor in Macedonian Language in the Bureau for Development of Education

39 Study programs at the Faculty of Pedagogy in the frames of the University "St.Kliment Ohridski" from Bitola, http://www.pfbt.uklo.edu.mk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23&Itemid=147&lang=mk, accessed on 11.11.2018.

40 For more information: http://www.ugd.edu.mk/documents/studiski-programi/2017/1-ciklus/fon.pdf

"The experiences of engaging professionals and practitioners as lecturers who will be able to evaluate are modest. This is a legal gap (for example: you cannot evaluate unless you hold a Ph.D. title). Very often these programs are pure formality. No attention is paid on who lectures these topics, how competent the staff is, the selection of the literature used, the relation between the theory and practice i.e. outputs. All these things lead towards inefficient system.

If we analyze the teaching plans and programs in the elementary education we will conclude that the media culture is represented in cross-curricular manner – it covers some topics related to acting, speech, film, theater, visual arts, pitching of movie idea, synopsis and here everything finishes – with some 10 hours in total in the ninth grade. The media education does not exist in the secondary education. How media literate the students will be after the end of their education and how capable they will be to evaluate the media content depends for the most part on the teachers, how long they do it and how they do it. However, the question is can the teachers acquire that knowledge with this concept of initial education in order to able to convey that knowledge to the students. My opinion is they can't!"[41]

The obsolete study programs at the pedagogical faculties is noted as a fact in the Strategy for Education 2018-2025 so one of the priorities (4.2.) in the Action Plan is "Improvement of the study programs (the initial training) for the teachers and professional staff in accordance with the professional standards". The success indicator by 2020 is "Improved study programs approved by the Board for Accreditation and Evaluation of the Higher Education". The plan is also to revise the manner in which the students are enrolled at these facilities i.e. some 500 scholarships for students who achieved good success are foreseen. The same document also requires from the Ministry of Education and Science to establish a working group by 2019 along with recommendations for revision of the study programs.

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41 Statement of Kiril Barbareev, professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University "Goce Delchev" in Shtip.

Conclusion

The incorporation of media literacy in the educational process is well-established practice in the world and Europe. First it was UNESCO, followed by the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, by adopting a number of resolutions and recommendations that put as priority the need to learn about media literacy in all levels of education and as part of the learning process. In accordance with those guidelines, in almost every European country today the students in the schools (elementary, secondary, universities) study via the media and with the media (press, radio, TV, theater, film, Internet) and acquire "competencies for access to different media, understanding of the media content, ability for their interpretation and critical evaluation, including ability for independent creation of media message. The focus today is on the media literacy modalities in the existing teaching programs i.e. whether the current models achieve the desired objectives. There are many research in that regard not only for promotion of the media literacy but also about evaluation of the acquired competencies.

One of the most used models for learning about media literacy in the schools is the inter-cultural approach i.e. full integration of the media literacy in the mother tongue program, specific aspects in the programs of other subjects as well as different extra-curricular activities (journalist circles, school newspapers). This model is used in Slovenia, a country that was first in Central in Eastern Europe to introduce the media literacy in the educational system – from pre-school to higher education. In the elementary education, the *media literacy* is implemented through its incorporation in the teaching process of two mandatory subjects (mother tongue, civil education and ethics), with methodical units in several optional subjects (computer literacy, computers, artistic design) as well as through a number of different extra-curricular activities (circles, lectures, newspapers). What is specific about this model is the optional subject on *Upbringing about medium* which is consisted of three themes – press, radio, TV and Internet, developed program and textbook in print format. The competencies the students need to achieve through the mandatory subjects is critical perceiving and interpretation of different texts, development of communication, cognitive and imagination abilities when writing own texts, creating printed and electronic announcements, understanding and evaluation of advertising texts, development of political literacy, critical opinion on different standpoints and values and active involvement in the social life. Almost the same competencies are also present in the optional subjects, with emphasis that the students need to learn to critically analyze, evaluate and create different media forms, to be IT and functionally literate, to be active citizens and not just passive consumers of the media messages.

The model has been in use for more than 20 years but does not yield the expected outcomes, especially when it comes to optional teaching. Hence are the requirements of the expert and scientific public in Slovenia for incorporation of the media literacy in the group of mandatory subjects with special program i.e. modernization of the existing teaching subject *Upbringing about media*¸ even its clear defining as "literacy". It is a strategic determination of the country as well and needs to include not only the participants in the education process but also the adults, publishers, journalists, creators and providers of online services. However, the knowledge acquired and the ability to critically perceive the information, their evaluation and active establishment

of rapport with the world and society is related not only to the media literacy but also to the digital literacy. On top of that, initiatives for separate subject on *Digital literacy* are on the horizon that would incorporate the digital literacy, media literacy and protection of the privacy and personal data. The time will tell whether these changes will also happen in the media literacy and in the media education.

Until ten years ago, the media literacy was something unknown in Macedonia. It is still not clearly defined in the legislation. The Law on Elementary Education has been changed many times and one of the key changes is the introduction of mandatory nine-year education when the reforms of the teaching plans and programs will start. Although many of the textbooks were revised and new mandatory and optional subjects were introduced, the educational system failed to "recognize" the media literacy as integral part of the elementary education programs. On the other hand, it has been strategically (Ministry of Education and Science) recognized (since 2005) how important the *computer literacy* is for the young people and adults and that it is the basis for efficient preparation of the children/ youth for development of abilities for independent creative and critical thinking and quality life. In the same direction are the commitments for *digital literacy* (since 2011) in order to reduce the digital gap and create inclusive information society for all citizens. The focus today is on the *information literacy*, mainly on the need for intensified use of ICT in the education through e-learning portal and learning management system and continuous training of the staff in the use of new technologies and ICT tools in the education. The use of the new media in the teaching process is equalized with the media literacy: the learning with media is not the same as learning about media.

The question that remains open is when and in what way the media literacy will be incorporated in the educational system, especially in the elementary education. What the elementary school students need to learn about the media literacy has been absolved by "inserting" specific program areas in various subjects covering only parts of this area, but not as media literacy but rather as "media culture", "expressing and creating" or as separate topics within a specific subject, such as "online living", "media", "family, household and society". The students are getting acquainted with different types of media, press, radio, television, film, theater, Internet. They read magazines, listen to radio and watch TV programs, they watch theater performance, retell and discuss the things they have read, heard or seen, make announcements, news, journalist stories, interviews, they search and select information on the Internet. However, the time to reach the foreseen ambitious goals is short: the goals are about training and instigating interest for monitoring of various media, analyzing of their content and taking own standpoint about the quality of different information. Only 5-7% of the teaching process includes topics that are supposed to instigate the critical attitude towards the media. The teachers who are usually in "charge" of transferring this content to the children are those teaching mother tongue, social sciences, computer skills and basics in programming, civil education. The need for modernization of the work conditions is undeniable (media libraries, media production tools). What is missing is a further training of teaching staff which is supposed to be sufficiently media literate in order to share its competencies to elementary education children who do not remember life before the smartphones i.e. the so called "Generation Z".

Recommendations

The contemporary system of education inevitably involves the media literacy in all levels – from pre-school to higher education. It is a concept that is upgraded systematically and continuously, in accordance with the development of new media and forms of expression. In terms of inclusion of the media literacy in the educational system in Macedonia – something that is currently facing significant challenges and reform processes – it is clear that this area in the elementary education is detected not only by the teachers but also by the research team that analyzed the teaching plans and programs. On the basis of findings from the research carried out by the School for Journalism and Public Relations, the following recommendations are provided:

General recommendations:
- Harmonization of the legislation, strategies and plans in the area of educational policy for development of the media literacy, in accordance with the European standards and recommendations in this area.
- Improved cooperation between all stakeholders in the society in order to have greater promotion of the media literacy: developing dialogue between the educational and other relevant institutions, parents, civil sector, the public broadcasting service, media, the media industry and the Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Media Services.

Recommendation to the Ministry of Education and Science, Bureau for Development of Education and other institutions in charge of the educational policy:
- Introduction of a media literacy concept in the educational process as inter-curricular model of media education. Design, planning and delivery of media literacy program in the elementary education the objectives of which will be complementary to the three core elements of this concept: *access, analysis* and *production* of media content in all possible forms.
- Revision of the existing teaching plans and programs in the elementary education for inclusion of topics that aim to instigate the critical perception and analysis of the media content, especially those to which the students are primarily exposed to – new media and social networks. Training of students in media production skills and know-how, and use of the advantages provided by the media for articulation of own interests as active citizens in the society.
- Development of policy for continuous trainings, programs for professional development and education of teaching staff in media literacy. Development of system for valuation of the teachers' involvement in activities supporting the media literacy among the students (managing the journalist, drama and similar circles; preparation and maintenance of school newspaper – either printed or online, organizing drama and theater activities, etc.).
- Modernization of the literature used in the teaching process to include media literacy topics: revision of the textbooks – in all languages in which the teaching process is delivered – which cover the role of the media in the modern living and improvement of the didactical means for the teachers in this area (handbooks, practicum books, etc.).
- Greater involvement by the Bureau for Development of Education in the

teaching programs implementation monitoring in order to timely identify the needs of the teaching staff and the students, especially concerning topics that aim to improve the media literacy among the students.

Recommendations to pedagogical faculties
- Revision of the study programs at the pedagogical faculties to include modern teaching programs for media education. Quality improvement of the teaching staff delivering this content.
- Improved cooperation with the media and media organizations for involvement of journalism and communication practitioners in the area of journalism and communications.

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