

## **MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Finland's media literacy education system is an important part of its effort to strengthen societal resilience to systematic and targeted dissemination of disinformation and anti-democratic messages. The publication of the National Media Education Policy in 2019 continues a decades-long effort to promote democratic participation and reduce polarization in Finnish society.

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- **Theme**  
Building societal resilience
- **Keyword**  
Media literacy | Education
- **Country**  
Finland

### **Challenge**

As noted by the [National Media Education Policy](#), the need for media literacy has become more acute in recent years given “the systematic and targeted dissemination of disinformation and anti-democratic messages,” as well as other rapidly evolving threats. Faced with the instantaneous and global spread of disinformation and threats posed by malign foreign actors, Finland focuses its media education efforts on promoting people's willingness and ability to consume, use and share information in a responsible way, and, ultimately, contribute to citizens' active participation in society.

### **Government action**

The first media education curriculum was introduced in Finnish schools in 2004 through an action plan addressing violence in the media and media education, though media education initiatives have been present in Finnish schools since the 1950s.

Finland's approach to media literacy is outlined in the National media education policy, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2019, in collaboration with the National Audiovisual Institute. The promotion of media literacy is a cross-cutting activity for the Ministry of Education and Culture and has expanded to cover other areas of society and administration.

The concepts of misinformation and disinformation are part of student coursework, including the study of famous propaganda campaigns, advertising, and tactics for using misleading statistics. As part of the curriculum, students create their own messages and multi-media products on different topics to share with their peers for comment and analysis.

Finnish media education involves a range of actors: non-government partners, such as civic organizations, schools, libraries, NGOs and universities, are involved in developing media education plans. Finland also promotes media literacy in accordance with European Union guidance, such as the [Audiovisual Media Services Directive \(EU 2018/1808\)](#) and the [Communication from the Commission on Tackling Online Disinformation](#). The National Audiovisual Institute, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Culture, is responsible for evaluating the implementation of the action plan.

## Relevance for policymakers

- Media literacy has long been perceived in Finland as part of a wider effort to build societal resilience to disinformation.
- A wide range of civil society and associations, media, and educational leaders participate in the design and implementation of media literacy activities, facilitating a whole-of-society effort.
- Media and digital literacy initiatives are implemented by a wide range of government ministries and departments, representing a whole-of-government approach.

## Further information

[mediaeducationpolicy.pdf \(medialukutaitosuomessa.fi\)](#)

## OECD resources

OECD (forthcoming), Good Practice Principles for Public Communication Responses to Mis- and Disinformation, <https://www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/good-practice-principles-public-communication-responses-to-mis-and-disinformation.pdf> .