



IMPACT STORY

MELIA OBSERVATORY



BACKGROUND

Citizen competence is crucial for active political participation, one of the main components of good governance and sustainable democracy.

Especially in the Eastern part of the Danube Region, political participation is stagnating. Particularly worrisome are apathy and lack of political interest on the side of the younger population.

The core element of the citizen's competence is **high media literacy**. It is necessary for citizens reflection on social reality and their resilience to negative media phenomena, like hate speech and fake news.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

To address and strengthen media literacy and active citizenship in the Danube Region, a consortium of 16 partners from 10 Danube Region countries and their associated partners developed the **MELIA Observatory** project, financed by the Danube Region Programme – Interreg.

The MELIA Observatory project is vital as it addresses the challenges of the digital age, where access to information for people of all ages has increased, but critical thinking and media literacy skills have not kept pace.



THE IMPORTANCE

In many countries of the Danube region, the development of competencies of media literacy and active citizenship are far behind more developed parts of Europe. The project focuses on strengthening the competencies of youth and the people who work with them to address the gap in media literacy.

Strengthening media literacy is especially important in a world where fake news and misinformation are on the rise, leading to a decline in trust in public institutions.



WORK OF MELIA OBSERVATORY PROJECT

One of the primary outputs of the project is the **Handbook on media literacy**, which offers a **detailed account of the state of media education and media literacy in project partner countries** (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia), from a plethora of perspectives, including legislative and institutional settings, to success stories and styles of media messaging.

Building on the observations from the Handbook, the project created the **Media Literacy Observatory application** that provides an **instrument for scrutinizing media contents, training tools and policy recommendations** for upgrading media literacy in relation to other civic skills. Observatory is designed as a user-friendly web application that serves as a tool for practical education in media literacy and enables the analysis of source texts.



WORK OF MELIA OBSERVATORY PROJECT

Based on the detection of good practices from inside and outside the Danube Region, MELIA Observatory partners also developed **innovative educational toolkits in the field of media literacy and active citizenship**: a toolkit for the training of pupils in higher years of elementary school (eighth, ninth year), a toolkit for the training of high school students (with focus on vocational schools), and a toolkit for the training of youth educators (teachers, tutors, coaches).

The **toolkit equips educators with the necessary skills to teach pupils and students about media literacy**, critical thinking skills, behaviour on social networks, manipulation and propaganda, marketing and advertising, media communication and politics.

The learning materials consist of handbooks and interactive materials and are **freely available in 5 languages**.

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Learning materials

STUDENTS

BECOME AN ACTIVE CITIZEN • INFLUENCE THE WORLD AROUND YOU • EQUIP YOURSELF WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO NAVIGATE AND SUCCEED IN THE MEDIA WORLD.

6 HANDBOOKS • 6 INTERACTIVE MATERIALS • 6 TOPICS

Manipulation and Propaganda

Marketing Advertising

Behaviour on Social Networks

This circular graphic features a yellow background with a central illustration of a man and a woman looking at a tablet. Surrounding them are various social media icons (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest) and speech bubbles containing the text 'Manipulation and Propaganda', 'Marketing Advertising', and 'Behaviour on Social Networks'. The top left corner contains the Interreg logo and 'Danube Transnational Programme MELIA Observatory'. The main title 'Learning materials' is in large blue letters, followed by 'STUDENTS' in smaller letters. Below that is a mission statement and a list of '6 HANDBOOKS • 6 INTERACTIVE MATERIALS • 6 TOPICS'.

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ON A BASIS OF DATA COLLECTION PROVIDED BY THE MELIA OBSERVATORY PILOTS, PROJECT EXPERTS PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING MEDIA LITERACY

Policy Briefs on media education in the Danube Region

- ▶ ADOPT OF A COMMON WORKING DEFINITION OF MEDIA LITERACY AND MEDIA EDUCATION.
- ▶ DELIBERATE ON THE PLANNED MEDIA LITERACY POLICY'S ENVISIONED MAIN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

This circular graphic has a red and green background. At the top left is the Interreg logo and 'Danube Transnational Programme MELIA Observatory'. Below it is a line of text: 'ON A BASIS OF DATA COLLECTION PROVIDED BY THE MELIA OBSERVATORY PILOTS, PROJECT EXPERTS PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING MEDIA LITERACY'. The main title 'Policy Briefs on media education in the Danube Region' is in large blue letters. Below the title are two bullet points with red arrowheads. At the bottom, there is an illustration of a person sitting at a desk with a laptop, surrounded by various media icons like a heart, a mail envelope, a speech bubble, and a music note.

CONNECTION WITH EUSDR

In addition to these tools, the MELIA Observatory project has established a network of media literacy stakeholders from the region, enhancing collaboration among organizations promoting media literacy and active citizenship.

The project is an excellent example of how cross-border cooperation can address social challenges and has laid a strong foundation for media literacy and active citizenship in the Danube Region. The project's success could serve as a blueprint for other EU regions facing similar challenges in media literacy.

The project activities that ran from 2020 to 2022 are connected with **Priority Area 10** (Institutional Capacity and Cooperation), focusing on strengthening governance, institutional capacities (via capacity-building activities) and transnational cooperation in addressing societal challenges across the Danube.

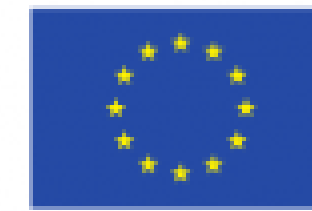




Slovenian Presidency
of the EU Strategy
for the Danube Region



Interreg



EUROPEAN UNION

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MELIA Observatory

For more about the **MELIA Observatory project**, visit: <https://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/melia-observatory>