# Media Literacy
# for Global Education
## Toolkit for Youth Multipliers

**North-South Centre
of the Council of Europe**

# Media Literacy for Global Education

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# Contents

# Introduction

This toolkit targets youth multipliers and educators and gathers practical and contextual information about Media Literacy (ML) and its contribution to the field of Global Education (GE).

Its activities and fact sheets are focused on non-formal learning contexts, but they can also be implemented in schools since the toolkit combines the most recent developments in GE, ML and Digital Citizenship Education useful to enrich formal school curricula.

All the practical activities proposed in the toolkit are in line with the Competences for Democratic Culture and the Human Rights approach of the Council of Europe.

The toolkit's main aim is to empower practitioners on ML, but also to provide the wider public with the knowledge and tools to become more responsible and active citizens, offering activities focused on the critical analysis and production of media messages, analysis of algorithms, active participation in societies, maintenance of privacy, maintenance of well-being and management of e-identity.

## Why was this toolkit developed?

In a globalised world powered by fast-developing information and communication technologies, media work as a facilitator to connect people. However, the increasing power of the media and the general awareness about the capacity of media messages to impact human dynamics, both at local and global level, may be used to influence economic behaviours, political analysis and even interpersonal interactions and intercultural dialogue.

On the one hand, media may be used as an important tool in democratic processes – as journalism that abides to professional standards. On the other hand, media can be a powerful tool to disseminate harmful content, leading to disinformation, hate speech and extremism.

As the common saying goes, "With great power comes great responsibility". Therefore, ML needs to be considered as a fundamental element of conscious living in an extremely complex world. Following this reasoning, ML needs to be integrated as a pivotal aspect of GE, since it provides a lifelong set of skills that enables informed decision-making and respectful interpersonal and intercultural dynamics. This is in line with the GE aim of empowering citizens to deal with complexity and interdependency in the global context.

By enlarging the scope of GE with ML elements, GE becomes a more effective tool contributing to the achievement of UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## How is this toolkit organised?

This toolkit offers an integrated approach towards ML in the context of GE. It is organised in four parts. Part I explains the concepts of ML, GE, and why is it crucial to envisage the first as an important part of the second.

Part II presents a set of five warming up activities to introduce the topic of ML in the context of GE by:

▶ compiling general considerations that a non-formal educator should observe while preparing a GE training session;

▶ presenting exercise guides that adapt common non-formal activities to the specific subject of ML.

Part III goes deeper into specific topics of ML which are particularly relevant for trainers working within the context of GE. It offers four fact sheets compiling contextual information about the topic area. Each fact sheet precedes an activity guide describing new activity ideas specially tailored to train youth multipliers working in the field of GE. Especially designed to achieve GE objectives, through sharing multiple perspectives and the development of critical thinking, the available activities are the following:

1. news manipulation;
2. search algorithms and my worldview;
3. responsible participation;
4. digital footprint.

After each activity, several resources for trainers and educators are offered – namely, one handout and several short sets of practical information; tips to raise critical thinking about the information contained in the fact sheets; tools; and resources presenting links to reports, other toolkits, infographics, videos, and other materials to continue learning more.

Part IV is composed of resources with more pedagogical ideas.

# Defining the core concepts

## What is Media Literacy?

ML is the outcome of a lifelong media education learning process (Buckingham 2003) that takes place in formal and informal learning contexts, through which people learn the "ability to access the media, to understand and critically evaluate different aspects of the media and media content and to create communications in a variety of contexts" (Commission of the European Communities 2009).

A media literate citizen is able to follow a five-phase process such as Access (media and technologies), Analyse (media messages), Evaluate (in a critical way), Create (media messages in a reflexive way), and Participate (through the publication and dissemination of his/her own media messages in order to reach the desired audience). Through this process, the individual ranges the so-called "empowerment spiral": Awareness, Analysis, Reflection and Action (Thoman and Jolls 2008).

Even though different terminologies are used – such as digital media literacy, information literacy, visual literacy, internet literacy or news literacy – in general, the definitions refer to "competencies that emphasize the development of enquiry-based skills and the ability to engage meaningfully with media and information channels in whatever form and technologies they are using" (UNESCO 2011).

ML encompasses "the full range of cognitive, emotional and social competences that includes the use of text, tools and technologies; the skills of critical thinking and analysis; the practice of message composition and creativity; the ability to engage in reflection and ethical thinking; as well as active participation through teamwork and collaboration" (Hobbs 2010).

These competences are developed both in formal and informal learning contexts, and this is why all education policies should include ML at their core (Torrent 2014), aiming to empower children, young people, adults and elderly people so they become active citizens through media. As the Council of Europe (2016) argues: all citizens, with no exception, "should have access to multiliteracy skills education – including media and information literacy – which is effective, up-to-date and free of charge or affordable for the most financially disadvantaged members of society".

For the purposes of this toolkit, ML will be understood as defined in the mandate of the Media Literacy Expert Group for the European Commission:

> "Media literacy" is an umbrella expression that includes all technical, cognitive, social, civic and creative capacities that allow a citizen to access the media, to have a critical understanding of the media and to interact with it. These capacities enable the citizen to participate in the economic, social and cultural aspects of society as well as to play an active role in the democratic process. "Media" is to be understood in a broad way: including all kind of media (television, radio, press) and through all kind of channels (traditional, internet, social media).
>
> *(Audiovisual and Media Services Policy (Unit I.1) 2016)*

## What is Global Education?

GE[1] is an education perspective which arises from the fact that contemporary people live and interact in an increasingly globalised world. This makes it crucial for education to give learners the opportunity and competences to reflect and share their own point of view and role within a global, interconnected society, as well as to understand and discuss complex relationships of common social, ecological, political and economic issues, so as to derive new ways of thinking and acting.

By separating themes and categorising subjects, most formal education systems have established hierarchies of knowledge while alternative ways of learning and of exploring, knowledge have been depreciated. The detachment created by this process of compartmentalised education did not place the educator nor the learner in a connected world. This is the reason why building bridges to approach, get to know and critically understand ourselves and others has been a daring experience.

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1. This section is inspired by the following book: *Global Education Guidelines – Concepts and methodologies on global education for educators and policy makers*. Available here: https://rm.coe.int/prems-089719-global-education-guide-a4/1680973101.

GE came to fill this gap, adding the value of reflective learning, multiperspectivity and the development of critical thinking as the main goals of the education process. A process which also deals with the challenges posed by the new forms and new ways of communication, and with the emergence of a generation of digital natives.

Transformative learning through GE involves a deep structural shift in the basic premises of thoughts, feelings and actions. It is an education for the mind as well as for the heart. This implies a radical change towards interconnectedness and a real sense of the possibilities and opportunities for creating equality, social justice, understanding and co-operation amongst nations and peoples.

Four main stages of transformative learning are strongly linked to this process:

 a) an analysis and critique of the present world situation;
 b) a vision of what alternatives to dominant models might look like;
 c) the development of a set of competences fostering democratic culture;
 d) a process of change towards responsible global citizenship.

As transformative learning, GE implies problem analysis and participatory decision-making processes at all these stages. The educator and the learner need to be able to critically examine the present reality and facts and explore how to move beyond them.

As a transformative and a learner-centred learning process, GE stimulates self-consciousness about the learner's responsibility as an agent of change within their political, economic, social and cultural environment, and makes the learner, as well as the educator, aware of the impact and the interconnectedness between local actions and global challenges. This mindfulness offers a way to make changes at local levels to influence the global levels and build citizenship, with a global perspective, through participatory strategies and methodologies.

At both local and global level, GE consistently articulates different agendas of education – Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention, Citizenship Education, Gender & Children's Rights Education, Intercultural & Interfaith Education, Disarmament Education, Social and Economic Education, Environmental Education, etc. – in order to define the common grounds of GE.

As referred in the Maastricht Global Education Declaration (2002: 2), "Global Education is education that opens people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all. Global Education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimension of Education for Citizenship".

Various core documents (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy) refer to GE, each having in common the development of Human Rights, personality and respect for other people.

This transformative learning creates a real impact on both formal and non-formal education, which have a huge role to play in bringing people – in any space, any time, any rank of age – towards a wider understanding of their real power to shape and contribute to a new future. Transformative learning enables people to shape a common vision for a more just and sustainable world for all.

GE is one of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe's priorities. The North-South Centre has been contributing to GE since 1997, when the Global Education Charter was first drafted.

Throughout the years, the North-South Centre has had a number of initiatives to disseminate and enrich GE through improving policies, promoting the exchange of global education practices and by providing space for dialogue and partnerships.

## Why talk about Media Literacy in the context of Global Education?

ML and Global Development Education (GDE) have been strongly related from the very beginning. Already in 1982, under the Grünwald Declaration (UNESCO 1982), media education was envisaged "as a preparation for responsible citizenship", which is in line with the GE main aim: educating responsible global citizens for social justice and sustainable development.

GE is a thorough answer to the current main social problems since it aims to "foster mutual knowledge and collective self-awareness", empowering citizens "through participatory strategies and methods, so that people learn by taking responsibilities that cannot be left only to governments and other decision makers" (Global Education Guidelines 2012: 14).

According to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on developing and promoting digital citizenship education), a responsible citizen is a "digital citizen" who masters

the competences for democratic culture (Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture) in order to:

a) be able to competently and positively engage with evolving digital technologies;

b) participate actively, continuously and responsibly in social and civic activities;

c) be involved in a process of lifelong learning (in formal, informal and non-formal settings);

d) be committed to defending continuously human rights and dignity.

The competences for democratic culture (fig. 1) are organised in four groups (Values, Attitudes, Skills, and Knowledge and critical understanding) and must be acquired by every citizen in order to "function as democratically and interculturally competent citizens" (*idem*), which is in line with the GDE that aims to build citizenship through participatory strategies and methods.



**Values**
– Valuing human dignity and human rights
– Valuing cultural diversity
– Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

**Attitudes**
– Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices
– Respect
– Civic-mindedness
– Responsibility
– Self-efficacy
– Tolerance of ambiguity

**Competences for Democratic Culture**

**Skills**
– Autonomous learning skills
– Analytical and critical thinking skills
– Skills of listening and observing
– Empathy
– Flexibility and adaptability
– Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
– Co-operation skills
– Conflict-resolution skills

**Knowledge and critical understanding**
– Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
– Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication
– Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability
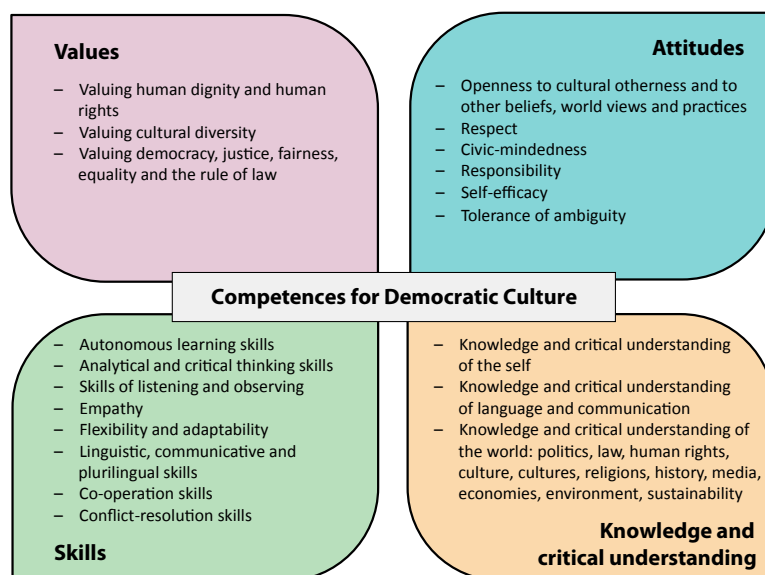
*Figure 1 – Competences for Democratic Culture*

The participatory strategies are increasingly implemented through media, mostly digital media, and occur in a disruptive conjuncture. They are marked by "post-truth, alternative facts and fake news" in a changing media landscape since we have moved from a time when it was difficult to access a large quantity of information to another in which "the problem is sifting through a huge volume of resources to identify what is quality" (Snelling 2017).

Therefore, being a media literate citizen is, crucial to succeed in GE and gain the skills and abilities to competently interact with the media and with the world through the media. A media literate citizen knows not only how to access media and technologies, analyse media messages, and critically evaluate them but also how to create media messages reflexively, paving the way to participate actively, continuously and responsibly in social and civic societies.

ML is an important part of GE – a lifelong set of skills that enables informed decision-making and thus conscious living. This improves the quality of life and contributes to the effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),

goals 4 and 16 in particular. It equips GE learners with tools to tackle issues such as hate speech, racism, sexism, media bias, disinformation, violence, radicalisation, extremism, media bias and disinformation.

The above referred issues seriously undermine the efforts towards a global co-operation based on mutual respect and aiming at peace and sustainable development. In its different forms and channels, media shapes people's perceptions and understanding of various situations and issues. Thus, ML is critical for learners to understand some of the most complex processes leading to tensions at individual, collective, national and global levels and be aware of some of the ways in which these tensions or conflicts can be prevented or resolved.

Furthermore, GE aims at developing learning communities in which learners and educators work co-operatively to promote participation on global issues.

Technologies assist learners and educators in learning collaboratively, co-creating content and opening spaces for dialogue. Therefore, ML as tool to empower citizens on critical analysis and production of messages is an important dimension of GE.

# Warming up activities

To introduce participants to the topic of ML, you may use existing tools, dynamics, methods or games, with some adjustments. You are perhaps familiar with some of these methods, since some of them have been tested countless time. You will find five examples of that kind at the end of this part II.

Before that, **table 1** summarises the main aspects that a non-formal educator should consider when preparing a session, and **table 2** describes some common non-formal education methodologies that can be used in the context of media education and GDE.

These five adapted exercises, which are at the end of this part II, are only introductory; in part III of this toolkit, you will find four more activities, which delve into more concrete topics about the media and GE.

How to approach this training material:

► Most of the exercises are creative and a relaxed approach is encouraged.
► In many cases, there is no right or wrong answer.
► ML education is a process: there's no need to stress if you feel lost at some point, or if, when starting the exercise, you are not 100% confident on how it will work out.
► Approach it with curiosity and lightness.
► Give space and time to the group to explore and familiarise themselves with the materials at first.
► **Create a safe space filled with empathy, tolerance and respect.**

*Table 1. Aspects that a non-formal education trainer usually considers when planning a session*

| Target group | – What is their background? |
| --- | --- |
| | – What is their level of awareness about the topics? |
| | – Why are they motivated to learn about a certain topic? |
| **Aim of the training** | – What are the learning objectives? |
| | – What skills do you intend to develop? |
| | – Are the participants supposed to deliver follow-up activities after the training/ workshop? If yes, what kind? |
| **Topics to be covered** | – What topics are relevant to the context you are working in? |
| | – What topics respond directly to the needs of participants and the community you are working with? |
| **Method used** | – Are you acquainted with the method you are going to use? |
| | – Do you have the necessary background and experience to know how to steer the process you are opening? |

*Table 2. A selection of methods commonly used in the field of non-formal education*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Group work** | Activities involving group work and project work can be directed to topics related to ML and/or including media tools, for example, by producing media content such as articles, videos and podcasts as well as media and information campaigns. Those activities open discussions on the key-topics, deepen their understanding and build participants' digital competences. . |
| **Drama pedagogy** | As a very versatile methodology, drama pedagogy such as "Theatre of the Oppressed" can be developed in the field of ML and can include correlated topics; for example, drama work on journalists and media people, understanding their view, posture and position; working with image theatre on topics related to ML and GDE and even producing a forum play on the topic. |
| **Self-reflection** | The method of self-reflection can be applied to ML topics, either enabling self-reflection through a media tool (e.g. blog post, news article) or reflecting on personal media and information consumption habits. |
| **Loesje creative writing** | Loesje is a worldwide collective of people who design creative activities and projects based on humanistic values and solidarity between people. Loesje creative writing is a simple, fun and effective method of group work, which can also be a good way to produce material to be further disseminated through media and information campaigns. |
| **Flipped learning** | Flipped learning is a method that turns around the traditional teaching-learning process. In this method, participants are asked to get to know the subject beforehand, for example, by accomplishing a given task before the actual training. During the training, the whole time is used not to get familiarised with the topic led by the trainer but to discuss, reflect and complete further work on the topic. This method gives more space for the learners and reduces the chance for the trainer to be one-directional. This is a method to be used when one wants the learners to be active and get deeper into the topic. This method can be used with all ML-related topics in the context of GDE, but it requires regular training sessions and a well-organised plan so that the time will be well used and the tasks can be delivered in advance. |
| **Problem-based learning (PBL)** | The core idea of PBL is to set on fire the learner's own motivation to learn. Using PBL as a method in its original form requires going through a specific cycle. In GDE activities, which can vary a lot from another, educators can benefit more by adapting it. PBL is a learner-centred approach to developing a viable solution for a defined problem. It empowers the learners to conduct research, integrate theory and practice and apply knowledge and skills to find the answers and solutions. Examples of PBL characteristics: ▶ Learners are responsible for their own learning. Learners engage with the problem regardless of their current knowledge or experience. Motivation increases when the responsibility of the solution rests with the learner. ▶ The problem can be ill-structured because a critical skill developed through the PBL process is the ability to identify the problem and set parameters on the development of the solution. ▶ A wide range of disciplines or subjects should be integrated because learners should learn to recall and apply information integrated from diverse sources and because multiple perspectives lead to a more thorough understanding of the issues. ▶ Collaboration is essential. ▶ Activities carried out must be real-world problems. The role of the trainer is to facilitate the learning process (Walker et al. 2015). |

## Exercise 1: STATUES

| | Number of participants: 5 to 30 |
|---|---|
| | Age range: 12 and up |
| | Duration: 20 to 30 min |

**Short description**
- When they hear a word, participants take the position of a statue that expresses their idea about that concept.

**Objectives and outcomes**
- To raise awareness of how media works.
- To develop an understanding of the basic terms of media and media literacy.
- To discuss the core terms of media.

**Methods**
- Role play.

**Resources and materials**
- List of words related to media: print the proposal below or create your own.
- A room big enough for the group to move around.

**Practical arrangements**
- Select the words you are going to use in the activity (e.g. Media, Journalist, News, Truth, Fact, Mass Media, Television, Social Media, Newspaper Agenda, Editor, Blogger, Opinion Maker, Disinformation, Stereotype, Bias).
- Adapt the words and concepts you work with to the background and interests of the participants.

**Procedure**

**Warming up**

− Ask participants to walk around the room freely, without a specific direction and at a dynamic pace.

**Exercise**

− At some point, state a word from the list and ask participants to assume a position immediately (without thinking too much) that represents this word (concept/idea/emotion/person/action) for them. They should stand like a statue: no movement, no sound. Ask participants to interpret this word in their own way (there are no right or wrong answers) and to use as much as possible the whole body, especially the face.
− When participants assume their position, ask them to stand in it for a few seconds and to look a bit around the room at other statues (who are remaining still in their position). You can also state, for example, "This is how this group understands Media" or "This is what Media means to this group". It's best if the group does this part of the exercise in silence.
− Ask the participants to walk around for 10 to 20 seconds, then come up with the new word. If the group is working well after three to five words, you will notice they are ready to go to the next step.
− After the participants freeze in their statues, select a statue that seems interesting and ask her/him to stay in the position. The rest of the group is invited to leave their postures and gather around the statue.
− Ask participants: "What do you see? What do you think it means?" Facilitate the discussion by asking additional questions.
− Ask the "statue" to share feedback on her/his own interpretations. For example, "Is this what you wanted to show? Would you like to add something to the comments?"
− You can repeat the procedure several times, provided the group is motivated.

**Ending**

− Invite participants to walk for half a minute around the room and to relax, come back to their present identity and also shake away physically the statues they represented.

**Debriefing**

− Invite participants to sit in a circle and open the space to debrief the activity, including their feelings during it. You can ask the following questions or invent your own:
− Do you remember the words you were asked to represent through freezing like a statue?
− Was there any word of which you had a common understanding?
− Was there any word that the group members interpreted in different ways?
− How can you justify the common understandings (if applicable)?
− What about the diverse understandings?
− Can you define the words we used in the activity?
− Keeping in mind those definitions, can you share your ideas on how media works?
− Do you think this is true for every place in the world?

**Tips for facilitators**

− The exercise works best if done by walking, but if there is not enough space, it can be done standing.
− Adapt the tempo and the concepts you present to the group, starting with the easier ones and then add in the more crucial ones.
− Always try to select different participants for the "statue show".
− You may pick two or three statues per topic.
− Be prepared to explain how media works and to define the core media terms used in the activity.

## Exercise 2: SILENT FLOOR

| | |
|---|---|
| **Number of participants: 5 to 30** | |
| **Age range: 12 and up** | |
| **Duration: 25 to 35 min** | |

**Short description**
- Starting from their own point of view, participants generate a silent discussion and question the way we understand media.

**Objectives and outcomes**
- To raise awareness of how media works.
- To develop an understanding of the basic terms of media and media literacy (ML).
- To create a common understanding of concepts and ideas related to ML and global education (GE).

**Methods**
- Individual reflection.

**Resources and materials**
- Three to six A2 or flip chart papers.
- A marker or pen for each participant.

**Practical arrangements**
- Based on the size of the group, select three to six words that represent important topics related to ML and GE and write each of them in the middle of a separate sheet of paper, leaving most of the surface free. Some ideas for the words to use: media, journalist, news, truth, fact, mass media, television, social media, newspaper agenda, editor, blogger, opinion maker, disinformation, stereotype, bias.
- Create islands in the room by putting the papers on the floor or on tables, allowing space around each paper so that several participants can approach them at the same time.

**Procedure**

**Warming up**

– There is no warming up needed. It is a good exercise to start a session.

**Exercise**

– Present the setting of the room and ask participants to walk around individually in the room, in silence. Tell them to:
  – approach the different papers in a random order and write or draw on them any association, comment or question they have regarding this concept or topic;
  – comment on anything that is on the paper, meaning the main concept but also the comments and questions of other participants;
  – move on to the next paper when they are done.
– After some time, when several ideas are written/drawn on each paper, invite participants to come back to sheets they have already been at and see if there are some new comments from others they want to react to. Let them continue writing for a few more minutes.

**Ending**

– When the papers are getting full or there is a feeling that participants have expressed most of what they had to say, ask them to take one marker each and go around the papers again, this time with the task of highlighting what resonates or is relevant for them on each paper regarding the topic. It can be a phrase, a word, a drawing, a question or a whole essay. It can be 10 things on one paper and nothing on another paper; it's based just on their judgment.

**Debriefing**

Place the papers in the centre of the room and invite participants to sit around them. Discuss each concept one by one. You can ask the following questions or invent your own:

– What seems to be the main understanding of the group on this topic?
– Are there any comments on the sheets that need clarification?
– Can you imagine situations or circumstances when this understanding of the concepts would be false?

**Tips for facilitators**

– Adapt the concepts you present to the group, based on their background and interests, as well as the aim of the session.
– Include specific topics you want to focus on in the list, and in the debriefing, connect this topic to further exercises (see Part III: Going deeper).
– Put on some relaxing background music during the individual work phase.
– Use creativity (drawings, images, etc.) to make the sheets visually more inviting and the topics more understandable.

## Exercise 3: SEARCHING IMAGES

| | |
|---|---|
| | **Number of participants: 5 to 25** |
| | **Age range: 12 and up** |
| | **Duration: 25 to 35 min** |

**Short description**
– Participants test their stereotypes through gaining a more careful understanding of an issue.

**Objectives and outcomes**
– To experience how stereotyping works.
– To get cognitive tools to recognise and deconstruct stereotyping.

**Methods**
– Individual reflection.
– Pair work.
– Web search.

**Resources and materials**
– Flip chart or table.
– Sheets of paper and pens for participants.
– Internet devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops.

**Practical arrangements**
– Make sure everyone has an online device at hand.
– Define and research in advance the topic you want to work on.

**Procedure**

**Warming up**

– There is no warming up needed. It is a good exercise to start with.

**Exercise**

– Select a term to work on. A hot topic works better – something on which there is a lot of talk in the media at the time of the activity. However, make sure that the choice of topic does not create an obstacle in learning. Keep in mind potential emotional reactions.

– Ask participants to work in small groups for a few minutes and write down all they know about the selected topic.

– Use a flip chart to collect the inputs of participants on the topic and create a common understanding of the term. If possible, try to summarise a definition that incorporates most participants' contributions.

– After creating this flip chart, ask participants (still in small groups) to search online for the term they are working on, using the image option. A lot of images will come on the screen. Let them check and discuss a bit in their groups.

– Ask them if there are any similarities between the photos they see. Write them down, if relevant. Ask them to observe and take some notes. Ask the following questions: "What are the values promoted in this article/image?", "What values are strongly present?" and "What values are weaker?"

– Ask participants to compare their original understanding of the term to the one they received through their online search and continue the discussion by asking:

  – Is it the same understanding? In what ways does it differ? Why do you think there is this difference?

  – Can you connect this narrative with some specific agenda or interest group? In whose interest is this interpretation conveyed and who is harmed or blamed?

  – Is there one narrative or more? If there is a mainstream narrative, are there counter narratives? Who do you think is contributing to the narrative and who is contributing to the counter narrative?

**Debriefing**

– Debrief the exercise by asking participants the following questions:

  – What did you find out in the process?

  – How can you connect it to your lives?

  – Is there some change in how you will consume media?

  – Do you think you would have got different search results in different places of the world? Why?

**Tips for facilitators**

– Search the terms on the web in advance to get an idea of what will come out.

– Tackle controversial topics only if you know how to handle an open discussion on them.

– Instead of images, participants can perform a normal search and analyse the first 20 hits without opening the pages. Alternatively, they can be asked to search for videos or use newspapers.

– You might suggest the use of search engines that respect privacy more and collect less data about the user, such as Qwant or DuckDuckGo (although Google will provide more results).

– Following the discussion about their original understanding of the issue and the one formed by the online search, you can present the Schwartz circumplex (Schwarz Basic Human Values Theory), which shows that, when one value is strong, others are weaker, and others are also strengthened.

  After understanding how it works, you can develop the exercise further, asking them to work in groups using the Schwartz circumplex and allowing them to look through other newspapers, magazines, etc. to find an article and try to analyse it based on the values theory.

## Exercise 4: NEWSPAPER THEATRE

| | |
|---|---|
| | **Number of participants: 5 to 28** |
| | **Age range: 14 and up** |
| | **Duration: 120 min** |

**Short description**

– Based on an artistic creative methodology developed by Augusto Boal, participants explore mass media and their messages. While doing so, they may reflect on media representations and stereotypes.

**Objectives and outcomes**

– To raise awareness of the stereotypes we have and to get a clear understanding of how stereotyping works.
– To get cognitive tools to recognise and deconstruct stereotyping.
– To raise awareness about the effects that mass media have on our views and on the way we understand the world.

**Methods**

– Group work.
– Role play.

**Resources and materials**

– Loads of different newspapers, magazines, promotional flyers, etc. The more plentiful and diverse, the better.
– A few scissors, glue and one A3 sheet or flip chart paper per group.
– Props for the play (optional).

**Practical arrangements**

– Each group shall have enough space to work, either on a table or on the floor.

**Procedure**

– Distribute participants into groups of five to seven.

– Put the material on the floor and invite the participants to sit around it (even on the floor).

– Tell participants that they will prepare a play based on what they find interesting in these newspapers and magazines. Ask them to cut out different parts of the papers that are meaningful to them in some way or, if there is a general topic for the play, parts they feel are relevant to the topic. It is a personal judgment; there is no right or wrong. Usually, each participant does this part on his/her own so that, as a group, they collect more pieces of texts.

– When they have collected enough text, invite them to start organising it on the A3 or flip chart paper. Some connections will emerge – a punchline, a response, some irony or contradiction. When they like a sequence, they can glue the pieces onto the big sheet.

– Ask participants to create dialogues from these texts, to enrich them with movements and then to act them out – and their play is ready! They can collect costumes, props and music to strengthen the message. In this phase, they can also use different reading techniques to enhance the message, like exaggeration, irony or reading a text using a tempo of a song or a speech. Eventually the group can revise the text and add some more if needed – but usually it is not.

– Leave enough time for the group to rehearse. Advise them not to talk too much about what they would do, but rather to do it, see how it is and then change it if needed.

– At the end, the groups perform their plays with the possibility of including participants from other groups.

**Debriefing**

Debrief the exercise by asking the spectators questions first:

– What did you just see?

– What was the play about?

– Do you think it was a fair and balanced interpretation?

– How can you connect what you just saw to your life?

– Afterwards, ask the group who prepared the play to react to the comments:

– What was the message you wanted to show?

– What did you find out through exploring the newspapers?

– Did you notice differences or similarities between newspapers? Why? How do these change your understanding of the stories?

**Tips for facilitators**

– Facilitate the group to agree on a topic to work on before getting to the exercise.

– If you have some more time, work with the group on the aesthetics of the play (i.e. costumes, music and background).

– Note that, by selecting the type of newspapers and magazines, you are directing the exercise in a certain way.

## Exercise 5: HEY, YOU THERE!

| | |
|---|---|
| **Number of participants: 12 to 60** | |
| **Age range: 14 and up** | |
| **Duration: 20 to 30 min** | |

**Short description**
– It is an experiential learning activity related to the understanding of media. It deals with the convergence of power and dominance, as well as represents some basic concepts of psychology and sociology used in media.

**Objectives and outcomes**
– To understand and experience how psychological mechanisms related to mass media may work.
– To raise awareness about relations between power and mass media effects.

**Methods**
– Drama exercise.

**Resources and materials**
– Enough space for the group to walk around.
– A chair or another support (like a box, a step or a sidewalk or small wall) that a person can stand on.

**Practical arrangements**
– Be ready to place a chair in the floor when the "Execution" part begins.

**Procedure**

**Warming up**

It is good to warm up before the exercise. Walking in the room, maybe assuming different postures and walking styles (e.g. happy, lazy, in a hurry) or any warm-ups related to body and/or voice are particularly relevant.

**Exercise**

Setting up

– Ask participants to walk around the room with a dynamic pace, changing their direction quite often.
– Select a precise point of your choice in the room and tell participants to shout, "HEY!" all at the same time, when you clap your hands or say, "NOW!" Repeat it a few times.
– Ask participants to select another point in the room and, at your sign, shout, "YOU!" when you point there. After a few trials, add a third point when they have to shout, "THERE!" when you point there. Try it a few times and mix the three: "HEY!", "YOU!" and "THERE!"
– Let the participants try this a few times. Encourage them to use their whole body to point and all their energy to shout. Let them warm up their voices gradually to reach a higher volume of shouting.

Execution

– Place a chair on the floor and ask for a volunteer from the group to stand on it.
– Ask participants to walk again randomly in the room, and at your sign, point at the person on the chair at the same time and shout "HEY, YOU THERE!"
– Check whether the volunteer is fine – sometimes it can trigger stronger reactions.
– Invite other volunteers to take a turn on the chair (but do not push participants).

Closing

– After repeating it a certain number of times and letting a number of participants experience it, ask them to walk around freely again and shake off the experience.

**Debriefing**

The debriefing of this activity is particularly important to get an insight into the psychological mechanisms of mass media.

Invite participants to sit down (on the floor or on chairs) in a circle and ask them the following or similar questions:

– How was the activity? How did you feel in the crowd? And on the chair?
– Did you notice something special you want to share with the group?
– Was it different to shout as a group than to do the same thing alone? How?
– Did the group have an effect on your behaviour? Do you think you would have done it the same way alone? How was it different?
– Do you perceive some links between this exercise and society in general, especially related to media literacy and global education?

**Tips for facilitators**
– Use volume and body language to support and influence the group.
– This may be a very powerful exercise, so you should try getting to know the group first.

# Going deeper

**N**ow that you've got your participants already interested in the topic of ML, it might be time to explore some current ML topics that are particularly relevant for GDE:

1. news manipulation;
2. search algorithms and my worldview;
3. responsible participation;
4. digital footprint.

In this section, each topic is presented according to the following order:

▶ **Fact sheets**, which will provide you with some background knowledge on the topics that may be useful for you to guide the sessions and debriefings.

▶ **"How to"**, **"what can you do"** and **"why"** tool-boxes where you get practical information. Media education should not only be about raising critical thinking and awareness but also about empowering participants with practical tools that can be used in their daily lives.

▶ **Activities** to help participants assimilate what they learn about ML. After each topic you will also find one original long activity (usually between two and four hours of duration) about that specific topic.

▶ **Ideas for further activities** and questions to catalyse critical thinking about ML. These may either be used for your own learning process, or as discussion ignitors in a training session, or even as short activities.

▶ **Resources** to continue exploring the topic.

## 1. News manipulation

### FACT SHEET: Addressing the information crisis

What we generally call "fake news" can span from "honest mistakes" to dangerous lies. The Council of Europe, for example, proposes three categories of misleading information:

- Mis-information is when false information is shared, but no harm is meant.
- Dis-information is when false information is knowingly shared to cause harm.
- Mal-information is when genuine information is shared to cause harm, often by moving information designed to stay private into the public sphere.

(Wardle et al. 2017: 5)

As a global development educator, you should also approach the information disorder problem. A responsible global citizen needs to be aware of the various facets of the "fake news" problem and raise his/her ability to tackle disinformation in his/her daily life.

Exploring the topic of information crisis, you could try establishing connections between the local and global level of this phenomenon and its repercussions. Also, something you should keep in mind is the connection between past and present events.

The spreading of news, which were not true, was common in the early days of the history of journalism. For example, fake news was part of **yellow journalism**, a term coined at the end of the nineteenth century in the USA. Yellow journalism was characterised by unethical journalism practices and the publication of under-researched news reports and catchy headlines with the purpose of increasing profits. Yellow journalism is related to what we now more commonly call sensationalism.

The use of misleading information is also associated with political **propaganda**, which is "the enemy of independent thought and an intrusive and unwanted manipulator of the free flow of information and ideas in humanity's quest for 'peace and truth'. It is therefore something which democracies, at least, ought not to do" (Taylor 2003: 1).

A different, yet common, association with the idea of fake news is the idea of **fabricated photos** and the manipulation of images, which may also be referred to as doctored photos. This type of photo has been used, for example, by state propaganda with the intent to manipulate public opinion but also by photojournalists regarded as independent before. For example, the issue of whether certain iconic photos have been staged or not has been raised; for instance, the photo of the death of a soldier during the Spanish Civil War taken by the famous photojournalist Robert Capa or the photo of the rise of a flag at Mount Suribachi taken by Joe Rosenthal.

Additionally, what has been said about photography could also be applied to TV.

There are several current cases of fabricated photos. Pick some which are proximal to you (geographically, culturally, emotionally speaking) and analyse them in terms of the repercussions they had in society and what could have been done to prevent its spreading. Here are two examples for you to get started:

**Ethiopia's Tigray conflict sparks spread of misinformation**

With the Ethiopian government conducting a military offensive in the northern Tigray region, some people have taken the opportunity to spread misinformation online. This includes material either not directly related to the conflict or, sometimes, altered to make it look like it is.

In BBC News (11th November 2020)

**False claims, misleading images promote 'eco resort' crowdfunding campaign that's raised over $60K**

An eco-resort that claims to be on the brink of opening, and whose owners have raised over $60,000 on that promise, consists of little more than a raw piece of land in the B.C. Interior and a converted bus parked in a backyard in Langley.

In CBC Canada (24th November 2020)

Nowadays, people face **unprecedented information and data overflow**. Therefore, the information problem is no longer about gaining access, but about learning how to navigate through this overflow and protecting ourselves (Potter 2011). One of the main dangers to which most people are exposed is **profiling**, which the Council of Europe (2010) defines as "an automatic data processing technique that consists of applying a 'profile' to an individual, particularly in order to take decisions concerning her or him or for analysing or predicting her or his personal preferences, behaviours and attitudes" (Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)13 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the protection of individuals with regard to automatic processing of personal data in the context of profiling).

The disguised data collection of personal data and subsequent **profiling** is a current major issue. Furthermore in this increased flow of information, there is consequently a substantial amount of harmful information. Issues of disinformation, manipulation, truth and trust are under the spotlight. Some researchers are describing it as "information pollution" at a global scale (Wardle et al. 2017).

"**Post-truth** era" or "post-truth politics" is another expression that has gained some visibility in the last few years and that is usually associated with the information crisis. But again, although this is not a new concept, the use of this expression has grown immensely in the last few years (OxfordLanguages 2016). In a post-truth debate, the weight of emotions and personal beliefs outshines facts and objectivity (Polizzi 2017). While internet is not the cause per se of such phenomenon, "it multiplies the possibilities of producing and consuming misinformation" (Polizzi 2017).

At the same time, **trust** in the media has been in decline. The lack of trust in the news is the second most important reason why people are avoiding news consumption, the first being how the news negatively affects the audience's mood (Newman et al. 2017). News avoidance may lead to an uninformed or mal-informed electoral body. There may be a relationship between **news avoidance** and other political and social factors, and it is likely that countries that at present higher rates of news avoidance may change over time.

Trust in the news and news avoidance may also be related to another concept: **polarisation**. Polarisation in the context of politics refers to divisions in public opinion, which can go to extremes.

Lastly, the idea of news avoidance is related to another important concept: **incidental news exposure**. Incidental news exposure means being exposed to the news without searching for it, for example, when a friend shares a news article in our social networks.

Many individuals and institutions have been advocating for ML as part of a solution to fight the information disorder. If, on the one hand, raising individuals' ability to evaluate information may help people become better gatekeepers (users-producers), on the other hand, some academics have been questioning a possible backlash effect (Boyd 2018) – an ongoing debate in the field of ML studies concerns how raising ML may increase a healthy **scepticism** on one side or **cynicism** and **distrust** against media on the other. When acting as an ML multiplier, it is important not to develop a negative approach towards media content.

### HOW TO … Respond to the information crisis?

Different actors can take different measures to tackle the information crisis. So, what can you do? At an individual level, we are both receivers and producers of media messages. We can act as producers to several extents, which can rangefrom just sharing a news piece to actually producing and posting a media message. As producers we have, at least, a moral responsibility for what we share. A media literate person should assess the media message before sharing, so as to avoid propagating rumours, cyberbullying, hateful content and so on. In order to do that, it is important to understand how that message was constructed. However, becoming a more media literate person implies the development of an ethical and emotional dimension too. When sharing a message, the individual should not only assess the message credibility and seriousness, for instance, but also its content and its effects. Therefore, when thinking what you can do to make a change in the information disorder, there are several kinds of actions to consider, such as the following ones, organised by The Trust Project:

**Best Practices:** What are your standards? Who funds the news outlet? What is the outlet's mission? Plus its commitments to ethics, diverse voices, accuracy, making corrections and other standards.

**Author/Reporter Expertise:** Who made this? Details about the journalist, including their expertise and other stories they have worked on.

**Type of Work:** What is this? Labels to distinguish opinion, analysis and advertised (or sponsored) content from news reports.

**Citations and References:** For investigative or in-depth stories, access to the sources behind the facts and assertions.

**Methods:** Also for in-depth stories, information about why reporters chose to pursue a story and how they went about the process.

**Locally Sourced?** Let you know when the story has local origin or expertise. Was the reporting done on the scene, with deep knowledge about the local situation or community?

**Diverse Voices:** A newsroom's efforts and commitment to bringing in diverse perspectives. Readers notice when certain voices, ethnicities, or political persuasions are missing.

**Actionable feedback:** What the site does to engage your help in setting coverage priorities, asking good questions and finding the answers, holding powerful people and institutions accountable and ensuring accuracy. Can you provide feedback that might provoke, alter or expand a story?

## Activity 1: News manipulation

**Number of participants: 10 to 20**

**Age range: 15 and up**

**Duration: 3 to 4 hours (depending on the number of participants)**

**Short description**

– Participants will explore the notion of "information crisis"/"information disorder" and experience the production of a very controversial piece of information through role playing a given situation.

**Expected outcomes**

– To increase awareness about the methods used to produce propaganda and manipulation.
– To encourage critical assessment of information coming from the media.

**Methods**

– Group work.
– Role play.

**Resources and materials**

– Handout (Activity 1).
– Pen and paper.

**Practical arrangements**

– Print the handouts beforehand.
– When working in groups, allow them to be far apart so that they do not hear what other groups are doing.
– Have the room arranged in plenary setting, at the end, for the play presentation and discussion.

**Procedure**

– Organise groups of about five participants.
– Distribute roles among group members in each group (politician, assistant to the minister, press officer, journalist, member of the public).
– The role of the politician and the press officer is to produce fake news that is convincing and raises the number of supporters. The role of the journalist is to debunk the fake news.
– Give a handout to each group.
– Give the groups between one and two hours to work, during which you should monitor the developments in each group.
– Based on that role-playing exercise made in groups of five, the group will then elaborate on the narrative input, produce a short piece of misinformation/disinformation/malinformation, and prepare a play to present in plenary.
– Give each group 5-10 minutes to present their play in plenary.
– Moderate a 30-minute discussion in plenary after the presentations. Here are some questions that may inspire you: What exactly is fake news? What characteristics does it have? Why is it produced? How can it be dismantled? How can we really distinguish between accurate and false information? Why do people manipulate the news? Who decides? Who benefits from the news manipulation? What kind of questions would you address to find out if the information is accurate?

**Debriefing**

Invite participants to sit together and discuss the activity. The following questions can support this procedure:

– Was it easy to produce the piece of information? Why?
– Why do people manipulate the news? Who decides? Who benefits?
– What do you understand by "information crisis"/"information disorders"?
– How would you define the concepts of disinformation, malinformation and misinformation?
– What distinguishes these concepts?
– Was this activity important to learn how to produce a piece of information?
– How would you deconstruct a piece of information?
– What do you understand by critical analysis of media messages?

## Handout for activity 1: News manipulation

Dear Group,

In this activity, you will explore the notion of "information crisis"/"information disorder" and how misinformation, disinformation and malinformation are produced, through a role play. The goal of this activity is to raise awareness about the methods used to produce propaganda and manipulation.

Here is some **food for thought**. Fake news is a very complex concept, and most experts would rather use other terms instead. The Council of Europe uses the expression "information crisis"/"information disorder" as an umbrella term that refers to three different concepts:

**Misinformation** – use of false information without malicious intent

**Disinformation** – deliberate use of false information created with harmful intent

**Malinformation** – use of information based on reality with harmful intent

With these nuances in mind, we invite you to write on five pieces of paper the title of each role that you will be playing, those roles being:

**The parts**

Press Officer
Minister for the Environment
Assistant to the Minister for the Environment
Journalist
Member of the Public

If your group has more than five people, you can also add the following roles: Environmental NGO Activist, more Members of the Public and more Press Officers.

**The plot**

Elections for the parliament are coming close. A new survey has just come out. The levels of likeability of the current government are at their lowest. A series of incidents in several cabinets are behind the decreasing rates of likeability. And, as the Minister of the Environment discusses this problem with his/her press officer, the assistant comes in with one more problem. Analysis of the water in the most important river of the country has shown that the levels of contamination are too high – the water is not drinkable as in the long term it may cause cancer. It should also be boiled before being used for cooking. Scientists at the laboratory explain that the cause of this contamination lies at the water treatment plant, which belongs to the state. The results of this analysis are only known at the laboratory and the cabinet. The laboratory rules do not allow the scientists to make public comments about it.

So the minister should have total control over how and when and if to spread this information. The minister just can't stand another scandal, so he/she decides to keep this a secret. However, a journalist contacts the press officer asking when the results will be released to the press. The press officer says to the minister that they will have to issue a statement to keep journalists away. The assistant to the minister and the press officer insist that the minister does not have to tell the truth about it. Together, the three of them have to decide what the story they will be releasing is going to be. For them, at this moment, it is more important to keep the likeability ratings from decreasing than to tell the whole truth.

What do they tell the press?

How will the journalist react to the press release?

How will the public react to the press release? How will the press release affect the levels of likeability of the government?

You have one hour to decide how you are going to make a statement (e.g. with a formal press release, with social media, with a press conference?) and what will be in that statement be (i.e. write it). Then, pre-test it among your group (with the journalist and the member of the public).

After lunch, you will be presenting this activity in plenary and testing the impact of the press release among all your colleagues as if they were all members of the public.

More questions for you to brainstorm while you're at it:

What exactly is fake news? What characteristics does it have? Why is it produced? How can it be dismantled? How can we really distinguish between accurate and false information? Why do people manipulate the news? Who decides? Who benefits from the news manipulation? What kind of questions would you address to find out if the information is accurate? Where can you get help for this?

Good luck!

## Ideas for further activities

► Can you think of global spreads of "fake news" which have affected your local community and/or vice versa, local "fake news" which may have had a global impact?

► What kind of tabloids exist in your country? How do those newspapers contribute, or not, to the propagation of rumours and false information?

► In the last few years, allegations about specific political groups trying to influence public opinions have been made in several countries. Can you think of specific examples like that? Would you say those are cases of propaganda?

► Look at newspapers and websites and pay special attention to how pictures are framed and think of how framing a picture in a specific way influences your perspective of that event.

► Choose a TV segment from a comedy talk show about an ongoing issue in your country and a segment about the same issue from a TV newscast, then, compare and comment on both approaches in terms of credibility, impartiality, independence, sources used, and so on. Show the group only one of those two selected segments, for example, the satiric one, and ask them to create the other one, for example, the journalistic one. Compare the participants' work with the professional segments and have them discuss the differences while sitting in a big circle.

► In the context of GDE, you may help people broaden their view about the problem of information by raising their understanding of the information flow.

► What kind of relationship do people in your local community have with the news? Do they usually find the news credible or not? Are they tired of the news? Do they still value journalists' work?

## Resources to learn more

**Report:** European Commission Report (2018) "A multi-dimensional approach to disinformation: report of the independent High level Group on fake news and online disinformation"

**Report:** Council of Europe Report (2017) "Information Disorder: toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making"

**Report:** Mapping of media literacy practices and actions in EU-28

**Infographics:** European Association of Viewers Interests, Infographic: beyond fake news – 10 types of misleading news

**List of fact-checking sites:** https://www.poynter.org/international-fact-checking-network-fact-checkers-code-principles

**Digital games to learn how fake news is produced:** https://www.getbadnews.com/#intro

**Educative digital platform about news verification:** https://checkology.org/

**Ethical considerations about the use of images and messages in the context of the NGO's work:** https://nonprofit.xarxanet.org/news/ethics-using-images-humanitarian-aid-ngos

**Ethical considerations about the news:** Ethical Journalism Network, http://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org

## 2. Search algorithms and my worldview

### FACT SHEET: Elevating our perception – knowledge and belief

Raising ML knowledge implies not only a better understanding of how media messages are produced, but also how people internalise those messages. "In order to survive in our information-saturated culture, we put our minds on '**automatic pilot**' to protect ourselves from the flood of media messages we constantly encounter. The danger with this automatic processing of messages is that it allows the media to condition our thought processes" (Potter 2011: 3) since "while we are exposing ourselves to more and more messages, we are paying less and less attention to them. With reduced concentration, our increased exposure does not translate into increased learning" (Potter 2011: 8.

#### Confirmation bias and selective exposure

One important aspect in the way we internalise media messages is called **confirmation bias**. Confirmation bias refers to the tendency people have to search, favour and remember information that is in accordance with their prior beliefs. Additionally, people tend to interpret the information they read with bias, favouring the line of reasoning that is in accordance with their own prior beliefs.

Confirmation bias is related to another key theory about how media messages are internalised: **selective exposure**. This theory describes how people prefer to expose themselves to the information that reinforces their own beliefs and avoid the information that is opposed to their own beliefs. Even though the role of the media may not be intended to change attitudes, as an opposite effect, media, instead of changing people's attitudes, may end up reinforcing people's beliefs. A simple and practical example of selective exposure would be a right-wing person buying a right-wing newspaper but not a left-wing newspaper.

But why does this happen? According to Stroud's (2017) synthesis, researchers explain selective exposure through five main reasons:

1. "Cognitive dissonance" – selective exposure helps reduce the state of dissonance with news which present a different perspective.
2. Sometimes people are very motivated to reach a certain conclusion.
3. It is easier and requires less effort.
4. Our mood and emotions also affect our information search.
5. People tend to think that like-minded information is of higher quality, and because we seek quality in information, we are more inclined to consume like-minded information.

#### Echo chambers, incidental exposure, and filter bubbles

Selective exposure theory dates to 1940, but with digital and social media, it gained another dimension. At first, the internet was regarded as an open medium that would expose us to more ideas and people. However, as search algorithms became personalised, new concerns arose. An internet search, for example, may end up reinforcing the pre-existing beliefs even more. Accordingly, internet and social media may now function as **echo chambers** reinforcing even more one's own confirmation bias, keeping us closed within the same lines of thought. Search engine optimisation, search algorithms personalisation and social media customisation all work to provide us with the links, people, news and so on that they think we are most interested in. In this sense, internet, instead of broadening global debate may be doing just the opposite.

In the current web paradigm, we are mostly **incidentally exposed** to news shared by our friends or generated by algorithms based on our own preferences and search history, and less by random sources. Because of that, we risk being exposed to news only within a **filter bubble**, a state of isolation, that only reinforces our own views of the world, often leaving out different perspectives and approaches. Issues such as stereotypes, hate speech, extremism or cyberbullying may be amplified within a bubble of exposure to like-minded people.

It is, therefore, fundamental to be aware of the difference between knowledge and belief. Misinformation is sometimes intentionally used to alter people's perception about certain topics, like climate change, for example. The gateway belief model is the theory, which explains how misinformation is used to change one's perception by creating doubt. Two examples linked to the gateway belief model are the controversial debates concerning vaccines and climate change – two topics which, despite the fact of having substantive undoubtful scientific proof backing them up, are still being questioned by many people who do not believe in that proof.

## Stereotypes, bias, and perceived information

**Stereotyping**, from a merely psychological point of view, is a cognitive mechanism that helps human beings save cognitive energies and understand unknown situations by presuming similar items have similar characteristics. The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy defines gender stereotypes as generalised views or preconceived ideas according to which individuals are categorised into particular groups, according to their gender. The same can be said about race, nationality, and other differentiating characteristics.

As an example, we learn that rotten food has some specific taste. Even though we do not know the specific taste of each rotten food, we will assume by similarity this is the case. The same goes with biases, there are essentially personal inclinations or opinions towards or against certain ideas or actions based on our personal experiences. If people knew that each time they went out in the rain they would get sick afterwards, this would slowly result in a **bias** against going out when it is raining. So, the psychological mechanisms of stereotyping and biasing are quite essential cognitive mechanisms and are very useful in helping us interact with the world.

Now, in the situation of living in a complex and sophisticated environment, our trivial psychological mechanisms can also get confused and serve us wrong in understanding and interacting with today's society, causing small and big problems, yet these mechanisms will always be present. The aim is to be aware of them, within us, and within other people, including the ones that produced or influenced the content in order to seek a better and more comprehensive understanding of the situation. We must keep present that stereotypes are working on probabilities: a spider may or may not be poisonous, but surely not each spider is poisonous. Secondly, biases and stereotypes are based on personal experiences and information we collect during our lifetime.

How the media portrait certain groups can influence how people perceive those groups (Arendt and Northup 2015). Therefore, to counteract prejudice, it is important to address the effects of those representations in society and to proactively educate people on how to become better interpreters of media messages that cover issues of gender, race, multiple identities, minority groups such as refugees and so on. Increasing respect and tolerance in a global society are at the core of GE, and to do that in a mediated world, it is important to raise awareness about stereotypes and bias in the news. Some countries and/or media organisations have a code of ethics against the use of discriminatory language on the news. Even so, many news media perpetuate prejudices.

With ongoing political changes and exacerbated extremisms against feminist movements, migrants, refugees and other minority groups, a GE educator should foster the learners' understanding of the subtle (or not so subtle) ways in which we generally **perceive information**, how we tend to keep in our comfort zone (e.g. confirmation bias, selective exposure) and how living in that bubble affects our world view and our view of the other.

## Competences

Elevating people's perception is related in the first place to an attitude of openness to otherness and other beliefs and world practices, thus relating to others with respect and open-mindedness. Just by assuming an open-minded attitude, we can see clearly and navigate between stereotypes and biases, which many times are carried by a strong emotive component of discontent or fear not necessarily connected to the topic or people we are stereotyping. For this reason, understanding of oneself and having empathy are crucial to engage in open, appropriate and respectful interactions across cultures. To be globally minded, you need to start by being mindful about yourself. A learner that has a respectful attitude in the context of GDE expresses respect for other people as equal human beings regardless of their cultural background, socioeconomic status, political opinions and religious differences.

**HOW TO … Raise your mindfulness about media consumption and influence?**

Raising ML is not only about acquiring skills about how the media works, how media messages are produced and how to evaluate them. It is also about knowing ourselves and our information consumption habits better. Therefore, one thing people can do to improve their ML level is to raise their mindfulness about the way they are exposed to and consume the news. Potter (2011) suggests a personal strategy with ten specific steps to increase one's ML, which are related with raising our understanding about our own media experience:

1. strengthening the personal locus [knowing your goals and drives];
2. focusing on usefulness as a goal;
3. developing an accurate awareness of one's exposure;
4. examining one's mental codes;
5. acquiring a broad base of useful knowledge;
6. thinking about the reality-fantasy continuum;
7. making cross-channel comparisons;
8. examining one's opinions;
9. changing behaviors;
10. taking personal responsibility.

(Potter 2011)

**HOW TO … Raise independence from algorithms in your internet searches?**

As people clean their windows at home to contemplate the views, they should also clean their devices in order to see out of the bubble when performing searches. To do that, they may regularly:

– clean search history and cookies;
– use incognito mode when browsing;
– use different search engines when performing an information search;
– log off social media and email accounts and others which may have tracking systems;
– search in credible sources and not only using the first results returned by the search engine;
– use ad and tracker blocking systems;
– get into the habit of cross-checking and fact-checking;
– carefully think of how to phrase a query and be aware that suggestions for auto completion also follow an algorithm;
– take the time to personalise cookie preferences when possible.

| **Activity 2: Search algorithms and my worldview** |
|---|
| Number of participants: 5 to 30 |
| Age range: 15 and up |
| Duration: 2 to 4 hours (depending on the number of participants) |

**Short description**

– Through a visual exercise, participants explore the notions of confirmation bias and selective exposure, the difference between knowledge and belief, and how search algorithms may reinforce our own beliefs.

**Expected outcomes**

– To raise awareness about how the personalisation of algorithms may influence our view of the world.

– To highlight the importance of media literacy under circumstances when objectivity loses place to personalisation.

**Methods**

– Web search.

– Gallery walk.

**Resources and materials**

– Handout for Activity 2, including the list of topics.

– Smartphone or laptop with Wi-Fi connection for each participant.

– Flip charts or A3 sheets.

– Glue stick, coloured crayons or markers, scissors, tape.

**Practical arrangements**

– Make sure everyone in the group has an internet device and the Wi-Fi connection is strong and stable enough.

**Procedure**

– Create groups of three to six people and give them the handout for Activity 2, including the list of search topics. You may complete the list in the handout or create your own.

– Ask participants to perform searches for those topics on their own mobile/computer/tablet and then compare the obtained results with their own group.

– When they are done, tell the groups to choose one, two or more topics and curate an art exhibition with a narrative about the different results they obtained. Participants should turn those results into something visual, for example, posters.

– Ask participants to make an art exhibition out of their visuals in the room and present their findings to the entire group.

– In plenary, discuss the results obtained and how the chosen devices and search paths affect results and, ultimately, our view of the world.

**Debriefing**

Invite participants to sit together and discuss the activity. The following questions can support this procedure:

– What questions should you ask yourself when trying to raise mindful self-awareness about your information consumption?

– Now, what practical tips would you give to yourself and others about internet searches?

– How do you think the same activity would bring different (search) results in different parts of the world? Why?

– Refer participants to the "HOW TO … Raise independence from algorithms in your internet searches?" section above.

**Tips for facilitators**

– If you make your own list, define the number of topics according to the allocated time and group size. You may include some topics proximal to your local community too.

– Check regularly whether everyone understood the exercise and how the process is going. If needed, stimulate their critical thinking and creativity, particularly for the exhibition.

– Allow enough time at the end for a fruitful discussion. This exercise raises awareness about how search algorithms may influence our view of the world; it is important at the end to empower participants with specific tools to manage their searches. You can do that through the discussion. Check the "HOW TO" box on page 43

– You might mention that these differences are not always due to the algorithms but other reasons as well, such as certain countries blocking certain content, etc.

## Handout for Activity 2: Search algorithms and my worldview

Dear Group,

In this activity you will use art to explore the notions of confirmation bias and selective exposure, the difference between knowledge and belief, and how search algorithms may reinforce our own beliefs, through a visual exercise. The goal is to explore how the personalisation of algorithms may influence our view of the world.

**Some food for thought before starting:**

**Confirmation bias** refers to the tendency people have to search, favour and remember information that is in accordance with their prior beliefs. Additionally, people tend to interpret the information they read with bias, favouring the line of reasoning that is in accordance with their own prior beliefs.

**Selective exposure** theory describes how people prefer to expose themselves to the information that reinforces their beliefs and avoid the information that is opposed to their beliefs. A simple and practical example of selective exposure would be a right-wing person buying a right-wing newspaper but not a left-wing newspaper.

**Search algorithms** are personalised, which means they tend to present and order the results the way the system calculates that you would want to find them. This personalisation adds up to the confirmation bias and selective exposure tendency, which we all have.

**In this activity**, you will start by using your own mobile phone or laptop to perform a series of internet searches. Please use the search engine and browsers that you usually use. All members of the group should make all searches. Secondly, you will all compare and discuss the results obtained and how they may affect your perception of each topic. Remember to check the suggestions the search engine makes when you start typing the key words of the search. Thirdly, you will prepare an art exhibition about search results and perception to be exhibited after lunch to the whole group. You will receive a set of art and office supplies to help you. You are free to use the entire space of the room for your art exhibition. Please exercise your creativity, imagination and critical thinking, while being respectful and considerate of others.

Here is the **list of topics** for you to search:

1. "Egypt"
2. "Does climate change really exist?"
3. "Do vaccines cause autism?"
4. …

Good luck!

## 💡 Ideas for further activities

- Ask yourself about your information consumption habits:
  - How do you select the information that you consume?
  - How do you internalise the messages you come across? In other words, how do you learn and unconsciously assimilate those messages?
  - How do you search for information? (That is, do you rely on social media or actively search for the information you need?)
- Thinking of confirmation bias and politics, think of how the Cambridge Analytica situation has used the concepts of echo chambers, selective exposure and confirmation bias as well as data mining to reinforce people's views of politics during election trails in the USA, the UK and Kenya?
- What relationship can you establish between the concept of confirmation bias and the use of cookie trackers for marketing purposes? Can you think of a global and a local example of personalised advertising based on your search history? What is the impact that sort of marketing has on you?
- Think of your own news consumption. How are you exposed and/or influenced by different points of view?
- When posting content online, how are you influenced by a like and share?
- How is digital media impacting your perception of the world?
- How does a meme or a strong emotional video, for instance, influence your perception on a given topic?
- How do uncivil comments with a perspective with which you agree affect your own view? And with a perspective with which you do not agree?
- How does the media that you usually consume portray minorities from your local community?
- Do you usually read comments to the news? How do comments amplify hate speech?

## 🌐 Resources to learn more

**Book:** Potter, W.J. (2011), *Media literacy* (5th edn), Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California.

**Video:** MCAT, *Theories of selective attention/Processing the environment* , Khan Academy

**Video:** Simons and Chabris, *Selective attention test*

**Encyclopaedia:** Stroud N. J. (2017), "*Selective Exposure Theories*", in Kenski K. & Jamieson K.H. (eds.), The Oxford handbook of political communication

**Epub:** "Algorithms and human rights – Study on the human rights dimensions of automated data processing techniques and possible regulatory implications", Committee of experts on internet intermediaries (MSI-NET) (2018)

**Handbook:** Richardson J., Milovidov E. & Schmalzried M. (2017), *Internet literacy handbook*

## 3. Responsible participation

### FACT SHEET: Learning about participation

Digital citizens are not only consumers of information but also producers since they are engaged in a participatory paradigm when they make a simple comment on a news story or on a social media platform or when they share just a link, for example. However, there are stronger ways of participation that people can get involved with as multipliers and/or activists, for instance, through social media. Participation then means sharing, becoming involved and taking action.

Citizens choose to actively participate in and contribute to public decision-making at different levels: "The impact of global education can be measured by the level of awareness, engagement and participation of people in society and their ability to leverage power relations at different levels in favour of common goods" (Global Education Guidelines 2019: 33).

**eParticipation** refers to interactive online engagement, where decision-making takes place electronically, using online information and internet-based technology (IJAB 2014). Traditional forms of participation, such as volunteering, civic engagement in NGOs and political participation are – if not losing young people's interest – stable at low level. Thus, interest in political action as well as unconventional forms of participation (such as consumer boycotts, online petitions and demonstrations) are increasing. There seems to be some evidence that online tools introduce new opportunities for a low threshold of engagement of young people (Rupkus and Franzl 2018).

When talking about social media and participation, the potential of online communities cannot be ignored. New technologies and social media platforms create new ways of taking action and participating; thus, supporting the creation of different kinds of online communities. Online communities, formed by people with a common goal or interest who have not necessarily met before or have anything else in common, have the power to generate an impact, to facilitate information sharing and managing their common interest, and create the possibility of taking action together.

In the context of eParticipation, it is emphasised that the online activity should not be seen as an alternative for participation, but rather as a complementing element, offering new tools and opportunities. eParticipation is still developing, but it's not replacing offline participation; "rather, it enriches it and helps adjustment to changing participation patterns, providing necessary technological solutions relevant for today's realities" (Rupkus and Franzl 2018: 51).

Furthermore, it is essential to link the dimension of empowering active participation with the ML topics, in the context of GDE. There is a need to support young people not only to participate but also to participate meaningfully.

## Responsible participation as basis for taking action

To participate in responsible and ethical ways in media, one must be aware of his/her rights and responsibilities. Racism, xenophobia, hate speech or cyberbullying are some of the most visible expressions of harmful behaviour on social media.

In this regard, the question that summarises today's challenge is: how do we avoid crossing the border between freedom of expression, privacy and integrity-related rights? Part of the answer is in ethics, empathy and personal responsibility.

Whether people are writing posts, articles or publications, sharing images or videos, or altogether participating to social media discussions or whether they are a private person or a public figure or whether they act in an official capacity or just as a private citizen, an ethical way of acting should be always considered.

 In relation to GE, an ethical and respectful way of acting is at the core of all actions. As stated in Digital Citizenship Education (DCE), the 10 domains of ethical behaviour and interaction are based on "skills such as the ability to recognise and understand the feelings and perspectives of others". Ethics and empathy, amongst other responsibilities, are essential to ensure a safe and responsible digital environment for all (Council of Europe 2018: 3-4).

Responsibility is at the core of GE, as it promotes values and attitudes for responsible global citizenship, both at individual and collective level. At the base of a responsible social engagement needs to be a sensitive understanding of others' points of view and feelings, that is, to be empathetic. It is crucial for educators to enable responsible and ethical participation, from early settings, when young people are just learning the new ways of participation. To accomplish the GE goals, it is necessary for people to participate and act in a responsible way.

While using social media, people must respect others and moderate what they share and post, as suggested on the Respect Zone Charter. In addition, UNESCO's list of ethical considerations (2015: 71) suggests a set of ideas about active and responsible engagement through social media, recommending a set of ethical considerations in media use, as follows:

– "A focus on the intentionality of actions, as well as outcomes, intended or unintended.

– Understanding that Internet use can have positive outcomes, but it can also be misused or purposively employed in ways that violate standard norms, such as harming others.

– Consideration of whether the norms, rules and procedures that govern online behaviour are based on ethical principles anchored in human rights and geared to protect the freedoms and dignity of individuals in cyberspace and advance accessibility, openness, inclusiveness, and multistakeholder participation on the Internet."

Active participation has become an increased concern for many stakeholders. In the context of GE and on the way to achieving the SDGs, ethical and responsible behaviour is a key element valid online and offline. While educators should support young people in actively engaging in society, they should also guide them to do it respectfully. Therefore, educators play an important role not only in providing young people with practical tools for active participation but also in making sure that the ethics, responsibilities and principles behind the actions are being assimilated.

## Competences

While talking about responsible digital participation, we use technology as a vector or tool, but the primary producer is still the individual. Consequently, apart from technical skills involved in the production and dissemination of content, all the other required competences are the same as for engaging in public debate and civil society, especially a knowledge and understanding of the mechanisms of democracy and a civic-minded approach. A fully civic-minded approach results in exercising the obligations and responsibilities of active citizenship at either the local, national or global level, and taking action to stay informed about civic issues.

**HOW TO … Participate and campaign?**

– Learn about the topic you are engaging with, and make sure your arguments are based on reality and substantiated by facts.

– Be sensitive and listen to others, paving the way to constructive and responsible dialogue.

– Act open-mindedly, developing various visions, being proactive, respecting human dignity and equity, following, for instance, the Dóchas *Code of Conduct*, a useful tool for NGOs.

– Start a campaign aimed at raising awareness among policy makers; defining main goals, target groups, timeline, and needed resources; and monitoring it and its results constantly. Good examples of online campaigns are Amnesty International's campaigns, crowdfunding to reforest riverbanks and help with wildlife relocation on the Nile River in Uganda, Let's Talk About It, and No Hate Speech.

– Involve political representatives/decision makers relevant for your cause/issue, inviting them since they will give visibility to your campaign (for example, through media and public events), within local parliaments/work groups/councils or other bodies, apart from attracting potential donors or sponsors.

– Involve influencers/digital activists/YouTubers/vloggers (video-bloggers) in the campaign, keeping in mind their expertise, their influence and their notoriety among your target audience. They are usually individuals with high reach on social media platforms. They may become regular guests of your events or even ambassadors for your cause.

– You can also create an online petition independently of the geographical level of your campaign, for instance, exploring the examples and tools available through the following websites:

https://petition.parliament.uk/help
https://petiport.secure.europarl.europa.eu/petitions/en/home
http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome
http://www.citizens-initiative.eu/about/the-eci-campaign/
https://www.change.org/about

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## Activity 3: Responsible participation

**Number of participants: 8 to 20**

**Age range: 15 and up**

**Duration: 2 to 4 hours (depending on the number of participants)**

**Short description**

– Through creating a social media campaign, participants become aware of the importance of different levels of participation.

**Expected outcomes**

– To raise awareness about responsible participation.
– To understand the basics of ethical and responsible ways of acting.
– To acquire tools for online campaigning.

**Methods**

– Problem-based learning.
– Simulation.

**Resources and materials**

– Handouts with background info and a list of topics.
– Mobile phones, laptops or tablets with internet connection.
– Pen and paper, flip charts and markers.

**Practical arrangements**

– Print the handout for Activity 3.
– When working in groups, allow them to be far apart so that they do not hear what other groups are doing.
– At the end, have the room arranged in a circle or plenary setting for the presentation, discussion and reflection.

**Procedure**

– Form groups of about five participants.
– Give a handout to each group and explain how they should proceed with the activity.
– Give the groups between one and two hours to work. Announce the start of the second round and the swapping of the campaigns.
– After the two rounds, give each group 5-10 minutes to present their campaigns and explain what they did and how they proceeded with the campaign they have started.
– Moderate a discussion about the topic in plenary.

**Debriefing**

Invite participants to sit together and discuss the activity. The following questions can support this procedure:

– Can you summarise your group's discussion about the topic?
– What have you learned?
– Based on this experience, what are the most important elements of campaigning?
– Why is participation important?
– What topic would you campaign for?
– Do you think this would be different among different groups of people and in different places?

**Tips for facilitators**

– Allow participants to use the whole space of the room.
– Check the groups regularly to see whether they understand the handout and are proceeding well with the activity.
– Announce the different stages of the activity and facilitate the handover between groups. Before round two, check how their process is advancing, and if needed, stimulate the group's critical thinking and creativity.
– Allow sufficient time at the end for a fruitful discussion.
– Highlight the importance of messaging and using images respectfully. It is worth exploring, for example, the Dóchas *Code of Conduct*, which are guiding principles for choosing images and messages in a respectful manner.

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## Handout for Activity 3: Responsible participation

Dear Group,

Your task is to create a social media campaign. Your group is divided into two sub-groups, as this simulation happens in two stages. After half of the working time has passed, you will exchange your campaign with the campaign of the other group. This means that your social media campaign will be given to the other sub-group and vice versa. At this point, your task is to take your participation to the next level: you can share, comment, lead the discussion in another direction and further develop the campaign.

**The aim:** The aim of this simulation is to become aware of different levels of participation. This happens by creating a social media campaign, allowing others to participate in it, and in the end, reflecting and discussing.

**Important:** You should write down your decisions during the whole process:

– How did you end up with certain decisions?
– Were there some principles that you followed?
– What did you take into account while planning?

Keep an eye on the possible real effects that your actions could cause. Analysis and reflection are essential throughout the whole activity.

**Implementation:** Dividing the group into two sub-groups.

**Round one:**

– Both sub-groups produce a social media campaign on a specific topic.

– Your task is to create a social media campaign about a freely chosen topic, but preferably from topics related to Global Development Education (GDE) or Media Literacy (ML). The topic can be imaginary if you wish it to be. Plan the strategy according to the chosen topic. You can create the campaign in real life if you want, but a written or drawn idea on a flip chart also works. You can visualise the idea and write down the campaign strategy.

– Identify your target audience – who will benefit from your campaign? Try to visualise concrete persons.

– Identify specific issues within the topics you choose. You can use the listed references below to get started, but according to problem-based learning (PBL), your task is also to find out other sources to create the overall picture of the issue.

**Round two:**

– Swap the campaigns between the sub-groups. Participation is being taken to the next level by bringing in a new group to work on the campaign's concept, as developed by the other group.

– The other group can share, comment, lead the discussion in another direction and further develop the campaign or use it in for a very different or new purpose.

**Round three:**

– Presentation of the campaign. You are going to introduce your campaign to the others and explain your ideas and decisions.

– Hold a discussion between all the groups about the real effects of participation and how they succeed in this simulation.

**What is needed:** list of topics; mobile phone, laptop or tablet; internet connection; pen & paper; flip charts; markers.

**Things to keep in mind while working:** ethics, human rights, hate speech, sharing false information, reflection and action.

Good luck!

## Ideas for further activities

► Take a look at the Arab Spring, which is an interesting example about the power of active and committed people and also the power of social media and other media. Try to find out the main factors that made the whole phenomena so significant.

► Find a social media case, a discussion forum or a comment section of a newspaper article where someone has clearly expressed an ethical and respectful way of acting. What are the signs of ethicalness and respect?

► Choose an old or ongoing campaign and explore it. Deconstruct the campaign and try to figure out the following: the owner of the campaign, who funds it, the aim of the campaign, the channels and the target group.

## Resources to learn more

**Book:** Boud D. & Feletti G. (eds.) (1997), *The Challenge of Problem-based Learning* (2nd edn), Routledge, London.

**Study:** Council of Europe (2018), *Internet and electoral campaigns – Study on the use of internet in electoral campaigns.*

**Report:** UNESCO (2015), *Keystones to foster inclusive Knowledge Societies – Access to information and knowledge, Freedom of Expression, Privacy, and Ethics on a Global Internet.*

**More tips:** Kaakinen M. (2018), "Disconnected online: a social psychological examination of online hate".

**More tips:** Knowhow Nonprofit. (2017.) *How to run a campaign using social media.*

**More tips:** NCVO Knowhow. (2018). *What is campaigning?*

## FACT SHEET: Digital threats and Global Education

While the internet is a world of opportunities – for communication, knowledge or education – the fact that the youngest generations have almost unlimited access to the internet – anytime, anywhere – requires new forms of intervention. For instance, because children start surfing the internet before they can even read or write, it is imperative to underline the importance of privacy and digital footprint and their long-lasting traces. In short, certain skills and knowledge must be acquired for safe and responsible online behaviour.

One of the GE goals is to support people's active participation. In complex situations and in suffocating atmospheres of societies, it can be challenging to participate and try to act. It might demand bravery to take the first steps to participate. Also, it might require preparation for the possibility of being put down or ridiculed. Not only the uncomfortable atmosphere but also the threat of privacy and security-related issues might affect people's desire to act.

Data hacking, abuse of your personal data and information, or use of personal information for a harmful purpose are all realistic threats. There are many examples of prominent figures ending up as targets for ongoing bullying. There are also many examples of hacking cases and abuse of personal data. Despite possible risks and threats, people should participate and should be empowered to participate.

### Big data

Collecting, combining and analysing large amounts of data is an activity known as Big Data, which has no single definition, but according to the "Guidelines on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data in a world of Big Data", most definitions "focus on the growing technological ability to collect process and extract new and predictive knowledge from great volume, velocity, and variety of processed data" (Council of Europe - Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law 2017).

Interplaying with Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing and other technological environments, big data is also a huge opportunity for future innovations. However, because big data concerns personal data and human interaction, it is necessary to secure the protection of personal autonomy based on a person's right to control his or her personal data and the processing of such data. There must then be some concerns about the way big data is being used.

Personal data processing should not be in conflict with the ethical values commonly accepted, such as human rights and fundamental freedoms. Preventive policies and limitations can be a way to regulate the use of big data, but being such a vast and multidimensional issue, people should be aware of big data and its impact on our societies.

### Digital footprint

The trail of data left behind while using the internet is commonly known as **digital footprint**. It is part of your online history, and it can be seen by others or tracked in a database. It is a kind of portrait of who you are and can be used, for example, in targeting advertising by employers when they check the profile of prospective employees or in schools when selecting prospective students or fellows, thus, in the process tracking your movements across multiple websites.

Digital footprint can be divided into:

– Passive footprint: consists of unintentionally left data, such as IP addresses, purchasing data and search history. This means that the data is collected without the owner knowing it.

– Active footprint: consists of data submitted intentionally by you – the publicly traceable information that you share on the web. It is everything left behind by you, for example, by online shopping, writing emails, commenting, sharing and liking on social media including a list of used devices (European Commission 2016).

TIP: Third-party apps on Facebook can sometimes collect your data and data from your friends. When you click on fun quizzes or apps such as "What famous person are you?" or similar, be aware that you might share more of your personal information than you intend to. Always read how much information you are sharing.

## Privacy

The number of different technologies and devices collecting data has been increasing rapidly. Devices connected to each other, collecting and transferring data are something of an everyday occurrence for many people – including computers, mobile phones, tablets, activity wristbands, virtual assistants, or even certain toys, for example.

**Privacy** is, therefore, one of the most essential factors to understand while participating and acting in internet and social media. In the digital context, it relates to "the collection, storage, use and circulation of information that is variably conceptualized under the label of 'personal data'" (UNESCO 2015: 56), or to "the degree of control that a person has concerning access to and use of his/her personal information" (Council of Europe 2017: 61).

Although we live in a global world, international regulations, which have been adopted by certain countries, may not have been adopted by all countries. At the same time, each country has its own set of laws. With servers sometimes placed in several different countries and companies registered in foreign countries, the complete picture of how our right to privacy is protected becomes extremely complex.

A common aspect of all digital risks and threats related to privacy is the difficulty of controlling them at a personal level. One might be able to minimise the data left behind, but not eliminate it completely. What is essential, in addition to policies and regulations (such as General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), is personal awareness about the data left behind and also the ways that data might be used.

In the context of GE, it is essential to ensure that people are positively encouraged and supported to act despite the possible threats. The issues that GE deals with might be delicate and, therefore, the special focus should be on education and support – the positive effects of online participation should surpass the personal risks and threats. Knowledge about online safety and privacy and the skills to minimise the risks of information being spread uncontrollably are essential.

As a GE educator, it is necessary to understand the risks related to online actions. It is impossible to act in online environments without being exposed to possible risks, such as data hacking or different forms of abusing big data or personal information. The educator – teacher, trainer or facilitator – has the ability to focus on possibilities and support young people to act and participate despite the possible risks and threats. Not by neglecting the risks, but by showing and teaching the safe way of acting and the ways to minimise the risks.

## Competences

This a very complex environment that requires analytical and critical thinking skills combined with a good understanding and knowledge of the technologies we use daily, both from a technical and legal perspective. Such environments require responsible approaches and a high awareness of our own actions and their implications and impact. The threats and risks associated with the online world vary a lot according to the country one is based in and the existing mechanisms covered by specific country legislations.

**HOW TO … Protect your privacy on the internet?**
- Get to know your browser settings.
- Keep your software and operating system up to date.
- On a regular basis, clear your cache memory, browsing history and cookies. Instructions for how to do this depend on your browser and can be found in your browser.
- Use incognito mode when surfing the internet because it allows you to do it without saving cookies, browsing history or cache.
- Check and be aware of your location and tracking settings; use a tracker blocking add-on.

**HOW TO … Control your digital footprint?**

To manage your digital footprint, carefully consider some of the following questions and advice:

– In which applications do you enter your information? Unsubscribe each time you do not want to receive the information or report websites that seem to have used your data abusively.

– Is it mandatory to provide all the information asked about you? Think about whether all the data you are asked to enter is necessary.

– Should you choose a nickname in certain cases? Consider what portrait of yourself you would like to present."

– You may want to open a separate email address that is not related to work or personal communication to be used for platforms that require this information (such as social media, TV streaming, games, etc.)

– How is your information being used? Learn more about the policies and regulations.

– What happens to your information later on and is possible to remove it? Act despite the threat of being vilified – be well prepared and stand behind your arguments.

– Check the facts and purpose before sharing any information, whatever it may be (for example, personal data, posts involving your friends, tagging someone in photos, information concerning minors).

– Respect the copyrights. Check carefully, if you are going to share something, to determine whether it is protected by copyright or a Creative Commons license, or whether it is in the public domain.

– Be aware that you can close a social media account by yourself following the instructions in the application or by contacting the administration, but not all information is removed by default. To get a glimpse of how to close a social media account in different applications: http://backgroundchecks. org/justdeleteme/.

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## Activity 4: Digital footprint

**Number of participants: 4 to 20**

**Age range: 16 and up**

**Duration: 2 to 4 hours (depending on the number of participants)**

**Short description**

– In this activity, participants experience concepts such as privacy, online safety and digital footprint in practice. It also creates awareness of how we make assumptions based on information we find online.

**Expected outcome**

– To enlarge the understanding of digital footprint, privacy and security.

– To deepen the understanding of how information is gathered in digital environments.

– To raise awareness of how information we leave behind in digital environments can be used.

**Methods**

– Online search.

– Individual reflection.

– Group discussion.

**Resources and materials**

– Handouts for the activity.

– Laptop, tablet or mobile phone with internet access for each participant.

– Pen and paper, flip charts and markers.

**Practical arrangements**

– Estimate whether you have time for both parts of the activity.

– Make copies of Handout 1 and/or 2 accordingly, for each participant.

**Procedure**

– Ask participants to find someone in the group whom they do not know and are not friends with on social media.

– When everyone is in pairs, tell them to run an online search on the other person and establish their profile based on their findings.

– Give each participant a copy of Handout 1 and make sure that everyone understands the task.

– Give them sufficient time to do the search and create the profile.

– Call the group to sit in a circle and let the presentations begin!

– When everyone has introduced their pairs, ask participants to take their notes from the process and moderate a group discussion about the simulation, the issues that made profiling possible and about digital footprint in general.

**Debriefing**

Still sitting in the circle, shift the discussion towards debriefing. You can ask the following questions or invent your own:

– Were you aware of the detail of the information you leave behind online?

– Was the information in your presentation correct?

– Were the assumptions based on that information correct?

– Was there anything that you would not like your employer to know about you?

– Can you imagine a situation where this information could put you in an unfavourable situation?

– Do you think people can face difficulties because of the things they share online?

– Based on this experience, what are the most important elements of digital footprint, safety and privacy on the internet?

If you have time, distribute Handout 2 and invite the group to create a guide to safer use of the internet. This may be done individually, in pairs or in groups as well. Let them present their findings and discuss their relevance.

**Tips for facilitators**

– Raise participants' attention to the information economy and big data.

– If you do the second part of the activity (Handout 2), you can make an exhibition of the safer internet guides.

– Alternatively, you can assemble one charter from all the guides that participants can share with others to raise their awareness too.

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## Handout 1 for Activity 4: Digital footprint

Dear Participant,

Your task is to make a profile for one of your group members based on online search.

– Choose one member – preferably one whom you don't know so well – and start an online search about that person.

– Write the biography of the person: who is she/he, what does she/he do/has done, her/his education, profession, hobbies, private life, etc. Also include your deductions from this information.

– Write down all your remarks and assumptions, both about the person and the process itself.

In the end, you are going to introduce your group member to the others based on the online search. For example: "This is X.Y. He is xx years old and lives in … He loves to pick berries and to surf." Try to assume the person's character based on the information found and include it in your presentation.

You are also expected to participate in the common discussion in the end. So make notes of your remarks, all the possible complexities and conflicts, your feelings while finding information, the history (difference between childhood & adulthood notes), the context, the channels where the information has been found, etc.

**The aim:** The aim of this activity is to process themes such as privacy, safety and security online and the digital footprint in practice. This happens by making a profile about another group member based on online search or by making a profile about a person who is not your friend on social media. It helps create awareness of how people make assumptions about us based on our online profiles.

**Round one:** Make a profile of a person who is NOT on your friend list on any social media platform. The idea is to find as much information as possible about the person, using all the traces of the information that are available on the internet.

Create her/his profile or biography based on this information. Pay attention especially to the way you found the information: why did you find this trace of information? What should she/he have done differently, so that the information would not be available?

**Round two:** Introduce this person to the rest of the group.

**Round three:** Discuss the simulation, the issues that made profiling possible and about the digital footprint in general.

**Note:** Even if the aim is to point out that some unwanted information might come out, avoid embarrassing the "target person" in public. During the simulation write down what you noticed. Pay attention to the process of profiling and write down not only the things that made the profiling possible but also the things that complicated the profiling or prevented the information being gathered.

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## Handout 2 for Activity 4: Digital footprint

Dear Participant,

In this part of the activity, your task is to create a document about how to act securely in digital environments. The output document can be, for example, a list of proposals or a detailed figure.

Use the questions listed below to discuss the topics and to further develop your proposals. The list of questions is created to help you get into the topic, but feel free to use other triggers as well. The idea is to reflect on your own actions and discuss the different options concerning the traces you leave behind while acting in digital environments.

**Questions:**
– What kind of internet searches do you do?
– What browsers do you use? Why?
– What kind of information do you share – publicly, in restricted groups, etc.?
– Is there a difference between how you act in digital environments as a private person or as a representative of your employer? If yes, why do you act differently? If not, why?
– Are you aware about your personal settings in social media environments?
– Do you share any delicate or private information (diseases, children, etc.)? If yes, in which kind of settings? Why do you share? If not, why?
– Do you use private browsing settings? If yes, in what kind of situations? If not, why?
– Do you log out of your computer? If yes, how often? In what kind of surroundings? Public? Private? For which reason? If not, why?
– Do you delete your browsing history? If yes, why? How often? If not, why?
– Are you aware of trackers and cookies? If so, do you try avoiding or restricting them? If yes, why and how? If not, why?
– Do you change any privacy settings? If yes, why? How often? What settings have you changed? If not, why?
– Do you always read the terms of service If yes, why? How often? If not, why?
– What does it mean that you leave so many traces behind you? For what purposes could someone use all that information?
– What are the benefits of leaving so much personal information behind?
– What are the risks of leaving so much personal information behind?

**Things to keep in mind while working:** digital footprint, privacy, information security & information policies related to it, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), etc.

## ☼ Ideas for further activities

► Find an example of a celebrity or a public figure who has been denigrated on social media. Analyse what happened in that specific case: how was that information spread? Was the information debunked? And what steps were given after? How did the online community react?

► The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has a statistic about the access to internet. Charts show that in the year 2017, from the lowest 50.9% to the highest percentage 99.5% of all the households in OECD countries had access to internet. Most of the countries included were between 71.0% and 99.5%. In European Union countries, the variation in accessing the internet was between 71.0% and 98.2%. This means that data is vastly collected and transferred throughout the world. Who has access to all this data? Who uses this data? For what purpose is this amount of data being used? What happens to the information you leave behind? Is all the information you remove really being deleted?

► Note to educator: Digital footprint, amongst the other online behaviour-related technical issues, is an issue to be aware about. Google yourself. What did you find? Is it all relevant?

► Take a closer look at your web browser. Clear your history, cache, cookies; update your browser settings; and check if you can disable geo-targeting by turning off your location.

► Try to list all the services and applications where you remember entering your personal information. Do you still use all of them? Do you even remember all of them? Try to find connections between the information you have searched or entered and the advertisements that you receive.

► As an educator and multiplier, it is important for you to emphasise how crucial it is for young people to learn good everyday internet habits:
  – Check your settings on browsers, social media and chat apps (such as WhatsApp).
  – Think carefully before entering any personal information.
  – Read and understand the privacy policies before accepting.

► Right to be forgotten: Since the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect in May 2018 in Europe, you have got the right to be forgotten. It means that you have the right to know who has gathered information about you and what information has been gathered about you by specific providers/platforms. You also have the right to ask them to remove all the information concerning you. Contact the administrator or the register holder. There are certain procedures on how the information can be removed.

► Outside the European Union, different or limited data protection regulations, or even lack of regulation, might occur. Depending on the country you are acting in, it is necessary to check the local regulations concerning data privacy.

## 🌐 Resources to learn more

**Publication:** Citizens in a Mediated World.

**More tips:** Internet Society. Your digital footprint matters.

**Data:** UNESCO. Survey on privacy in media and information literacy with youth perspectives.

**Data:** Your Europe. Data protection and online privacy.

**Data:** Council of Europe. Comparative Study on blocking, filtering and take-down of illegal internet content.

# Resources with more pedagogical ideas

UNESCO's online Media and Information Literacy (MIL) resources for teachers:
http://unesco.mil-for-teachers.unaoc.org/

UNESCO's manual on MIL and Human Rights (includes many similar topics to ours such as extremism, issues about equality and so on):
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002463/246371e.pdf

UNESCO's *Journalism, 'fake news' and disinformation: a handbook for journalism education and training*:
https://en.unesco.org/node/296002

UNESCO's Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID) Network:
http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/media-development/media-literacy/mil-and-intercultural-dialogue-university-network/

European Commission's Media Literacy webpage:
https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/media-literacy

Council of Europe's activities, included in *Compass: manual for Human Rights Education with young people*:

Front page: https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/front-page

My life is not a show: https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/my-life-is-not-a-show-

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A media literate citizen knows not only how to access media and technologies, analyse media messages, and critically evaluate them but also how to create media messages reflexively, paving the way to participate actively, continuously and responsibly in social and civic societies.

This in line with the Global Education main aim: educating responsible global citizens for social justice and sustainable development.

Being a media literate citizen is, therefore, crucial to succeed in Global Education and gain the skills and abilities to competently interact with the media and with the world through the media.

By enlarging the scope of Global Education with Media Literacy elements, Global Education becomes a more effective tool contributing to the achievement of UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This toolkit offers an integrated approach towards Media Literacy in the context of Global Education. It explores a set of activities focused on the critical analysis and production of media messages, analysis of algorithms, active participation in societies, maintenance of privacy, maintenance of well-being and management of e-identity.

ENG

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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