

Analysis of the State of Media Education at Primary and Secondary Schools in the Czech Republic



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1. Foreword

Media education has been part of the education system for over ten years, but it has not received a great deal of attention in recent years. In the beginning, the emphasised interest was, aside from news topics and developing critical analysis skills, to train young people to be able to recognise hidden advertising in articles and avoid desiring non-essential or overpriced products (at the time, the boom in loans provided by non-bank companies led to growing household debt and court-ordered enforcement of debt claims).

When the issue of indebtedness and hidden advertisement disappeared from the media, neither society nor the media showed much interest in media education. Not even at the time when hoaxes started spreading via the social networks, claiming that the Czech Roma received preferential social benefits or discounts in pharmacies. Each new hoax led to a new wave of hatred (e.g. in 2011 anti-Roma demonstrations in the Ústí Region). The public and the media first began to question the scope and contents of media education when the conflict between Russia and Ukraine erupted, but this did not result in any changes in the education system.

A radical change in attitudes towards media education thus came during the peak of the migration crisis, after the UK's referendum on leaving the EU and the election of Donald Trump as US president. At that point, many people realised that society's insufficient ability to recognise disinformation and analyse intentionally misinterpreted data could lead to social polarisation and affect the strategic orientation of the country.

Media education is now mentioned more often in the media and the first-ever survey of media literacy of students of primary and secondary schools is being conducted directly by the Czech Schools Inspectorate, with the objective to identify the elements that could improve media education at schools. There is now a clear interest on the part of private philanthropists who understand the impacts of growing distrust in traditional media and democracy or questioning the Euro-Atlantic orientation of the country.

This analysis was made to explain, in under two hours, everything that needs to be explained about media education in the Czech Republic. It also aims to answer frequent questions asked by the public: what is the current state of media literacy, how the government ensures that children receive media education, how media education is implemented in schools, what kind of support the teachers receive, what the curriculum of media education is like and who determines it.

After the autumn elections to the Chamber of Deputies, voices critical of the public service media intensified and a debate started on their "nationalisation". These voices are coming not only from extremist parties but also from the ranks of the victorious centrist party. The topic of the referendum has also come to the spotlight. It is now not completely unlikely that the Czech political system could soon see the implementation of the possibility to decide on important geopolitical matters – such as membership in the European Union and NATO – through direct voting. This means that Czech society will have to be able to better evaluate the balance of news reporting and orient itself in the information maze that would surely develop prior to any such referendum.

The urgency of hoaxes and disinformation issues increases interest in the topic of media education. This could be reflected in the area of grants and the selection of educational activities available to teachers, libraries or organisations working with senior citizens. It will become necessary to deal with the independence of opinions and the matter of whether or not the providers of media education represent one of the sides of the political divide.

The analysis was prepared between November 2017 and February 2018 and should not be considered academic in scope and standards; it has no such ambition. It is meant to be read by the broader public, politicians and people in the media who want to quickly get their bearings in the area of media education in the Czech Republic. It was not possible to cover everything related to media education in this analysis and there remain other issues deserving of more attention. The analysis focuses mainly on formal education, not on out-of-school activities. Aside from the family, the school is an institution that significantly influences the education of young people. Aside from publicly available information and survey results, this analysis is based on three focus groups surveys conducted among university students, two roundtable discussions, and consultations with education experts. It follows on previous work conducted by European Values in the area of disinformation and protecting democratic values in the Czech Republic. It is also a response to a call contained in [the Declaration](#) of representatives of civil society and the business community of Central and Eastern Europe to promote the quality of teaching, active citizenship and critical thinking¹.

The first part introduces the steps that need to be taken to promote better media education. The second part explains the tasks the schools have been given by the government in connection with media education, what data are available on media literacy and how they were obtained, and what the surveys show with regard to the scope and implementation of media education in schools. The final two chapters study the support that is provided to teachers and the initiatives that influenced the current form of media education, including current and potential initiatives.

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¹ Encourage educational reforms, including in teacher training, that increase the emphasis on high-quality teaching on democracy, active citizenship, current affairs and critical thinking."

2. Important findings relevant to promoting the role of media education in the education system

1. Finding: In pursuing the objectives of school educational programmes, the schools lack resources to further strengthen other necessary literacies. It is pointless to consider implementing new educational topics unless it is first determined which skills or knowledge should be sacrificed to free up resources necessary to teach them.

- **Recommended steps:** Any activities and initiatives promoting progressive change in education to better reflect the educational needs of children in the 21st century should be promoted. The steps that should be prioritised have been well summarised in the initiative of twenty educational organisations titled [Education Above-All \(Vzdělávání přede-vším\)](#).

2. Finding: Attitudes of the Minister of Education and authorisation by the prime minister play a key role the decision-making process.

- **Recommended steps:** If the Government acknowledged that low media literacy could jeopardise the country's position or security, it could provide systematic and financial support for the Ministry of Education to strengthen the role of media education.

3. Finding: Media education is taught mostly as a cross-sectional topic; a half of the surveyed schools admitted they do not monitor the implementation of media education in their curriculum. Most secondary school students only receive four hours of media education per year. This is probably a result of low teacher preparedness (more than three quarters of teachers create their own teaching materials; audiovisual teaching aids are not sufficiently available) and insufficient time for preparing and implementing media education topics. The cross-sectional topic of media education is not included in trade schools' curriculum at all.

- **Recommended steps:** Organisations directly subordinate to the Ministry of Education such as the National Institute for Education (NIE) and the National Institute for Further Education (NIFE) can implement projects to increase systematic support for media education.

4. Finding: According to the survey conducted by the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting, different attitudes towards the media are also determined by the ability to use digital technologies. Differences in media literacy overlap with the "digital gap" dividing those with access to modern technology and those without. Media literacy cannot be increased without ensuring better digital literacy as young people predominantly use digital media to access news and information. This underlines the importance of digital literacy, which is emphasised in two national digital strategies. The objectives of at least one of these strategies (the Digital Education Strategy 2020 does not include media education directly and falls under the Ministry of Education) are still far from being accomplished.

- **Recommended steps:** Both national digital strategies should be reviewed in order to promote both the aforementioned literacy types. Both strategies have been approved by the Government and the Government should insist on and support attaining their objectives.

5. **Finding:** Strengthening media education as an instrument to combat hybrid threats is also mentioned by the National Security Audit.
 - **Recommended steps:** The Ministry of the Interior should ask the Ministry of Education to create suitable conditions for education to facilitate promotion of media literacy and results in media education.
6. **Finding:** A survey is currently being conducted by the Czech Schools Inspectorate on students' media literacy and the way media education is implemented in schools. No final decision has been made as to including media literacy in the regular literacy surveys.
 - **Recommended steps:** Testing media literacy and monitoring its achievement by schools should be included in the regular literacy surveys in order to monitor the effects of potential measures to strengthen media education and literacy.
7. **Finding:** The fastest (but not the most effective) instrument to change the educational content at schools is to include the needed knowledge or skills among those being tested, especially as part of the *maturita* examination (the secondary school-leaving examination). However, this could be perceived as an unwelcome and repressive instrument that might encounter resistance from teachers.
 - **Possibilities for support:** If the Centre for Educational Assessment (CERMAT), which organises the *maturita* examination on the national level, included one or two media literacy questions into the Czech language part of the examination, the schools would be better motivated to strengthen the role of media skills in the curriculum.
8. **Finding:** Many high-quality study materials were created for the teachers as part of various projects but are not available in one place. Some materials for media education remain unavailable even though they were created with public funding.
 - **Recommended steps:** The Ministry of Education should ensure (e.g. through its subordinate organisations such as NIE and NIFE) that all publicly funded study materials and other aids are available e.g. at the rvp.cz portal.
9. **Finding:** Media education is not listed among the “templates” (*šablony*), which means the schools do not receive reimbursement for educational courses in this area unless they are also associated with reading or computer literacy.
 - **Recommended steps:** Support strengthening of media education via large project calls launched by NIFE or NIE.
10. **Finding:** There is no single catalogue of educational courses and events for media education teachers and there is no rating system for evaluating the courses. A rating system would be useful to all teachers.
 - **Recommended steps:** The new catalogue of accredited courses for teachers that is being prepared by Akredis offers a convenient opportunity; the Ministry of Education could introduce the possibility to rank the individual courses. Such a reference system would benefit not only media education teachers but the whole pedagogical community.

11. Finding: Public service broadcasters are not explicitly required to promote media education and literacy; nevertheless, one of their roles is to educate their audiences. Czech and Czech Radio fulfil this role through their programming, but there is a lack of further didactic support that could be used for teaching.

- **Recommended steps:** The Directors General of public service broadcasters are elected by the Czech TV Council and the Czech Radio Council, respectively. When choosing the Directors General of public service broadcasters, these bodies can insist that the candidates present their proposals for promoting media education, e.g. by opening their editorial offices to visitors from schools and the general public, acquaint people with what happens “behind the scenes”, support children’s media content creating, and enable talented children to publish their work, organise workshops in the editorial offices, host field trips, etc.

3. Media education and its position in the education system

Main findings

1. In pursuing the objectives of school educational programmes, the schools lack sufficient resources to further strengthen other necessary literacies. It is pointless to consider implementing new educational topics unless it is first determined which skills or knowledge should be sacrificed to free up resources necessary to teach them.
2. Media education is implemented as a “cross-sectional topic” in the Czech education system.
3. Cross-sectional topics are a mandatory part of the curriculum, but the scope in which they are to be taught is not specified. Each school chooses its own strategy of incorporating the individual cross-sectional topics in the school educational plan (SEP). A school may specialise in some topics while devoting only minimum attention to others. There are several possibilities on how to approach the teaching of cross-sectional topics: in separate subjects, through a project, cross-sectionally in other subjects or through a combination of all the above options.
4. The National Institute for Education (NIE) is currently reviewing curricular documents – right now it is not clear what part cross-sectional topics will play in the system.
5. Media education is to be implemented not only by institutions of formal education (schools); the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting (CRTB) is also tasked by law to monitor media literacy.
6. The need to strengthen media education as an instrument to combat hybrid threats is also mentioned by the National Security Audit.
7. The Directors General of public service broadcasters are elected by the Czech TV Council and the Czech Radio Council, respectively. When choosing new Directors General of public service broadcasters, the respective councils may request that the candidates incorporate media education in the proposed programming schemes.
8. Media literacy can be boosted via media education even by informal educational institutions (e.g. libraries) or the family; however, informal education is not free and thus greatly depends on the socio-cultural status and wealth of the family. This carries the risk that media education will not be available to the most vulnerable segments of society.
9. There is no strategic document specifying the ways to promote media literacy in various groups of people, how to monitor and assess media literacy and appropriately adjust adopted measures. The Government’s ministries (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) are active in some ways, but they lack coordination, there is no one to bear formal responsibility for the area of media literacy and there are no specific objectives to be achieved.
10. Support for media literacy is not explicitly mentioned in either of the two digital strategy documents. This is true even despite the fact that media literacy can only be increased by promoting digital literacy. Fulfilling the objectives of the Ministry of Education’s digital strategy is not going well.

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11. Poland is currently conducting a review of the results of the first year of educational reform, which has put more emphasis on patriotic aspects of nurture and education. As a result of changes in the curriculum and the incorporation of new content, some other topics had to make way. This meant that promoting media literacy was removed from the list of expected outcomes. The Polish experience shows that all aspects of social change that could reduce media education in Czech schools must be reflected.

3.1 What are media literacy and media education?

Media education is a process through which people attain media literacy. It should be noted in the context of media education and 21st-century education process that young people as well as adults also obtain media literacy outside of school. That being said, the school plays an important role especially with regard to lower-income social strata where people cannot afford educating themselves through informal processes. It is questionable to what degree the lower-income groups of people are willing to educate themselves in this area even if they can do it for free. The issues of digital and social exclusion are handled by a team at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs which is responsible for the implementation of the [Digital Literacy Strategy 2015–2020](#). The teams' findings will be important for future developments in this area.

The framework educational programme (FEP) defines media education as follows: “*Media education should help students achieve a basic level of media literacy. Media literacy consists in developing a basic knowledge of the functioning and social roles of contemporary media (their history and functional structure) as well as obtaining skills supporting educated, active and independent participation of individuals in media communication. In particular, this includes the ability to analyse the message, assess its credibility and evaluate its communicative purpose, and make associations with other messages where appropriate; it further entails the ability to orient oneself in mediated contents and choose an appropriate medium to satisfy certain needs, ranging from obtaining information to education and entertainment.*”²

Experts and scholars have offered many definitions of media literacy, but there is also the definition included in [Directive 2010/13/EU, the Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#): “*Media literacy refers to skills, knowledge and understanding that allow consumers to use media effectively and safely. Medi-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.*”³

Monitoring media literacy is a responsibility of the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting (CRTB). *The CRTB is explicitly tasked with co-operating with the Czech Telecommunication Office (Section 5 (l)) and issuing opinions and proposals towards forming the Czech government policy in the area of broadcasting and its development and increasing media literacy (Section 5 (m)). The CRTB also cooperates, in the scope of its responsibilities, with legal entities established pursuant to the laws of the*

² [Framework educational programme for primary schools](#), Ministry of Education 2017, p. 138.

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32010L0013>

Czech Republic (...) especially on creating effective self-regulating systems and implementing measures to promote media literacy.”⁴ However, the CRTB has no educational responsibilities. Its role is to monitor the state of media literacy in the population and inform about the activities of radio and television broadcasters. This monitoring role does not extend to the Internet and print media. Any additional CRTB activities go beyond its statutory responsibilities (e.g. the [Children and Media](#) portal).

In June 2015, Ivan Krejčí, the chairman of the CRTB, issued a public report in which he warned about low media literacy and called for a systematic solution to this problem. He proposed to establish an inter-ministerial commission to “prepare a unified strategy for increasing media literacy among all Czech citizens, including vulnerable groups, the underprivileged and the elderly. The strategy should include an extensive participation of libraries as natural centres of adult education, in accordance with the recommendations of the Declaration on Media and Information Literacy in the Digital Era issued last year by the European Union and UNESCO.”⁵

Media education was also called for by the [National Security Audit](#): Requests for inclusion of new topics into the school system’s educational programmes were repeatedly mentioned, either in relation to security education or promoting civic and media literacy (anthropogenic threats, natural threats, hybrid threats, foreign influence). Media education is also mentioned in the November 2017 presentation by the Deputy Minister for Strategies and Innovation, Mr Josef Rydl of NIFE, titled *Security topics in programmes for further education of pedagogical workers developed by the National Institute for Further Education – possibilities for inclusion of security topics in headteacher education courses*. The presentation highlights the need for security in the cyberspace, including protection against risk communication (which, however, may mainly concern cyberbullying). Simultaneously, the [POKOS](#) (*Příprava občanů k obraně státu* – Preparation of Citizens for National Defence) project is being implemented at schools, [raising eyebrows](#) among the expert community. Segments concerning hybrid and cybernetic threats should be part of similar or follow-up projects devoted to promoting security.

3.2 Media education in the education system

Within the Czech education system, the [National Institute for Education](#) (NIE) is the authoritative institution creating educational content; however, all curricular changes are ordered and approved by the Ministry of Education. Media education is a “cross-sectional topic”. In practice, this means that students should acquire media literacy either through a specific school subject, or across multiple subjects, or through a project aimed at media issues prepared by the school. If a specific school decides to implement media education cross-sectionally across multiple subjects, the teachers of those subjects should think about how to connect the subject matter, e.g. English language, with media issues.

In the Czech Republic, schools are bound by certain set thematic areas specified by the [Framework Educational Programmes](#) and further supplemented and updated via the Recommended Expected Outcomes. Each school subsequently spreads the expected outcomes among individual subjects based on the possibilities, knowledge and skills of the teachers, or achieve them via other activities (e.g. optional subjects or projects). This is called the “School Educational Programme” (SEP). While the form

⁴ <http://www.rrtv.cz/cz/static/o-rade/poslani-rady/index.htm>

⁵ Press release of the CRTB, 16 June 2015: [Mediální gramotnost – České republike ujíždí vlak \(Media Literacy – Czech Republic Lagging Behind\)](#)

is clear with respect to standard subjects such as mathematics, history, geography, etc., cross-sectional topics must be spread among various subjects. Cross-sectional topics must be implemented in teaching in such a way that students encounter them over the course of their school education. This is very difficult to achieve in terms of organisation; in many cases, teachers are assumed to have skills they do not have. The recommended outcomes specified by the NIE are not binding. They exist as a suggestion and inspiration for teachers. Under existing conditions, possibilities and qualifications of teachers, these recommended outcomes are hard to achieve, even if a school pays attention to them. The following part includes examples of the expected outcomes at the individual education levels. These outcomes are described and classified in more detail in the individual documents.

3.2.1 Lower primary education (6 to 10 years of age)

- The student can say which media he or she follows and how (“my everyday media biography”, media as a part of the family environment);
- The student can demonstrate (on the example of e.g. family members) the differences in the ways media content is consumed and the approaches to media messages – the student can explain the differences referring to specific examples;
- The student can recognise specific means of expression as marked and their emotional tone as “leading” the user to a specific interpretation of the message’s content;
- The student can perceive differences in the expressive and emotional tone of words with similar meanings that are used in news reporting (e.g. “admitted” or “conceded” instead of “said”);
- The student can explain, with examples, in what way the composition (e.g. in a photograph) leads the viewer to a specific interpretation of the message;
- The student can perceive differences between “reliable” and “tabloid” news and the means of expression typical for each of these types;
- The student can identify entertainment elements in non-entertainment media products (e.g. educational TV programmes and textbooks)⁶.

3.2.2 Higher primary education (11 to 15 years of age)

- The student can distinguish individual media messages according to whether they constitute a “fact” or “fiction”, and can identify the basic genres and means of expressing “fiction” in the individual media;
- In printed media, the student can name the functions of using graphic and other visual elements (font, pictures, photographs);
- The student can recognise stereotypes in media messages and can explain, using examples, their simplifying and generalising relation to reality;
- The student can compare media products and identify regularities in their composition (e.g. in news bulletins or internet portals);

⁶ [Recommended Expected Outcomes. Methodological aid for teaching cross-sectional topics in primary schools. Metodická podpora \(Methodological Aid\)](#), Research Institute of Education (VÚP) 2011, p. 27.

- The student can evaluate the ways in which notions of the target (intended) recipients are reflected in the form media messages take;
- The student can analyse, using specific samples, the content produced for his or her age group (youth magazines, commercials, TV programmes and websites);
- The student perceives the relationship between the media and freedom of speech and understands the risks associated with this relationship;
- The student can explain the societal implications of the spread of the printing press, radio and later television broadcasting, and the emergence of online media;
- The student can recognise and name the areas where the media influence a person (perceives the media as a factor influencing people's opinions, feelings, lifestyle, values and moral compass);
- The student can evaluate the benefits and risks of obtaining information from online sources (e.g. Wikipedia) and is able to verify the acquired information.⁷

3.2.3 Grammar schools (15 to 19 years of age)

Grammar schools (referred to as *gymnázia* in Czech) are the elite secondary schools in the Czech education system. Grammar school students are expected to continue their studies at a university after completing secondary education with the *maturita* examination. There is practically a zero chance that the teachers will be able to achieve the expected outcomes without significant methodological assistance.

- The student can list the right a person can exercise *vis-à-vis* the media (the right to respond, right to correction and right to protection of personal rights) and understands the basic principles of media laws applicable in the Czech Republic and the EU media policy;
- The student can enumerate the basic authorities which represent him or her *vis-à-vis* the media, either under the law or within media self-regulation (knows e.g. the importance of the position of the Czech TV Council or the Advertising Council);
- The student can analyse selected media controversies and, using them as an example, assesses whose (or which) interests the media advocate (e.g. in a presentation of Government policy or in an election campaign);
- The student can recognise expressions that aim to incite emotions or influence his or her attitudes and behaviour; the student can identify the basic argumentation and manipulation practices;
- The student can identify staged elements in news reporting (e.g. animations) and elements that make fiction appear more authentic;
- The student can distinguish between basic types of surveying and describing the audience/users of media; he or she knows the weaknesses of these surveys and can critically evaluate their published results;

⁷ [Recommended Expected Outcomes. Methodological aid for teaching cross-sectional topics at primary schools. Metodická podpora \(Methodological Aid\)](#), Research Institute of Education (VÚP) 2011, p. 29.

- The student is well-oriented in the area of media influence on individual age groups (especially child users) and can evaluate the importance of regulation of media communication;
- The student can recognise the mechanisms manipulating him or her to consume media content or that can be used to manipulate others (e.g. the threat of social exclusion);
- The student approaches media as a specific expression of culture and is aware of the role the media play in forming contemporary culture;
- The student can assess, using specific examples, the transformation of media production under the influence of digitisation and the Internet (citizen journalism, blogosphere, online media).⁸

The National Institute for Further Education is currently performing an analysis of cross-sectional topics in curricular documents.

Experts from the field of media education met twice to discuss the issue of media education. The meetings took the form of closed roundtable discussions. The first meeting was held on 17 October (11 participants) and the second took place on 18 January (22 participants). Both discussions were held in Prague and focused on promoting media education, schools' capacities and the risks of implementation. The discussions addressed the important issues:

- In pursuing the objectives of school educational programmes, the schools lack sufficient resources to further strengthen other necessary literacies. It is pointless to consider implementing new educational topics unless it is first determined which skills or knowledge should be sacrificed to free up resources necessary to teach them.
- The current demand for media education focused on hoaxes and disinformation must not overshadow the fact that media education and literacy comprises a much broader set of knowledge and skills. Better media literacy cannot be achieved by only teaching the students how to recognise hoaxes and disinformation.
- The current interest in media education increases the offer of courses provided by various organisations. Educational activities of these providers should also be evaluated in terms of their specific opinions and interests.
- There is a need for a meta-study that would cover all that has taken place in the area of media education within the education system and evaluate the results of the individual academic centres dealing with media education.

⁸ Recommended Expected Outcomes. *Mediální výchova na gymnáziích (Media Education at Grammar Schools)*. Metodická podpora (Methodological Aid), Research Institute of Education (VÚP) 2011, p. 5.

3.2.4 National digital strategy

In view of the fact that critical evaluation of media content now takes place mostly in a digital environment, digital literacy is important for the development of media literacy. Digital literacy overlaps with media literacy in many places but remains distinct in others.

As part of promoting employment and competitiveness, in 2014 the Government approved two important strategies for developing digital literacy. The Digital Education Strategy 2020⁹ (DES) managed by the Ministry of Education defines digital literacy as follows: *“Digital education means, in simple terms, an education that responds to the societal changes associated with the progress of digital technologies and their use in various areas of human activity. This includes education that effectively uses digital technologies to support education and teaching as well as education that develops digital literacy of students and prepares them for social life and competition on the labour market, where the demands on IT knowledge and skills are steadily increasing.”*¹⁰ The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs organises the Czech Digital Literacy Strategy 2015–2020¹¹ (DLS), which focuses on the adult population.

However, DES does not operate with media literacy, even though the two areas are related. Media literacy is only mentioned at the end of the document to provide context within the Glossary of Terms¹², where it is mentioned in reference to *Mapping Digital Competence: Toward a Conceptual Understanding*, a publication of the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) that describes digital literacy in the context of other literacy areas, including media literacy.¹³

The team implementing the DLS is currently preparing a general survey of the Czech population’s digital literacy. No review of DLS is planned; the 2014 strategy is transferred to the action plan which includes a set of various measures that are gradually being implemented.

The situation is more complicated with respect to DES – no public reviews or evaluation are taking place, but DES is closely monitored by the teachers themselves. According to the [monitoring](#) conducted by the Union of School IT Workers, implementation of DES is stagnating. DES is also undergoing an updated review which takes into account both the implementation dates and the contents. The strategy has naturally become dated since its inception before 2014.

⁹ <http://www.msmt.cz/ministerstvo/strategie-digitalniho-vzdelavani-do-roku-2020>

¹⁰ [Strategie digitální gramotnosti do roku 2020 \(Digital Literacy Strategy 2020\)](#), Ministry of Education 2014, p. 3

¹¹ https://www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/21499/Strategie_DG.pdf

¹² [Strategie digitální gramotnosti do roku 2020 \(Digital Literacy Strategy 2020\)](#), Ministry of Education 2014, p. 47

¹³ Ala-Mutka Kirsti: [Mapping Digital Competence: Toward a Conceptual Understanding](#), Institute for Prospective Technological Studies 2011, p. 6. http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/JRC67075_TN.pdf, p. 6

3.3 Media education in Visegrad Group countries

Slovakia applies the same approach to media education as the Czech Republic – it is considered a cross-sectional topic according to the Educational Programme for Schools (EPS).¹⁴ In 2005, the Slovak Ministry of Education approved the *Media education as a non-mandatory optional subject at primary schools and 8-year grammar schools* project and in 2009, the *Strategy for media education in the Slovak Republic in the context of lifelong education* was created.

Focus groups organised by European Values Think-Tank in Brno on 9 November included five Slovak university students. The students did not confirm that they encountered targeted lessons in the area of media literacy during their primary or secondary school education. This is confirmed by a publication of the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. “*The effectiveness of integrating media education as a cross-sectional topic within the curricula of the individual subjects is relatively low. This is also documented by findings of both the aforementioned surveys, where representatives of numerous schools confirmed they had insufficient knowledge of the subject-matter and misidentified irrelevant topics as elements of media education...*”¹⁵

The study of the University of Trnava cites Poland as an illustrative case of misapplied media education, even though both countries were among the first to introduce media education.¹⁶ According to Aleksandra Czetwertyńska of [Centrum Cyfrowe](#), media education was a part of the curriculum of what the Czech school system would consider the lower and higher primary school. However, the curriculum has undergone a reform which strengthened the “patriotic” aspects of education, which in practical terms brings a greater emphasis on teaching the Polish language, literature, culture and history. Media education is thus no longer a part of the curriculum for children between 6 and 14 years of age.

For older children, media education is not a mandatory part of the curriculum. Given the experience with the primary schools’ curriculum, a boost to media education cannot be expected. On the other hand, the Internet security, hate speech on social networks etc. are hotly discussed topics and it can be expected that the demand on the part of the parents will lead at least to an increase in the children’s skills in communication on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat etc. Poland has a strong tradition of film education that also cultivates the ability to critically evaluate media content.

Hungarian schools saw the introduction of media education already in the 1960s in the context of film education. According to Aczél Petra Katalin of Cornelius University in Budapest, media education is incorporated into the national curriculum as one of the required competencies as well as in the form of a separate subject. As in the Czech Republic, an assessment of media skills such as media literacy, understanding media behaviour etc. is being prepared. Since the 1990s, pedagogical faculties offered media education as part of the two-subject qualification.

¹⁴ Háberová Iveta: [Mediálná výchova v edukačnom procese \(Media education in the education process\)](#), Metodicko-pedagogické centrum (Methodological-Pedagogical Centre) 2012, p. 6

¹⁵ Vrabec Norbert: *Stratégie rozvoja mediálnej gramotnosti v európskych krajinách (Strategies for developing media literacy in European countries)*, FMK Trnava 2014, p. 136

¹⁶ Vrabec Norbert: *Stratégie rozvoja mediálnej gramotnosti v európskych krajinách (Strategies for developing media literacy in European countries)*, FMK Trnava 2014, p. 103

4. Interpreting the results of investigations conducted in the area of media education and literacy to date

Main findings

1. The survey currently being conducted by the Czech Schools Inspectorate on the way media education is taught in schools and the student's media literacy represents an opportunity. No final decision has been made as to including media literacy in the regular literacy surveys.
2. To evaluate the use of the media and trust in the media, a number of regular surveys are conducted. The surveys commissioned by the CRTB (Media Literacy Study of the Czech Population 2011 and 2016) and the NGO People in Need (*What do current secondary school students think about the world?* survey of June 2017 and *How is media education taught at secondary schools?* survey of January and February 2017) are the first relevant results concerning media literacy and education.
3. Secondary school students most often find information on social networks (69 percent), which also serve as a news filter.
4. More than a half of the students do not trust or do not know how to respond in relation to the reliability of main news servers (86 percent) or printed daily newspapers (59 percent). Secondary school students trust the public service TV channels the most (60 percent).
5. About 60 percent do not know or did not respond to the question whether the "alternative" news sites can be trusted.
6. Media education is taught mostly as a cross-sectional topic; a half of the surveyed schools admitted they do not monitor the implementation of media education in their curriculum. Most secondary school students only receive four hours of media education per year.
7. Support for teachers of media education is critical – three quarters of teachers in vocational schools and almost 90 percent of teachers in grammar schools prepare for the classes mostly by creating their own materials. Sixty-five percent of the teachers have received no formal training in the area of media education.
8. Radio still enjoys a high degree of trust (34 percent), while tabloid print media are trusted the least (6 percent).
9. Evening TV news remains a common feature of family evenings. The younger generations do not read print media but can distinguish between tabloid and regular newspapers (depending on their age).
10. Differences in the approach to media also depend on the skills in using digital media. Media literacy differences overlap with the digital gap between those who use digital technologies and those unskilled in information and communications technology (ICT). This points to the conclusion that media literacy cannot be increased independently of digital literacy.

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11. None of the participants of the focus groups organised by European Values Think-Tank has encountered an intentional implementation of media education at school. There are exceptions, however.
 12. A teacher of media education should have strong pedagogical authority as he or she deals with many current and controversial social issues where students' opinions can differ.
 13. Interviews with focus groups of students of (predominantly) humanities-oriented faculties revealed that the participants first noticed the attempts to influence media content at the start of the conflict between Ukraine and Russia.
 14. The focus groups also demonstrated that media education in the family often takes the form of arguments about the choice of TV channel to watch evening news on.
 15. An oft-mentioned handicap of media education in school was the inability to check the accuracy of information.

A comprehensive survey of media literacy among students at schools has not been conducted in the Czech Republic to date. Recently, however, the Czech Schools Inspectorate has started (autumn 2017 to spring 2018) a comprehensive survey of media education and media literacy among children attending primary and secondary schools. It would be desirable if the CSI included testing of media literacy in the regularly monitored literacy areas (e.g. reading, digital). The schedule in the currently ongoing survey is as follows:

- Autumn 2017 – an electronic survey conducted in selected primary and secondary schools concerning the way media education is taught and the schools' needs for improving the quality of education.
- Autumn 2017 – an electronic survey conducted among 9th-grade students and students in the 2nd grade of secondary schools, with the aim of assessing the results of media education as implemented in the respective schools.
- January 2018 – an electronic survey conducted in all primary and secondary schools concerning the way media education is taught and the schools' needs for improving the quality of education.
- Spring 2018 – qualitative, more detailed survey in schools which indicated in the autumn survey that they actively implement media education. The objective of visits in the schools is to obtain materials to share as examples of best practice.

In the area of media literacy, there are only two significant surveys available. One of them is the 2016 survey commissioned by the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting (CRTB); the other survey was conducted by People in Need in 2017. The pre-election survey conducted by the polling agency Median also brought current information concerning the attitudes of young people to the media. However, there are numerous smaller studies which studied some components of media literacy without this being their primary objective. The way individual teams define media literacy and what indicators they choose to study the area is also important. Many scholars disagree on how to measure media literacy – some even believe that it cannot be measured at all.

For instance, there are studies focusing on specific parts of media literacy, e.g. [the Czech population's trust in the media](#) performed by a team at the Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University in Brno; there is monitoring of the use of media conducted by private agencies, e.g. [the Association of Television Broadcasting](#) commissions an [audience survey](#) providing data on favourite programmes and other preferences according to demographic groups, including children and young people. Similar data on the online behaviour of children and young people are collected by the SPIR Association and published in its [yearbooks](#). [Byl jednou jeden tablet](#) (*Once upon a time, there was a tablet*) is another limited-scope survey that offers insights into media education in the family (how the parents regulate the use of ICT by their children, their participation in education etc.). Media literacy was the subject of a publication authored by Zdeněk Svoboda, member of the Faculty of Arts of Palacký University Olomouc titled [Media education in the family – attitudes, tools and challenges](#).

Systematic research of media literacy is not currently conducted in the Czech Republic. Only the CRTB is showing some activity in the area because it is tasked so by law. The currently pending testing conducted by the Czech Schools Inspectorate could become a basis for a new regular and systematic survey.

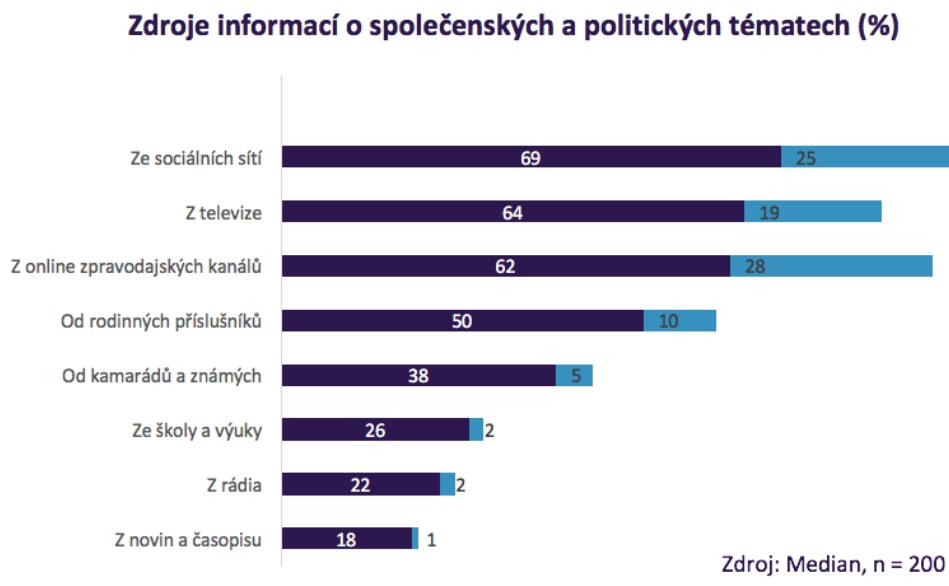
4.1 People in Need survey

4.1.1 What do current secondary school students think about the world?¹⁷

The survey was conducted in May and June 2017 on two hundred students using an electronic questionnaire. The survey organisers asked about the students' attitude to the media and consuming media content. The representative questionnaire survey was conceived as part of the "One World in Schools" educational programme and was conducted in co-operation with the Median polling agency. The total of 33 schools, a single class from each, participated in the survey. Another 200 students participated through an online survey. The aim of the survey was to find out more about the lifestyles of young people and their attitudes to the world around them. The results show who the secondary school students trust, where they find information, what their attitudes to the media are, and more. The survey was conducted in May and June 2017; over one quarter (27.7 percent) of participants were grammar school students; about two thirds (63.5 percent) were students of secondary vocational schools and about a tenth (8.8 percent) were apprentices at trade schools.

Graph 1 clearly shows that social networks, TV and online news are the student's main sources of information. Compared to 2014, there was an increase in the number of students for whom social networks are their most common source of information (from 12 to 25 percent); the importance of TV decreased from 33 to 19 percent and the relevance of online news fell from 34 to 28 percent.

¹⁷ [Co si myslí o světě dnešní středoškoláci? \(What do current secondary school students think about the world?\)](#), Jeden svět na školách (One World in Schools), 2017



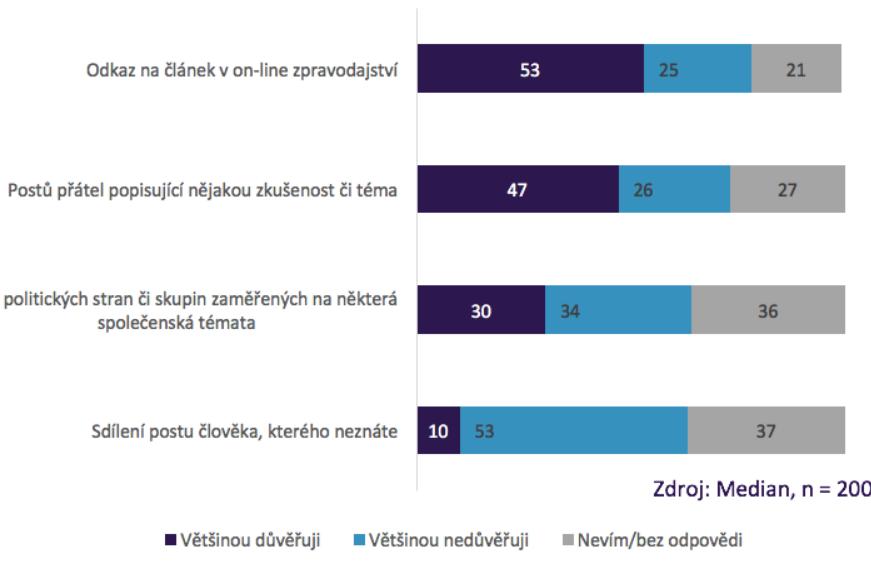
Graph 1: Source of information on social and political topics

(Graph 1:

From social networks; From TV; From online news channels; From family members; From friends and acquaintances;
From school and education; From the radio; From newspaper and magazines;
Main sources; Most common sources
Source: Median)

Graph 2 indicates that only slightly more than 50 percent of students trust online news and less than a half trust their friends' description of events. Less than a third trust the politicians' description of events and only one in ten trusts information posted by people they do not know.

Zdroje důvěry zdrojům informací na sociálních sítích (%)



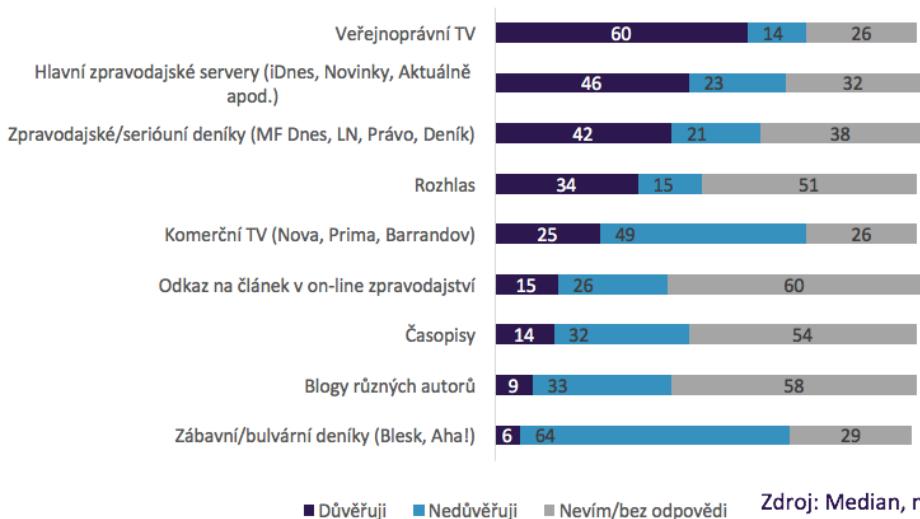
Graph 2: Sources of trust in information sources on social networks

(Graph 2:

*Link to online news article; Posts by friends describing an experience or a topic; posts of political parties or groups interested in certain social topic; Sharing of a post by an unknown person;
Mostly trust; usually don't trust; I don't know/no answer)*

Graph 3 shows that while only 15 percent of students trust the so-called alternative news websites and 26 percent distrust them, there were 60 percent of students who did not know or did not answer. This means that more than a half of the students do not trust or do not know how to respond in relation to the reliability of main news servers or daily print newspapers. It is possible they do not care about the topic at all or do not follow any news whatsoever.

Nakolik důvěrujete informacím ve zpravodajství a publicistice v následujících typech médií? (%)



Graph 3: How much do you trust information in news reported by the following media types?

(Graph 3:

Public service television; Main news servers (iDnes, Novinky, Aktuálně.cz etc.); News/reliable newspaper (MF Dnes, Lidové Noviny, Právo, Deník); Radio; Commercial TV (Nova, Prima, Barrandov); Link to an online news article; Magazines; Blogs by various authors; Entertainment/tabloid newspaper (Blesk, Aha!)
Trust; Don't trust; I don't know/no answer)

4.1.2 How is media education taught in secondary schools?¹⁸

People in Need, a non-governmental organisation, conducted a representative survey of media education in co-operation with Median from late January to mid-February 2017. The total of 132 respondents (49 headteachers, 67 teachers and 16 other school employees) participated in the survey. Of these, 37 were from grammar schools, 89 from secondary vocational schools and 29 from trade schools. Some of the school workers worked at more than one type of school, however.

The survey showed that a half of schools do not meet the objectives of media education. Six percent of respondents even admitted they do not teach media education at all. There are differences also between the individual types of schools: in 14 percent of grammar schools, media education is a separate mandatory subject, while the same is true in only 5 percent of secondary vocational schools.¹⁹ About a quarter of grammar schools offer media education as an optional subject, but only 3 percent of secondary vocational schools and trade schools do the same. Media education is usually taught as part of civic education, Czech language and literature (reading comprehension) and IT education (Internet security etc.).

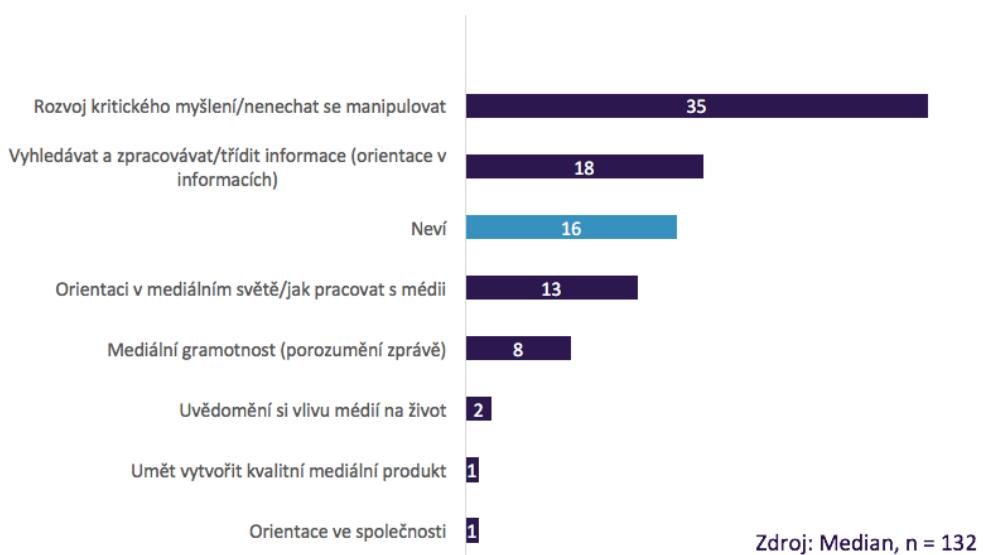
¹⁸ [Výuka mediální výchovy na středních školách](#) (Teaching of media education at secondary schools), Jeden svět na školách (One World in Schools), 2017

¹⁹ Media education is not a cross-sectional topic for secondary vocational schools and media education is mentioned in framework educational programmes (FEP) only in connection with other subjects.

Two thirds of respondents (Graph 5) said that they implement media education cross-sectionally. The degree of integration of media education in other subjects is difficult to estimate. According to the estimates of headteachers and teachers, a fifth of the students receives less than 4 school lessons of media education over their entire secondary school education. There is again a clear difference between grammar schools (65 percent of students receive more than 10 lessons of media education) and secondary vocational schools (only 37 percent receive more than 10 lessons of media education).

Graph 4 shows that headteachers and teachers most often cite a lack of critical thinking in searching for and assessing information. Topics which have always been a traditional part of media education such as creating multimedia content or learning about the media's influence on a person's life are marginalised. Unfortunately, it appears that one in seven teachers do not know what they should teach as part of media education.

Cíle výuky mediální výchovy (%)

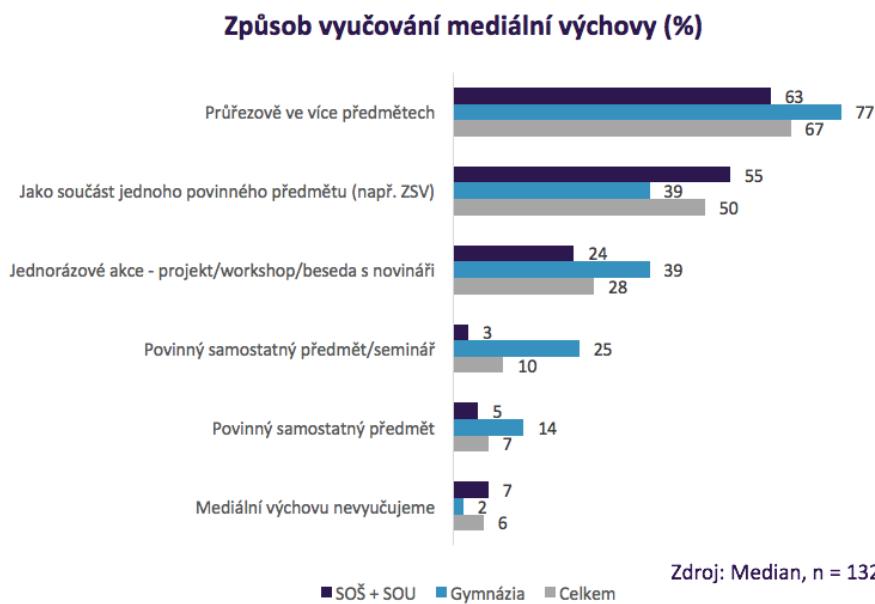


Graph 4: Objectives of media education

(Graph 4:

Cultivating critical thinking/resistance to manipulation; Looking for and processing/sorting information (orientation in information); Don't know; Orientation in the world of media/how to work with media; Media literacy (understanding of the message); Awareness of the role of the media in a person's life; Ability to create a good media product; Orientation in the society)

Media education is mostly implemented cross-sectionally in the teaching of other subjects. However, at secondary vocational schools and trade schools, general knowledge is less accentuated and there are no guarantees that media education actually reaches the students and apprentices. Grammar schools have more room to teach media education, which is documented by the fact that up to a quarter of them offer media education as a separate subject. Only 3 percent of secondary vocational schools do the same, which is alarming.



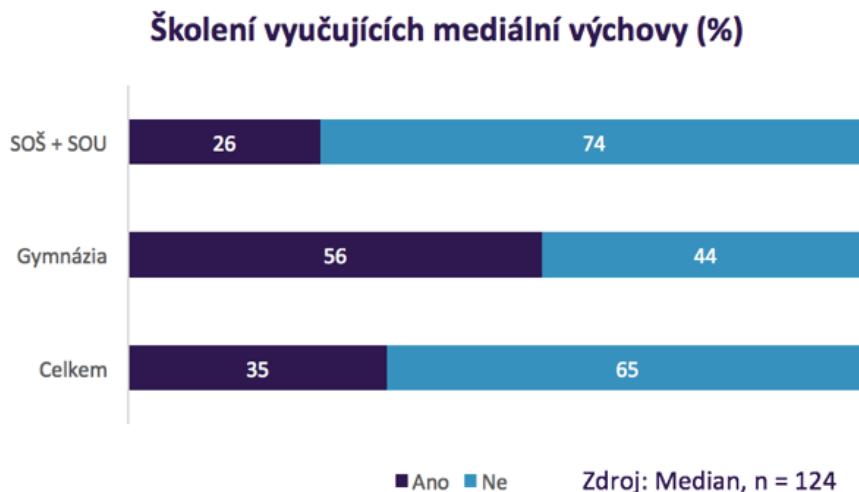
Graph 5: Implementing media education

(Graph 5:

Cross-sectionally in multiple subjects; As part of one compulsory subject (e.g. Introduction to Social Sciences);

One-off events – projects/workshop/meeting with journalists; Mandatory separate subject/seminar; Mandatory separate subject; Media education is not taught; Secondary vocational schools/trade schools; Grammar schools; Total)

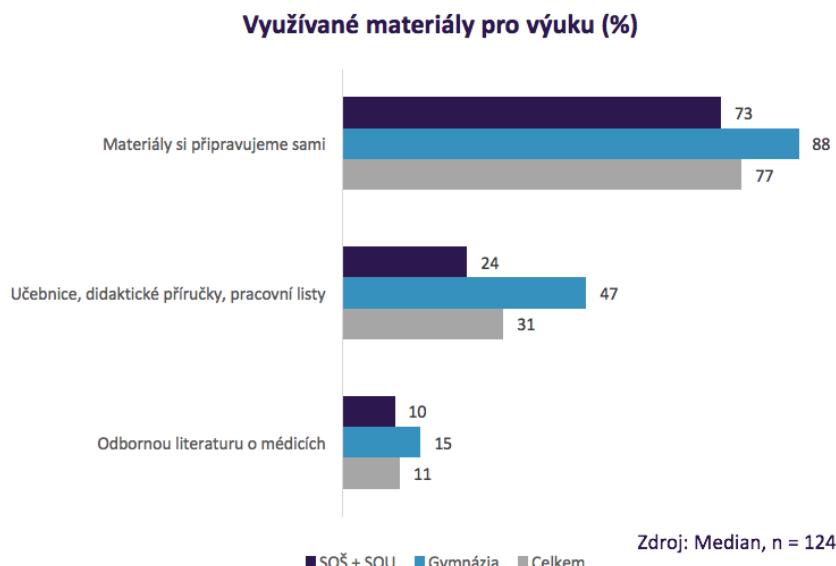
Graph 6 shows that most teachers receive no training in media education – they either choose educational activities focusing on their particular subject (e.g. physics), or they receive no media education training courses at all.



Graph 6: Training of teachers of media education

*(Graph 6:
Secondary vocational schools/trade schools; Grammar schools; Total;
Yes; No)*

As shown in Graph 7, the situation in supporting teachers of media education is critical – almost three quarters of teachers at vocational schools and nearly 90 percent of grammar school teachers have to create their own materials. If the teachers have no other option but to use sources they find on the Internet on their own, it is clear there are obstacles to media education in schools.



Graph 7: Materials used in media education

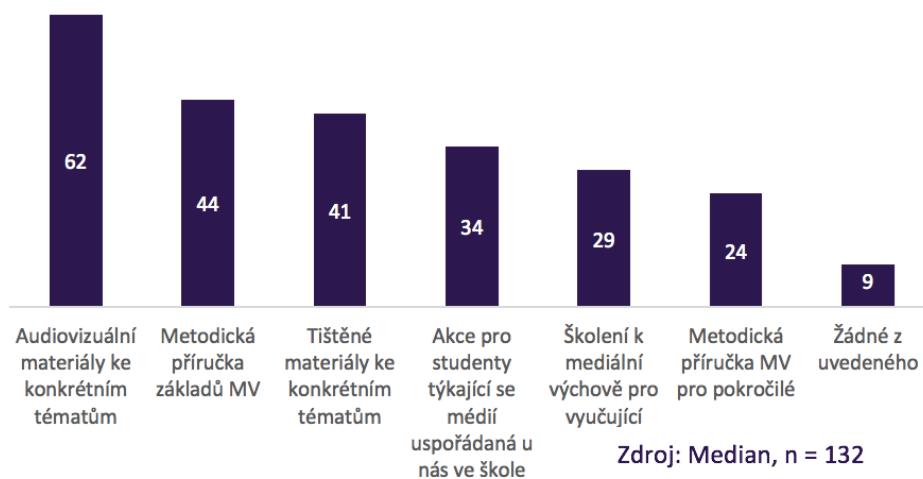
*(Graph 7:
We make our own materials; Textbooks, didactic manuals and worksheets; Specialised literature on
the media;*

Secondary vocational schools/trade schools; Grammar schools; Total)

Given the dynamic developments in the area of the media, frequent changes in the ownership and identifying hoaxes and propaganda, it is necessary to have reference materials reflecting current media and social-network controversies immediately available. These materials get obsolete quickly; the process of making a textbook from writing to reviewing, printing to distribution to schools is long and by the time the textbook reaches the students, its contents may no longer be relevant and up to date.

Graph 8 clearly shows that the teachers would prefer support in the form of audiovisual aids (62 percent). This format is most suitable for the young people; videos and audio recordings also present good didactic tools. About a half of teachers would also appreciate a methodological guide for teaching media education as well as printed materials for use in classes. Twenty-nine percent of teachers also request better training opportunities for the teachers. Only a quarter of teachers feel to be competent enough in the basics of media educations to request an advanced-level methodological guide.

Zájem o podporu v mediální výchově (%)



Graph 8: Interest in support for media education

(Graph 8:

Audiovisual materials on specific topics; Methodological guide on the basics of Media Education; Printed materials on specific topics; Events relating to the media organised for students at our school; Media education training for the teachers; Advanced-level methodological guide on Media Education; None of the above)

4.2 Surveys conducted by the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting (CRTB)

The Council carries out the surveys one every five years; the first surveys were conducted in 2011 (one focused on persons over 15 years of age and the other focused on children under 15 years of age). In 2016, the Council released the *Media Literacy Study of the Czech Population*, which was also divided into two stages: one for children under 15 years of age and the other for persons over 15. In 2016, the CRTB also issued the study of Media literacy of the elderly and disadvantaged groups of people.

4.2.1 Survey among persons over 15 years of age²⁰

The survey was conducted among 1,063 respondents.

The main findings are as follows:

- The survey found that unlike in 2011, watching TV with other members of the family is no longer seen as an opportunity to be together but as a waste of time. People over 15 use the Internet mainly for communication with others (e.g. via e-mail) but also as a place to find information, news and entertainment.
- A half of the respondents do not trust the media; radio enjoys the greatest trust (50.4 percent) while print periodicals are trusted the least (60.5 percent of respondents answered “*rather distrust*” or “*definitely distrust*”). People trust the Internet and TV about the same (around 45 percent). There is a clear gap between young people (15 to 17 years) and the elderly (over 70) in their trust of the Internet. Seventy-three percent of young people trust the Internet while the same is true for only 50 percent of the elderly; another 33 percent of the elderly are “*not sure*”.²¹
- The analysis revealed a “digital gap” between the individual age groups. Younger people used new technologies more often and consumed traditional media less often, while the opposite was true for older people. Differences were present also in the perception of the potential defence against slander (inaccurate information about oneself) on the Internet and in the traditional media. The adults were more sure about what to do with respect to the traditional media, but only a third could say the same about the Internet.²²
- The study found that the respondents are most concerned about a possible violation of their privacy and theft of personal data and information (40.6 percent), which includes fears of someone else gaining access to their Internet banking or online payments (9 percent).²³

²⁰Studie mediální gramotnosti populace ČR (Media Literacy Study of the Czech Population). Mediální gramotnost osob starších 15 let (Media literacy of persons over 15)., CRTB 2016,

²¹Studie mediální gramotnosti populace ČR (Media Literacy Study of the Czech Population). Mediální gramotnost osob starších 15 let (Media literacy of persons over 15)., CRTB 2016, p. 26.

²²Studie mediální gramotnosti populace ČR (Media Literacy Study of the Czech Population). Mediální gramotnost osob starších 15 let (Media literacy of persons over 15)., CRTB 2016, p. 14.

²³Studie mediální gramotnosti populace ČR (Media Literacy Study of the Czech Population). Mediální gramotnost osob starších 15 let (Media literacy of persons over 15)., CRTB 2016, p. 35.

4.2.3 Survey among children under 15 years of age²⁴

The survey was conducted by means of approximately hour-long interviews with groups of 6 to 8 students (with the total of 63 children from kindergartens, primary schools and grammar schools from different regions of the Czech Republic). The groups of students were divided mainly according to the age of the respondents into three groups: pre-school children (5 to 7 years), young schoolchildren (7 to 10 years) and older schoolchildren (12 to 15 years).

The main findings are as follows:

- According to the survey, children consider digital media and the Internet to be a standard part of their lives and see being offline as a disadvantage. Access to print media is mostly dependent on the environment where they are growing up (e.g. access to a household library).
- Consuming audiovisual media takes place mostly through the TV (which now serves as a multi-functional device with a connection to the Internet); listening to the radio is rare. Children are able to use several devices in parallel (PC, tablet, phone, game consoles) without clearly preferring one above the others.
- **For children, media are a source of entertainment but also information and means of communication. They are attracted to interactive features and the possibility to participate in content creation. Younger as well older students judge their intellect based on their abilities to use the PC, Internet search engines and books. Books are probably still idealised as a clearly beneficial, problem-free medium.**
- **TV news is a part of evening family rituals. Children mostly perceive negativity in news. Younger children judge news based on whether they entertain them, while older schoolchildren perceive their relevance as well.**
- **Younger as well as older schoolchildren consider print periodicals to be an outdated medium and do not read them very often. They are, however, able to distinguish tabloid news from actual news and identify the differences in terms of content and form.**

²⁴[Studie mediální gramotnosti populace ČR \(Media Literacy Study of the Czech Population\). Mediální gramotnost osob starších 15 let \(Media literacy of children under 15\).](#), CRTB 2016.

4.3 Results of focus groups organised by European Values

The European Values Think-Tank has organised three focus groups: on 17 October in Prague, on 9 November in Brno, and on 18 January in Olomouc. The Prague group included 7 people; the Brno group had 12 participants and 8 students attended the session in Olomouc. All respondents were university students. Recruitment was organised via student groups and online as well as offline communities and media; in the end, most of the participants were students and graduates of social sciences and humanities interested in media issues.

The following conclusions can be made:

- Almost nobody has encountered media education at school. There are exceptions, however.
- Each school has a teacher who would be capable of teaching media education, even though they may normally teach sciences. The participants agreed that such a teacher must be a figure of authority in the school.
- A teacher of media education should have strong pedagogical authority as he or she deals with many current and controversial social issues where students' opinions can differ. According to the participants, the teacher must be well-prepared and able to lay down cultivated arguments in discussions on sensitive topics.
- Within the participants' families, the quality of news reporting was discussed mostly during arguments about the choice of the TV channel to watch the evening news on.
- People with social sciences and humanities backgrounds can distinguish between privately owned and public service media, explain the differences and follow the selection of the Directors General of Czech Television and Czech Radio by their representatives. However, they are not sure about the names of the institutions and the manner of selection of their representatives who influence the selection of the Directors General.
- Most participants perceived the attempts to influence media messages during the conflict between Ukraine and Russia. Most participants noted that the appearance of "alternative news" websites even made them more interested in media issues.
- Even people interested in the media often did not know the owners of the most important media; they did not know which of the important Czech media were owned by foreign entities and were not able to answer the question of whether and how online news outlets are regulated.²⁵
- Aside from political topics, the participants believed manipulation was affecting areas where a certain level of expertise is needed, e.g. in the area of lifestyle – counselling, dealing with relationship issues, recommended medicines etc. The participants said they did not know how to identify hidden advertisement and how to competently verify information.

²⁵ Outside television and radio broadcasting, news in print and on-line media are not regulated at all in the Czech Republic. There is a widespread media freedom in the Czech Republic; outside of establishing a new radio or television broadcasting station where registration is necessary due to the limited number available frequencies, no permit is needed to publish any print or on-line media. In print media, only a registration with the Ministry of Culture is required.

- An oft-mentioned handicap of media education in school was the inability to check the accuracy of information.
- The respondents were aware that they are surrounded by people with specific opinions, but most had someone (e.g. a member of the family) with whom they had differences of opinion. These differences often consisted in a differing attitude to traditional and “alternative” sources of information.
- Selected media and influencers followed by the respondents on social media were the dominant source of trust in information. Cross-checking information using foreign-language media such as BBC, Guardian or Dennik N was often mentioned.

5. Teachers' possibilities in media education

Main findings

1. There is no single catalogue of educational courses and events for media education teachers and there is no rating system for evaluating the courses. A rating system would be useful to all teachers. Akredis, a catalogue of accredited courses for teachers that is currently under development, can also present an opportunity; however, it is not clear whether there will be the option to view ratings submitted by previous users.
2. Many high-quality study materials were created for the teachers as part of various projects, but are not available in one place.
3. Some materials for media education remain unavailable even though they were created with public funding. The Ministry of Education should ensure (e.g. through its subordinate organisations such as NIE and NIFE) that all publicly funded study materials and other aids are available e.g. at the rvp.cz portal.
4. There are a number of media education textbooks on the markets, but they are getting obsolete.
5. Teachers lack materials concerning current media controversies that would allow them to compare various types of media messages and interpretations. And before the teachers make the materials themselves, the media quickly move on to the next issue for which Czech teachers are – again – not prepared.

5.1 Teaching materials

The survey by People in Need conducted in February 2017 and titled *How is Media Education Taught in Secondary Schools?* showed that 65 percent of teachers of media education receive no training and 77 percent create their own teaching materials. This points to the fact that there is either not enough suitable courses or the teachers cannot or want not educate themselves in the area of media education.

5.1.1 Textbooks

There is no survey of which textbooks are most often used. There are media education textbooks on the market for each stage of education. The book titled [Introduction to Media Education](#) (*Základy mediální výchovy*) authored by Jan Jirák, Marek Mičienka *et al.* offers a basic theoretical and methodological introduction to the subject. The textbook is meant for teachers and offers, aside from a theoretical introduction to media issues, worksheets to be used in class. Although the textbook was written in 2007 and understandably lacks mention of current pedagogical issues in the area of media education (hoaxes, social networks etc.), it provides a solid methodological foundation.

Raabe publishing house published a series of books on media education such as [Manual for Pre-School Education](#) (*Příručka pro předškolní vzdělávání*, 2016) and [Textbook for Lower Primary School](#) (2012) and [Textbook for Higher Primary School](#) (2012). The [set of textbooks](#) authored in 2010 by Jan Pospíšil and Lucie Sára Závodná and published by Computer Media are popular at primary and secondary schools. Their popularity is based on their comprehensive nature: the set includes, aside from the [textbook](#) itself also a [student's workbook](#), [teacher's book with key](#) and [methodology for the teachers](#). The Fraus publishing house published its own [Media Education textbook](#) for teachers in 2013.

However, media education must include materials based on current media topics. For this reason, teaching materials distributed online are more important.

5.1.2 On-line materials

The Internet offers many educational opportunities, but currently, there is no unified catalogue or a rating system that would help teachers sort by quality. This also explains why teachers of media education almost always prepare their own teaching materials. Given the fact that media education is not a qualification taught at pedagogical faculties and teachers trying to promote media education must learn everything on their own, such isolation in self-education may constitute an obstacle to the development of media education at Czech schools. There is currently no association or group in the Czech Republic that would try to connect teachers of media education and inform them about materials and methodologies on current hot media topics.

The [rvp.cz](#) Methodology portal contains 3,498 links related to media education in the broad sense. They often lead to just a single presentation containing mostly lecture notes, but there are sometimes also interesting proposals for classroom activities. However, these often lack methodological support for the teacher, definition of goals or a thematic context of the topic.

The interest in strengthening media education in the Czech education system is documented by the share of materials created and funded using public money. In the [database of outputs](#) of the operational programme Education for Competitiveness, which provided funding for the creation of educational methodologies and materials, there are 223 outputs labelled "media education" out of 138,608 in total.

This represents merely 0.2 percent. Moreover, the project and outcome description noted that many activities concerned ICT, not a critical analysis of media content. The rvp.cz methodology portal [will soon undergo](#) a reconstruction that will affect both its structure and contents, so it will become possible to rate the individual materials. This will enable easier orientation and finding of good teaching materials.

Radim Wolák, a professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University in Prague, offers some educational materials for media education at medialnivychova.fsv.cuni.cz. However, this is his personal initiative and contribution to the development of media education in the Czech Republic. Radim Wolák publishes methodological materials prepared by students in his courses at the Faculty.

Teachers may also search for the methodological publication [Media Literacy and ICT](#) (*Mediální gramotnost a ICT*) from the Centre of Media Education or request methodologies from the [PRUT](#) portal, which focuses on cross-sectional topics and is operated by CCA Group a.s. The company received over CZK 11 million (over USD 440 thousand) in public subsidies for creating the materials, so this violates the basic rule that all publicly funded materials should be publicly available. This is because the materials are sent only at CCA Group a.s. discretion. For any potential monitoring and assessment of teaching materials for media education, it would be necessary for all materials that received public funding and are not available online to be requested and made available on the rvp.cz Methodology portal.

The One World in Schools [portal](#) administered by People in Need is a popular provider of multimedia didactic support for media education. Teachers can download not only videos there, but also methodological sheets or worksheets for the students.

Summary: Teachers lack online and available materials for teaching about the current media controversies. Media education classes are thus deprived of teaching aids that could help illustrate agenda setting by the individual media, including the responses on social networks. If the teacher cannot include current topics debated across traditional media and Facebook in time, there is a risk that by the time he or she does come up with the teaching materials in class, they will already be outdated and the students will not be interested. At that point, the old topic will be overshadowed by a completely new and different controversy, for which a Czech teacher will not be prepared.

5.1.3 Direct support for schools and media education teachers

In 2006, a very useful project titled *Understanding Media – the Basics of Media Education for Teachers* took place where around three hundred teachers received training and teaching materials on CD.²⁶ Within projects supported by the European Social Fund, a number of interesting methodological and other materials were created as well; unfortunately, they are in most cases not publicly available for teachers who did not participate in the original project. The [Zvolsi.info](#) initiative volunteers offer advice at schools as to how to verify the accuracy of articles; People in Need is also active in this regard within the One World in Schools project – [Media Education Week](#). Media education in connection with other topics such as gender issues, the refugee crisis and others is also offered by other non-profit organisations, but their activities are not primarily aimed at promoting media literacy.

²⁶ Wolák R.: [Učebnice a portály mediální výchovy V ČR \(Textbooks and Portals to Media Education in the Czech Republic\)](#), In Komunikace, média, společnost/Studia Nuntios Communicandi 2011, p. 2.

5.1.4 Informal support for media education

Czech Television programme [Newsroom ČT24](#), which focuses on current media topics from Czech Television's perspective, is very useful to teachers of media education. Teachers can get news about the Internet environment through the [@online](#) programme. The programme called [Pirate Broadcast \(Pirátské vysílání\)](#) at [Déčko](#), the Czech Television's channel for children, is aimed at promoting media education in young schoolchildren.

[Bezpečněonline.cz](#), [E-bezpečí](#), [Seznamsebezpečně.cz](#) and the project portals of the [National Centre for Safer Internet](#) (*Národní centrum bezpečnějšího internetu*) offer advice on Internet safety to parents and teachers. Books on media education in the family are also commercially available²⁷. Many libraries organise lectures and seminars on topics of media education. Portals such as [Mediaguru](#), [Mediář](#), Economia's [Marketing & Média](#), Mafra's [Mediahub](#) and Internet Info's [Lupa.cz](#) inform about the media generally.

Portals and webs focusing on identifying disinformation and hoaxes in politics such as [Manipulatori.cz](#) and [Hoax.cz](#) or the web [Demagog.cz](#) which fact-checks politicians' statements are also very useful for the purposes of media education. Neither of these sources is primarily meant for teachers; they serve the broader public.

5.1.5 Courses and training of teachers

Teachers may also attend the courses for further education of pedagogical workers (FEPW) accredited by the Ministry of Education. If a course is accredited as FEPW, the school may claim reimbursement of the costs (or their part) through subsidy grants. The courses are organised based on the expected demand among the teachers and can be organised by schools as well as non-profit organisations and companies. The [special portal](#) on FEPW offers over 750 educational opportunities, but none in the area of media education.

Accredited FEPW courses are to be catalogued in the Akredis system, which is currently under construction. It is currently unclear whether the finished web application for the catalogue will include a rating system that would help teachers select the appropriate training course. A rating system would not only improve orientation in media education courses, but help teachers get oriented generally.

²⁷ E.g. Zdeněk Sloboda's book titled [Media Education in the Family](#) (*Mediální výchova v rodině*) or Petr Valenta's [Media Activities in Pre-School and Younger School Age](#) (*Mediální činnosti – v předškolním a mladším školním věku*).

6. Initiatives to strengthen media education and literacy to date

Main findings

1. There is a possibility to build on previous activities which have largely been reduced on account of the fact they were previously financed from EU funds.
2. Media education is not listed among the “templates” (*šablony*), which means the schools do not receive reimbursement for educational courses in this area unless they are also associated with reading or computer literacy.
3. Many factors influence the shape and implementation of media education, including the demand on the part of the children, parents, the attitudes of pedagogical faculties and support of the Czech Schools Inspectorate during school inspections.
4. Attitudes of the Minister of Education or a person authorised by the prime minister play key role the decision-making process.

6.1 Initiatives to strengthen media education and literacy to date

Most previous initiatives in this area had one problem in common: they were dependent on EU funding and were insufficiently tied to previously created publications and activities. The portal of the Department of Czech Language and Literature at the Faculty of Education of Palacký University Olomouc at <http://komunikacnivychova.upol.cz/> is an example of that. A similar project was organised from 2009 to 2011 by the Coalition of Pardubice Region’s NGOs (KONEP) titled [Media Education at Secondary Schools](#). On the part of the founding authorities, the Zlín Region Authority decided to help the schools and the general public and created a [section for teachers of media education](#) at the www.zkola.cz portal. However, new content is published only about once every two months. The <http://mediagram.cz> portal operated by the Division of Information and Library Studies at Masaryk University in Brno is another useful source.

The currently most well-known institution promoting media education is the College of Media and Journalism in Prague. Its [School of Media](#) (*Škola médií*) portal and other activities receive EU funding and some are thus [available to teachers free of charge](#). The portal contains courses for teachers as well as lecturing programmes for media education in school and audiovisual materials to be used in class.

To date, promoting media education and literacy within the individual field methodologies was not the main concern of the various faculties of education. Nevertheless, there are many authors and experts at many faculties of education who do address the topic. For this reason, in 2016 the student association [Otevřeno](#) (*Open*), which works towards improving teaching at faculties of education and better connection with practical teaching, tried to systematically improve the inclusion of media education in the university basics and didactics courses. These efforts, however, were discontinued due to lack of staff. Universities as well as the individual faculties of education enjoy a high degree of academic autonomy; for this reason, a more open approach to connecting media and digital education within those subjects’ methodologies can only be expected if there is a significant demand among the students.

The [Association for Media Education](#) (*Asociace pro mediální pedagogiku*) was the closest to providing an institutional framework to teachers of media education. It focused more on academic activities rather than promoting media literacy and education directly in schools. However, the Association is not active at the moment.

6.2 Stakeholders in the area of media education

The shape of media education and its implementation is influenced by a number of organisations and institutions. Some of them fall under the educational system and can thus influence media education on account of being the decision-makers. Others may affect media education through its informal influence or by drawing the public's attention to educational topics.

6.1.1 Stakeholders able to influence media education directly

- Office of the Government; prime minister Andrej Babiš

If the Ministry of the Interior or the Security Intelligence Service (BIS) of the Czech Republic indicated that low media literacy could pose a threat to the country (in view of hybrid threats, disinformation, etc.), the [Government](#) could decide to boost media education and literacy in formal as well as informal education and allocate new resources for this purpose from outside the Ministry of Education. For this reason, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education are important stakeholders active in the area of media education.

- The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS); Minister Robert Plaga

Priorities in education policy are chiefly set by the [Ministry of Education](#) and decisions of the Government. Decision making with respect to strengthening and promoting media education is in the hands of the Minister and his assistants. The Ministry of Education also implements the [Digital Education Strategy 2020](#). Given the fact that young people mostly obtain information via modern technologies, increasing digital competences is a prerequisite for increasing media literacy.

- Czech Schools Inspectorate (CSI); Director Tomáš Zatloukal

[CSI](#) is responsible for carrying out questionnaire surveys and monitoring of the implementation of educational objectives at schools. The CSI can include monitoring of media education in the regular literacy surveys. It can monitor how media education is implemented and advise the teachers in case there are shortcomings.

- National Institute for Education (NIE); Nominee Director Václav Pícl

The [NEI](#) defines educational content and objectives, including the expected outcomes (what the students should know after completing the individual educational levels). If the NEI includes the competencies associated with media literacy in the educational documents, the schools must incorporate media education into their internal educational goals. However, the NEI cannot create conditions for supporting the achievement of expected outcomes as it can only define the contents.

- National Institute for Further Education (NIFE); Director Helena Plitzová

[NIFE](#)'s responsibility is to create conditions for further education of teachers. Media education is still not included in the [current catalogue](#) of supported programmes. Consequently, educators who want to organise courses of media education while still enabling the teachers to claim reimbursement of the costs from the school have to tie media education to reading or computer literacy.

- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; Minister Jaroslava Němcová

The [Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#) is responsible for the implementation of the [Digital Literacy Strategy 2015–2020](#) which aims to increase digital literacy among adults. Increasing digital competences will also promote media literacy. Given the close relationship between media and digital literacy, it would be preferable if the Ministry also focused on the development of media literacy among adults.

6.1.2 Stakeholders able to influence media education by exerting informal influence

- Representatives of the academia and universities, e.g. Prof. Jan Jirák

Many academic workers at various Czech universities pursue media education; they approach it from the perspectives of various fields (e.g. pedagogy, sociology, linguistics, media studies) and their definitions of media literacy thus often vary. For example, a [team of experts](#) at the Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University in Prague has been pursuing media education from the viewpoint of media studies for a long time. Various kinds of research, studies as well as media-education projects are being conducted. This institute has also created the original concept of media education as a cross-sectional topic that has subsequently become part of the framework educational programmes. The aforementioned experts often participate in various roundtable discussions, conferences and debates and organise specialised seminars on the shape and future of media education (e.g. in co-operation with the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic). The most prominent authority is Prof. Jan Jirák who has been long co-operating with the NIE on defining the contents (topics as well as the expected outcomes) of media education.

[Civic Education Centre](#)

The organisation has a wealth of experience with promoting a democratic culture. The Centre communicates with interested teachers, schools and other education stakeholders.

- The Czech High School Students Union; chairwoman Lenka Štěpánová

The [Czech High School Students Union](#) only has several tens of members, mostly from the ranks of grammar school students. It is, however, an accepted partner in the public space, also in respect to the media which convey its messages on how to make education better reflect current requirements.

- Czech Television (Director General Petr Dvořák) and Czech Radio (Director General René Zavoral)

Public service broadcasters are not explicitly required to promote media education and literacy; nevertheless, one of their roles is to educate their audiences. [Czech Television](#) as well as [Czech Radio](#) already perform this role through their programming (e.g. the [Pirate Broadcast](#) at the children channel Déčko) but they have unlimited potential to further contribute to media education.

- People in Need; Executive Committee member Karel Strachota

People in Need is one of the most active organisations in the area of media education. Through its projects such as [One World in Schools](#) or [Variants](#), the organisation cooperates with hundreds of schools and teachers interested in media education. People in Need thus probably has the largest list of teachers who potentially teach media education.

- EDUin; Programme Director Miroslav Hřebecký

[EDUin](#) is an organisation focusing on providing information in the area of education and informing the public on current issues, trends and innovation in education. EDUin has successfully maintained channels to education experts as well as the general public through the media, which enables it to raise awareness of urgent issues in the area of education.

- Department of Information Technology and Education at the Faculty of Education of Charles University in Prague (assistant professors Bořivoj Brdička and Ondřej Neumajer); Union of ICT School Teachers and Specialists (Chairman Petr Naske); Alliance for Open Education (Project Coordinator Tamara Kováčová)

The above institutions participate in or advocate the contents and implementation of the [Digital Education Strategy 2020](#). Digital literacy cannot be improved without simultaneous improvement of digital competences.

- Endowment Fund for Independent Journalism (Nadační fond nezávislé žurnalistiky); Executive Director Josef Šlerka

[The Endowment Fund for Independent Journalism](#) is an independent philanthropic project conceived by Czech businesspeople who wish to promote good journalism through the provision of adequate funding. Grants for mapping disinformation in online space can be utilised both in formal (schools) and informal (free time, voluntary activities) education. The Fund also increasingly participates in the promotion of media education and literacy.

- Open Society Fund Praha (OSF), Executive Director Robert Basch

[OSF](#) supports independent journalism and presents the prestigious [Journalism Award](#). OSF also significantly supports education. It is probably the most significant donor in the Czech Republic who is well-suited in terms of its area of interest to provide support to media education.

- Open (Otevřeno); Chairman Tomáš Čakloš

The [Open](#) association associates several dozen students of nine faculties of education and focuses on improving the quality of teaching at the faculties. Despite its size, it is a respected partner in discussions on pedagogical training.

Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting (CRTB); Chairman Ivan Krejčí

[CRTB](#) is the only institution in the Czech Republic with responsibility for monitoring media literacy among the Czech public. This is important with regard to age groups not attending primary and secondary schools (whose media literacy is monitored by the Czech Schools Inspectorate).

- [The Czech Republic Libraries Association](#)

Libraries remain very popular among Czech public and are doing quite well in their new role as leaders in informal education. Libraries can offer valuable services e.g. to senior citizens who are often targeted by disinformation spread via chain emails.

- Publishers Union; President Tomáš Tkačík

The [Publishers Union](#) is a hitherto inactive stakeholder in media education. However, given that publishers of print periodicals are most affected by the changing trends in media consumption, it can be expected that the Publishers Union will have to come up with its own literacy initiatives.

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