



MEDIA LITERACY

COUNTRY REPORT: CYPRUS

Country Report submitted to the European Commission

Pursuant to Article 33a(2) of the Audio Visual Media Services Directive on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) in view of changing market realities

Cyprus Radio Television Authority

March, 2023

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Part A: Legal and/or policy measure

The Audio-Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) 2018/1808(EU) has been transposed into Cyprus national legislation on the 21st of December 2021. Media Literacy is a topic of the Cyprus national legislation on audiovisual media services.

In particular, article 30C of The Radio and Television Broadcasters Law 7(I)/1998 (as amended later) stipulates the following:

- 30C.-(1) The CRTA shall promote and take measures to develop skills in media literacy.*
- (2) The CRTA shall undertake, in cooperation with other competent governmental, semi-governmental and private agencies, to promote the planning and coordination of the development and implementation of programmes (research, educational, informational and other) to raise the levels of media literacy in the Republic.*
- (3) Media service providers ought to participate in these efforts, on the basis of the planning of the CRTA, and in particular in disseminating clear and user-friendly information to citizens and in supporting awareness-raising campaigns, including on how to produce, promote, and distribute information and creative content in the digital environment, on the responsible use of the internet in general, as well as on how search engines work and how to make optimal use of them.*
- (4) For the purposes of this Article, the term “media literacy” means the ability to access, understand, analyse, use and critically evaluate the media and their content, the ability to create content in the media, as well as the ability to communicate safely and responsibly, especially through new technologies.*
- (5) The CRTA shall submit a report regarding the implementation of subsection (1) to the Commission, which shall be communicated to the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education and Culture, Sport and Youth, no later than 19 December 2022 and every three years thereafter.*
- (6) The CRTA shall take all appropriate measures to comply with the guidelines issued by the Commission, upon consultation with the Contact Committee.*

It is noteworthy that similar provisions are included in the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation Law, section 300A (as subsequently amended), which regulates the public service broadcaster in Cyprus, namely the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC)¹.

Article 18D of the aforementioned law provides as follows:

18D.-(1) The CyBC, in cooperation with CRTA, promotes and takes measures to develop skills in media literacy.

(2) The CyBC participates in media literacy actions coordinated by CRTA, particularly, in disseminating clear and user-friendly information to citizens and in supporting awareness-raising campaigns, inter alia, on the production, promotion and distribution of information and creative content in the digital environment, on the responsible use of search engines and their optimal use.

(3) For the purposes of this Article, the term "media literacy" means the ability to access, understand, analyse, use, and critically evaluate the media and their content, the ability to create content in the media, as well as the ability to communicate safely and responsibly, in particular through new technologies.

Moreover, upon the transposition of the AVMSD 2018/1808(EU) into Cyprus national legislation and regarding the responsibilities of video-sharing platforms under the jurisdiction of CRTA, these responsibilities refer, inter alia, on the provision of effective media literacy tools and measures and on informing the users about the implementation of the said tools and measures; article 32F(8)(j) is the relevant one.

As media literacy is one of the statutory duties of CRTA, the audiovisual media services regulator pays particular attention to develop media literacy levels of the entire population in the Republic. Empowering citizens with essential skills and competences in the new digital and converged media environment and educating them to evaluate and critically think about media content is a main policy objective for CRTA.

Regarding the appropriateness and effectiveness of media literacy measures implemented by video-sharing platform providers these are currently under evaluation by CRTA; provisional results indicate that these measures could and should be more influential and more effective.

¹ The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC) is country's public service broadcaster. Its operation is partially monitored by the Cyprus Radio Television Authority (CRTA). In brief, CRTA is responsible for monitoring issues as regards the CyBC, concerning, among others, the following: advertising and teleshopping, political advertising during pre-election periods, sponsorship, right of reply, European works, product placement, prohibition of incitement to hatred, implementation of media literacy activities.

Part B: Organisational measures

Article 33a1 of the AVMSD 2018/1808 provides that Member States shall promote and take measures for the development of media literacy skills. Within the context of Article 33a(1) of the AVMSD 2018/1808 the Cyprus Radio Television Authority, as the independent regulatory authority responsible for securing compliance of audiovisual media service providers and of video-sharing platform providers with the regulation is the competent and responsible authority for promoting and developing media literacy skills and for overseeing compliance with the obligations imposed on audiovisual media service providers and on video-sharing platform providers. According to the aforementioned provisions of the Cyprus national legislation CRTA can decide upon the measures and steps in order to fulfil its tasks. These steps may include, *inter alia*, the development of educational and research programs and the design and implementation of educational and awareness-raising campaigns.

CRTA cooperated with the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (educational institution of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of the Republic of Cyprus) in the design of workshops and lesson plans which seek to promote media literacy skills. Furthermore, CRTA cooperates with the AEI Audiovisual Forum, a non-profit cultural organization. The AEI Audiovisual Forum organizes with the support, among others, of the CRTA training and workshops for students on the production of documentaries.

Part C: Public funding and other media literacy financing arrangements

There is not any public funding for media literacy activities in terms that funding is provided by the central government. It is worth-mentioning that CRTA is a self-funded authority. The annual budget of CRTA provides for an allocation of 5.000euros annually for media literacy activities. Moreover, it is stated that the staff of CRTA works on media literacy activities (design and implementation of activities) as part of their daily professional activities.

CRTA sponsored the 4th and 5th Cyprus Archaeological, Ethnographic and Historical Film Festival in 2021 and 2022, respectively, organised by AEI Audiovisual Forum by sponsoring the first three awards for the competition part. As mentioned in the previous part the AEI Audiovisual Forum offers training and workshops on the production of short films and documentaries for students. Having the students attended the workshops they were called to produce their own documentaries on topics of archaeological, ethnographic, historical aspects of Cyprus for the competition part of the activity.

Additionally, the board of the CRTA decided the establishment of a Media Literacy Centre in Evrychou village, where visitors (the target group is the students) will have an opportunity to experience how media and audio content is produced. The community council of the village agreed and funded the renovation of the building, while the CRTA presents the project in order to attract private funding. The Media Literacy Centre is expected to be completed by end of 2024.

Part D: Engagement and awareness-raising activities, including media literacy curricula

Seeking to enhance media literacy levels in the Republic of Cyprus and to develop individuals' critical thinking on and about any kind of media content by equipping them with media literacy skills and competencies, necessary in the digital and converged media environment, CRTA puts into place various actions.

Experiential workshops

CRTA offers experiential workshops for students of primary and secondary education on the following topics:

- *Understanding the elements of advertisements*
- *Deconstructing gender stereotypes through an analysis of advertising*
- *Combating disinformation and fake news*
- *The role of Cyprus Radio Television Authority in the 21st century*
- *Evaluating News and Newsworthiness criteria*
- *Critical analysis of media content: 5 key steps to develop media literacy skills*
- *Reality TV/reality shows: do they really represent reality?*
- *Production of reportage and investigative journalism*
- *Conducting interesting and successful interviews*

Moreover, the students who attend the workshops on the *Production of reportage and investigative journalism* and *Conducting interesting and successful interviews* are called to produce their own media content. The students of Journalistic Club of Laniteio Lyceum in Limassol attended both aforementioned workshops and produced their own media content which is available on the social media accounts of the school (available here²) and shared on the social media accounts of the CRTA.

² Also available at: www.facebook.com/watch/?v=965448574338288

Workshops are offered nation-wide and all school establishments of primary and secondary education operating in the Republic of Cyprus are eligible to apply for participation. The rationale behind this action is that Media literacy education contributes towards developing critical thinking and active participation in media culture. The intention is to give youth greater freedom by empowering them to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media content.

Awareness-raising activities

Lectures

In order to create more awareness on issues of media literacy the CRTA officers give lectures to public and private Universities in Cyprus. There were three such lectures from 2019 to end of 2022.

The lectures focused on the following aspects of media literacy:

- Media Literacy: an essential competence in digital era.
- Media Literacy policies in the European Union
- Media Literacy in Cyprus: regulatory provisions and best practices
- Media Literacy and Media Regulation

Full day conference

In the context of the European Media Literacy Week (2019) the CRTA and the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education and Culture co-organised a full-day conference on Media Literacy on the 21/3/2019. Students and teachers participated in the conference and attended various workshops on topics of media literacy. A similar full-day conference was organised for 2020, in particular on the 27/3/2020 but we were forced to cancel it in line measures against the expansion of Covid 19, which were firstly implemented in the Republic of Cyprus on the 13.3.2020.

Moreover, the CRTA participated on the 6/6/2022 in a full day conference organised by Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC) on the topic *Digital Transformation of Public Service Broadcasting*. On behalf of the CRTA the participants (the Director and an Officer) presented the topic *Digital Literacy: Another aspect of policy making in the Media*. The conference was livestreaming.

Online quizzes

CRTA created and published three different online quizzes. Two of them focus on advertising. It is expected that by taking these quizzes citizens and mostly the children, who is the main target group of this initiative, will understand basic advertising techniques. The quizzes are in Greek language and are available [here](#)³ and [here](#)⁴. The third online quiz seeks to raise awareness regarding cybersecurity and to help users to improve their online behaviour and to adopt good and ethical practices while online and ultimately to behave responsibly. The quiz is available [here](#)⁵.

Webinar

In April 2022 a CRTA Officer participated as guest speaker in an online webinar, organised by EKOME on the topic ***MIL & Artificial Intelligence in News Literacy***. The webinar (discussion in English) is available [here](#).⁶

Publication of articles

Considering that media literacy targets the entire population the following publications are expected to contribute to awareness-raising:

- Article, titled *Media Education for Children in Cyprus: Educating pupils to critically read advertisements*, published in Media Education – Studi, ricerche e buone pratiche. This article considers the Media Literacy Experiential Workshop project described above. The article (in English) is available [here](#).⁷
- Article (in Greek), titled *New technologies in daily life*, published in Lemesos newspaper (online and printed version). This article discusses how new technologies affect citizens' daily life and argues that developing media literacy skills and critical thinking is a dire necessity in order to address current challenges. The article was published on the edition of the 17/6/2022. It is available online [here](#).⁸

³ Also available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KFHT2D2>

⁴ Also available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/H237DSB>

⁵ Also available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WYHLT56>

⁶ Also available at: <https://iame.education/watch-the-ekome-mil-webinar-series/>

⁷ Also available at: <https://oaj.fupress.net/index.php/med/article/view/13368/11510>

⁸ Also available at: <http://www.elemesos.com/index.php/2018-12-20-09-57-23/item/71183-2022-06-17-09-38-51.html>

Part E: Evaluation measures and methods

For the time being the CRTA does not use any measures to assess the impact of regional or national media literacy initiatives. However, CRTA acknowledges the importance of the adoption of measures that assess the impact of media literacy initiatives and is likely to adopt such measures in the future.