National strategy

Enabling pupils to exercise their citizenship in a society of information, forming enlightened citizens capable of analysing and criticising the media and its content is one of the aims of the Ministry of Education, which has introduced “Media and information literacy” (EMI – Education aux médias et à l’information). The subject is incorporated into compulsory schooling programmes at primary and lower secondary schools – i.e. at cycles two, three and four (Special Bulletin Officiel of 26 November 2015 [1]). In its 1st section, the Framework Law on the Future of Schools (loi d’orientation et de programmation pour la refondation de l’école de la République [2]) of 8 July 2013 (see Eurydice [3] Overall national education strategy and key objectives [3]) defines media literacy as scholastic training that “develops the knowledge, skills and culture required for the exercise of citizenship in the contemporary society of information and communication [...]”.

Media literacy is based on training in the use of digital tools and resources and raising awareness of rights and duties connected with use of the internet and social networks. Skills acquired in the context of such education should be assessed progressively.

Among those involved in media literacy, the Centre for Media and Information Literacy [4] (CLEMI - Centre pour l’éducation aux médias et à l’information), an operator under the Ministry of National Education, is tasked with implementing training actions promoting the use of information resources in education with a view to fostering pupils’ better understanding of the world around them.
Young people’s use of social networks has also been studied by the National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (INJEP – Institut national de la jeunesse et de l’éducation populaire), which has published a variety of articles, including *Twitter, un outil de transformation dans le champ éducatif* (*Twitter, a tool for transformation in the field of education*) in February 2014. The Canopé Network, [5] a Ministry of National Education operator, provides teachers with a range of training courses and teaching resources in the fields of education in the media and digital education.

**Media literacy and online safety through formal education**

The main instrument made use of by the Minister of National Education, which aims to teach children how to decode information and show proof of vigilance with regard to media and the internet, is the Media and information literacy (EMI – Education aux médias et à l’information) programme, which aims to create “cybercitizens”. Its objectives are to:

- Develop pupils’ critical spirit and judgement,
- Familiarise pupils with the world of media,
- Open pupils up to current affairs and the world,
- Have them discover media diversity and plurality,
- Teach them to process and “decode” information,
- Introduce them to creating their own media.

The themes tackled by media and information literacy are many and varied, as can be seen in the best practices listed by institutional educational networks [6]. For example:

History/geography classes in schools under the Dijon (city) Education Authority studied:

- “Does the web participate in democracy?” (*Le web participe-t-il à la démocratie?*) [7]

In language classes, themes dealt with include the “dangers” of the internet:

- “Harassment over the internet” (*le harcèlement par internet*) [8]
- “Media addiction” (*l’addiction aux media*) [9]
- “Internet safety, social networks and harassment” (*Sécurité sur internet, media sociaux, harcèlement*) [10]

Teachers can obtain training in media literacy, which is now incorporated in disciplinary programmes. Various online schemes and resource centres have been set up, such as the Parcours M@gistère, [11] a tutored interactive ongoing training scheme intended for secondary school teachers and MOOCs [12] (Massive Open Online Courses) on media literacy.

In addition, the Centre for Media and Information Literacy (CLEMI - Centre pour l’éducation aux médias et à l’information) provides several types of educational interventions and accompaniments: teacher training, 5-day courses on media and information literacy, talks, activities and advice, roundtables devoted to media and information literacy, etc. As regards the dangers connected with internet use, teachers have an information and resource portal devoted to the subject available to
“Responsible Internet” (Internet responsable), which, among other things, lists the regulatory texts on data protection, internet law, cyber-harassment, etc.

Promoting media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning

As Ministry of National Education partners, operators in non-formal education also foster media and information literacy via various initiatives. Associations have set up digital education projects in the context of Territorial Educational Projects (PEDTs – see 6.2 Cross-sectoral cooperation). Not all such initiatives have been inventoried but, as an example, the Ligue de l’ Enseignement (Education League) association (in Loire-Atlantique) organises workshops on the internet and coding and has mounted an exhibition on the subject of image manipulation.

The State-approved association of CÉMEAs (Training Centres for Active Education Methods), which is recognised as being of public interest and which trains youth work professionals, also organises training and talks on media literacy.

Apart from this initiative and via the Youth Experimentation Fund (FEJ - Fond d'expérimentation pour la jeunesse), the Ministry of Youth Affairs launched a call for projects on “Non-Formal Education for and by young people: Digital practices, innovative places and youth media” with a view to fostering “cyber-citizenship” and creation of innovative places and youth media. 334 projects were presented by associations, local authorities and public institutions. 52 projects were selected.

Raising awareness about the risks posed by new media

Preventing risks posed by new media is one of media and information literacy’s key focus areas.

Campaigns combating cyber-harassment have been implemented by the Ministry of National Education in partnership with the e-Enfance (e-Childhood) association, which is of recognised public interest and approved by the Ministry of National Education. The association raises young people’s awareness on best practices in digital technology and advises parents and educational professionals on the uses of digital technology. It operates a free helpline, organises talks to secondary school pupils, and has launched a 2019-2020 “Non au harcèlement” (No to Harassment) awareness-raising campaign. In order to reach a wide audience, the campaign has been disseminated on Facebook and the Ministry of National Education’s website. Awareness-raising tools have also been created by pupils themselves, in competition for “No to Harassment” prizes rewarding the best posters and videos made by pupils.

In addition, in 2016, Family Allowance Funds and their partners, the Agricultural Mutual Assistance Association (MSA - Mutualité sociale agricole), the Ministry in charge Youth and the Ministry in charge of Families, Childhood and Women’s Rights, launched a scheme across the country entitled Web Walkers, an educational presence on Internet “Promeneurs du Net, une présence éducative sur Internet”. A Web Walker is a youth professional, educator or youth worker who, enters into contact with young people via the internet and social networks. He/she listens to them and advises and supports them in achieving their aims. He also raises awareness of some...
(social) risks;