





FINLAND: TEACHING MEDIA LITERACY FOR THE FUTURE



Finland has placed first in the Media Literacy Index since it was first published in 2017.

The index ranks European countries according to their resilience potential to disinformation.





What makes Finland special in terms of media literacy?

In Finland, media literacy is viewed as an essential competence throughout the educational system, from early childhood education to non-formal education.



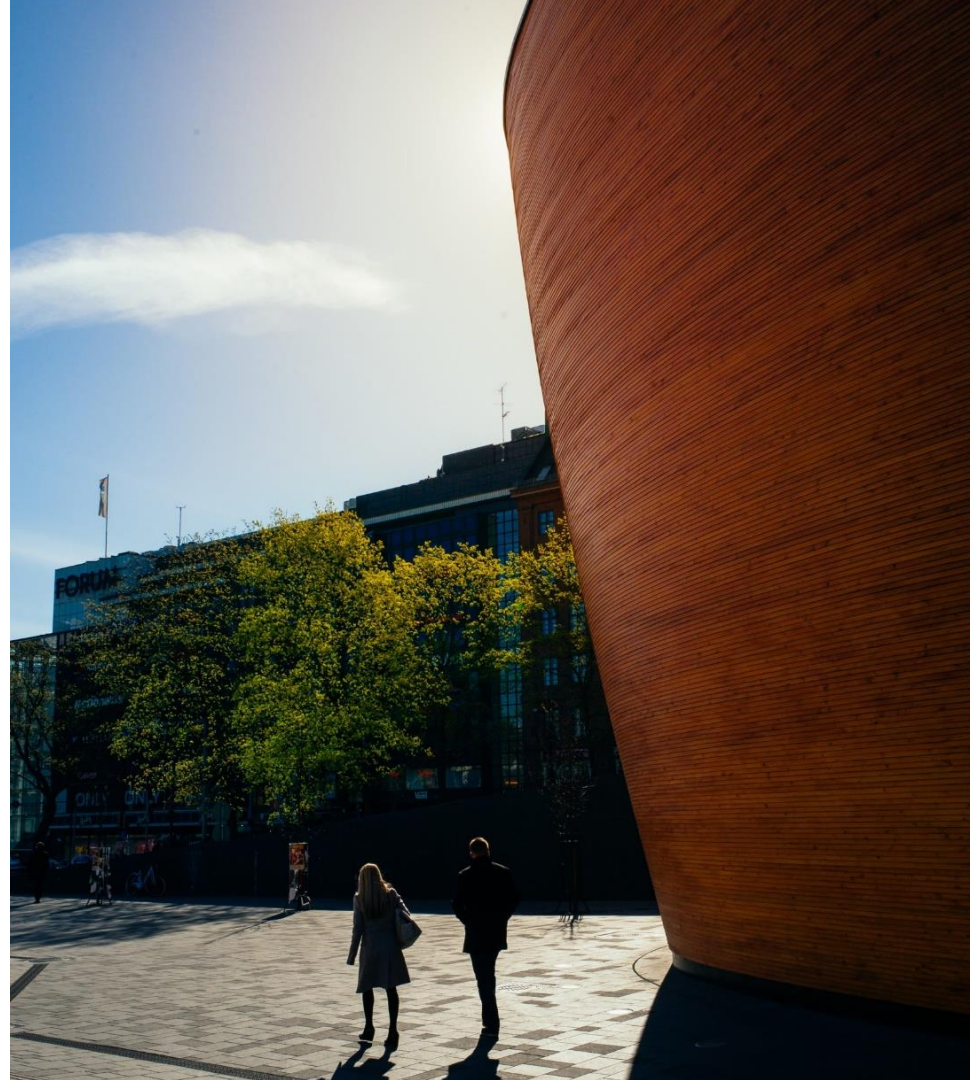


The secret behind Finland's success is a cross-sector approach to providing citizens of all ages with good media skills. A large number of organisations work together, coming from different perspectives, but with a common goal.





Finland's media literacy is strengthened by the society and social model, such as a free and independent press and a high degree of trust in individuals and institutions.



A group of about ten young people are gathered on a rooftop terrace. They are dressed in casual summer attire, including tank tops, t-shirts, and shorts. Some are waving their hands, and one person in the center is making a peace sign. The terrace has a dark metal railing. In the background, there are several modern apartment buildings. One building on the left is light grey with a prominent blue section. Another building to the right is light pink with white balconies. A brick chimney is visible on the far right. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK



What is media literacy?

“Media literacy” refers to the ability to use, understand and evaluate media content – as well as well the ability to produce it.

Media literacy encompasses a wide range of skills.



Media literacy is:

SUOMI
FINLAND


- Understanding media representation
- Analysing messages and their sources and credibility
- Understanding underlying biases, interests and motivations
- Creating media for communication

Media literacy is needed to critically analyse and digest information, and to build views based on evidence. It's also a key tool in combatting hate speech and disinformation.



Media education is not new in Finland. Content related to media literacy has been part of formal education since the 1970s. It has evolved as media education has adapted to a changing media culture.





In 2019, Finland prepared a National Policy for Media Literacy, working together with a large number of stakeholders.

The policy created a common basis for continuing to develop media literacy, and includes a vision for future work.



Finland's Media Literacy vision has three objectives:

1. Media education needs to be comprehensive in terms of its content, perspectives, target groups and geographic distribution.
2. Media education must be high-quality, meaningful and non-discriminatory. The quality of media education is assessed and developed based on research.
3. Media education has to be systematic and consistent in all parts of Finland.



A person in a grey jacket is interacting with a futuristic, illuminated display stand. The stand contains several tablets or tablets, each with a glowing blue light at its base. The person's hand is visible, touching one of the tablets. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an exhibition or museum setting.

FINLAND'S CROSS-SECTOR APPROACH



The Ministry of Education and Culture

has supported media education in Finland for decades.

The Ministry promotes media literacy by allocating resources, disseminating relevant information and developing legislation. This takes place not only through education, but also through cultural, youth and art policies.



The National Audiovisual Institute,

a subordinate agency of the ministry, is responsible for developing and coordinating media education around the country. They do so in close cooperation with stakeholders in the field.



The formal education system forms the foundation and backbone of Finnish media education. Media literacy is integrated into the national core curricula at all levels of education, and it is embedded in the day-to-day activities of schools and classrooms across the country.



Informal media education occurs in places like libraries and museums, and it is also integrated into youth work. Governmental organisations, civil society actors, NGOs and media outlets all play a role.



NEW LITERACIES



The New Literacies Programme, launched in 2020, is Finland's latest developmental programme for media education. From early childhood education to upper secondary level, it aims to strengthen children's and young people's media literacy, programming skills and competence in information and communications technology.



New Literacies: Early childhood education

SUOMI
FINLAND

Ages 0–4: Media education is approached through curious experimentation and play. Children get to know everyday media, devices and content. They empathise with stories and process them by means of personal expression and creativity. Together with other children, they examine information about issues that interest them.



New Literacies: Pre-primary education

SUOMI
FINLAND

Ages 5–6: Children take a more active role as media users and producers. At the same time, they begin learning how to understand what is fiction and what is true.



New Literacies: Elementary school I

SUOMI
FINLAND

Ages 7–15: Students examine and produce stories and learn how to use media safely and understand its role in society. They use creativity and imagination to produce stories with the help of media devices, both independently and in groups. In higher grades, pupils make initiatives, generate ideas and experiment with media. They use media to express their own thoughts and opinions.



New Literacies: Elementary school II

**SUOMI
FINLAND**

Teenage students develop their narrative methods and technical skills, and they get to produce media content aimed at influencing others. Students learn to evaluate the reliability of social media content as a source of information. They critically examine the various effects that media can have on individuals, groups and society. Data and privacy protection are also featured.



New Literacies: General upper secondary education

**SUOMI
FINLAND**

Ages 15–17: The curriculum includes the cross-cutting themes of Multiliteracy and Media, and Technology and Society. Students practise related competences across different subjects. Multiliteracy highlights the importance of abilities to interpret and to produce different media.



New Literacies: Vocational upper secondary education

**SUOMI
FINLAND**

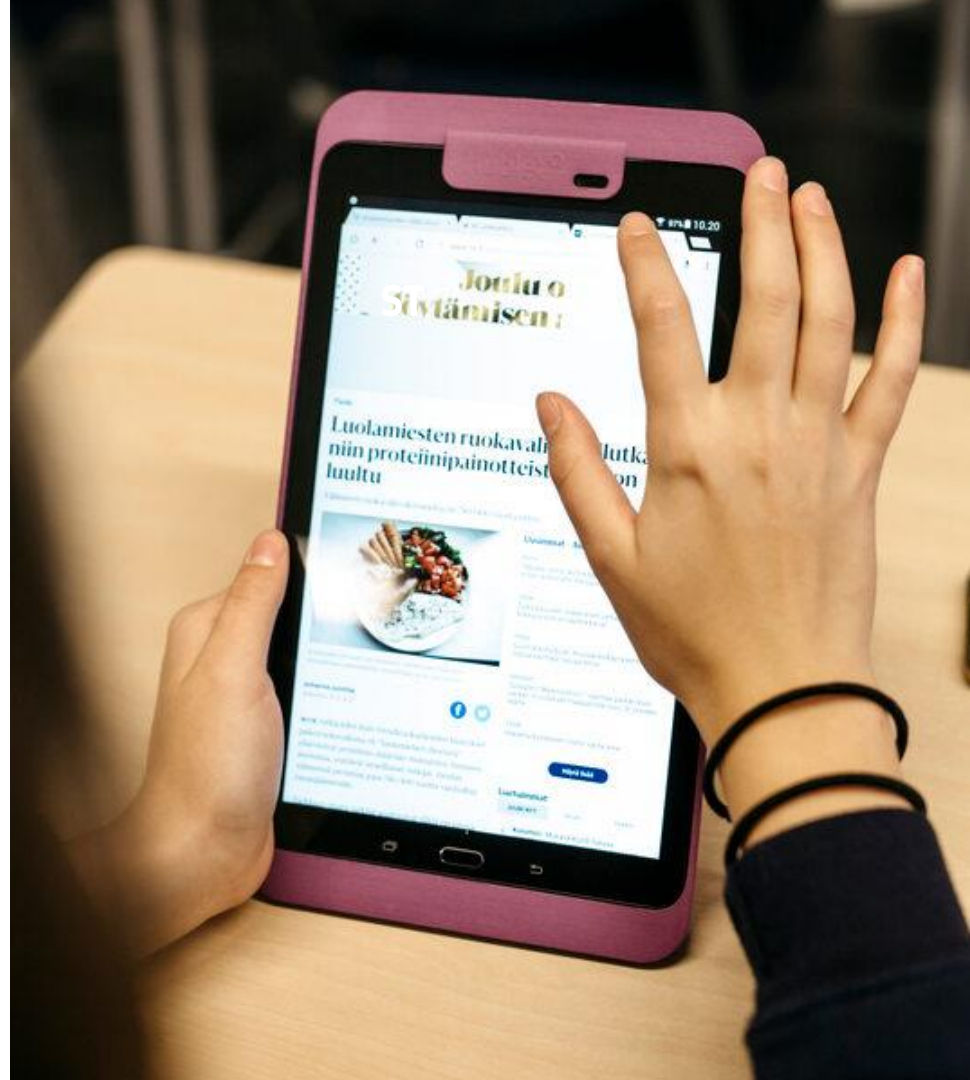
Ages 15–17: Media and information literacy competences are mainly integrated into language arts, information technology, maths and science subjects. Special attention is paid to work-related media competences.



MEDIA EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM



In Finland, teachers are university-educated professionals who are given a great deal of autonomy to plan their teaching based on the needs of their classes. Therefore, there is no single government-mandated way of teaching media literacy.





There is a variety of support materials for media education. They are available on a website, [Media Literacy School](#), for teachers to use and share.



Did you take the Clickbait?

🕒 120 min +

Free



Digital Gold Miners: Big Data

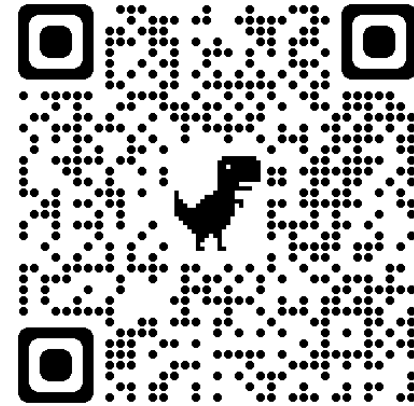
🕒 120 min +

Free



Populism Bingo

Free



Free



Finland celebrates Media Literacy Week annually. Every year, around 30 different campaigns are created in cooperation with more than 50 partner organisations from all sectors of society, such as public institutions, NGOs and private companies. The national theme week encourages local institutions, such as schools, libraries, youth centres, museums and kindergartens, to try new ways of supporting media literacy.





**ADULTS AND
MEDIA EDUCATION**



Adults are a challenging target group.

Individual competences and needs vary greatly, and adults cannot be reached as a cohesive group in the same way schoolchildren can. Those working in media education are actively searching for new ways to reach their target audience.



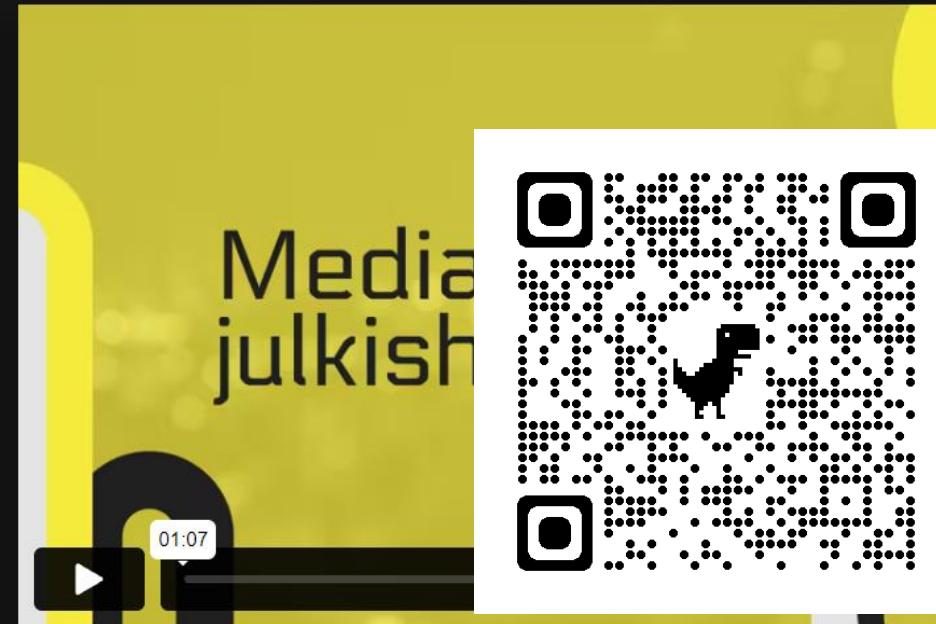
Several different organisations contribute to the development of adult media literacy. Some examples are adult education providers, libraries, different civil society organisations and private companies such as media outlets.



In public administration, employers can encourage the media literacy of their employees with an [online training course](#). The course was published in 2021 and is open to all government employees.

Medialukutaito julkishallinnossa

Tuotanto: eOppiva ja Kansallinen audiovisuaalinen instituutti





The annual Media Education Forum promotes media education for adults. This free-of-charge seminar provides stakeholders and specialists an opportunity to network and share views and best practices in media literacy for adults.

A photograph of a park scene during sunset. In the foreground, a group of four young adults are sitting on the grass, talking and smiling. In the background, many other people are sitting on the grass, and a crowd is gathered behind a metal barrier on the right. A statue is visible in the distance. The sun is low in the sky, creating a warm, golden light. A blue semi-transparent rectangle is overlaid in the center of the image, containing the text "SKILLS AND TOOLS FOR THE FUTURE" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

SKILLS AND TOOLS FOR THE FUTURE



Critically evaluating and applying information received from various media sources is a vital skill in our modern societies, and it's only becoming more important as technology continues to evolve.



In recent years, Finland has put more focus on inclusion in media literacy

education. Examples of objectives include strengthening the skills, capacities and inclusion of participants; improving accessibility; removing barriers; and preventing exclusion.



SUOMI
FINLAND

**Finland:
Teaching media literacy
for the future.**

