Media literacy report – Portugal

Luís António Santos, Maria José Brites, Helena Sousa, Marisa Mourão

This report results from the assessment of a broad number of initiatives and organizations that work in Portugal in the field of media literacy. Given the limitations imposed by the proposed time frame we could not contact each one of the actors. We gathered information based on our combined expertise and knowledge of the field. We used several sources (books, reports, organizations webpages and phone contacts); for the list of the most significant media literacy activities and practices that have taken place in the Portugal since 2010 we also made personal contacts. We started out by compiling a broad report of the whole field of media literacy in Portugal (Using tables Question1_Global and Question3_Global) and then departed to focus on audiovisual initiatives and programs (including both those which have audiovisual as a prime concern and those which have it as a secondary one) (Using tables Question1_Short version and Question3_Short version).   Bellow, we will justify our choices, focusing especially on the list of the most significant media literacy activities and practices that have taken place in the Portugal since 2010.

The number of initiatives on media literacy has increased during the last decade and particularly the number of initiatives on digital literacy has grown in the last few years. Media education in Portugal has a strong tradition in school's activities (namely school journalism and school newspapers) that persists, particularly since the Carnation Revolution (Pinto, Pereira, Pereira & Ferreira, 2011). In this regard, one of the most relevant national initiatives is Público na Escola, a media literacy project promoted by Público, a reference newspaper, that was founded in 1989. During the last years, school newspapers entered in a new era of adaptation to a new online environment, which changed and increased the challenges but also multiplied the opportunities to use text, audio and video. In addition, the Ministry of Education promoted another initiative especially focused on online school newspapers: Plataforma de Jornais Escolares (School newspapers platform). Both initiatives are centred on online platforms, specifically the last one, and in the promotion of civic and critical literacies of youngsters and teachers. Another initiative, also target at young students, SITESTAR.PT, promoted digital literacy and production of content, as the previous ones, but added a broader content framework going beyond the more exclusive journalistic approach and introducing some different dynamics to the informational context. DECOJovem, an educational branch of the consumer rights association, DECO, promotes this particular initiative.

At this point, we need to stress that during the last few years, an expanding incremental usage of television and radio at schools occurred (also digital), even if for different reasons these projects have not still managed to have the same relevance as the newspapers/blogs initiatives.

7 dias, 7 dicas sobre os media (7 days, 7 suggestions about media) is another initiative targeted at young students and is promoted by the School Librarians Network. This project aims to promote young students' production of diverse media outputs (from

video to posters for instance) giving suggestions on how to use media, how to have special care with online risks and also on issues related to citizenship. Conta-nos uma história! (Tell us a story!) is a storytelling project with the use of digital tools, especially in the production of podcasts. It is another school-based initiative that promotes the use of ICT in education through audio and video digital recording. SeguraNet Project is focused on the promotion of the informed, balanced and secure use of the Internet, targeting school communities, namely, children, youngsters, teachers, parents and others involved in educational environments.

As we look at the previous paragraphs, we can notice that most of the activities in Portugal are somehow related to a school environment and linked to young students and teachers. This is clearly visible in the table with the main media literacy activities and practices which have been delivered since 2010, like we will see later in this text. Considering the more particular scope of this report, we can also highlight another association, Os Filhos de Lumière, with these actions: CinEd; Moving cinema / Inside cinema and Mundo à nossa volta. It should also be noted in this regard that Cinema oriented initiatives connected with education are also very prominent in Portugal albeit having a strong regional prevalence (marked with R on the Tables Question3_Short version and Question3_Global) and are mainly related with civil society promoters (Pinto, Pereira, Pereira & Ferreira, 2011). So it is fully justified the usage of R (others/public authorities, in table Question3_Short version) because they are mainly related with Cinema, with Cineclubs (film societies) programs. In this regard, we must also stress that with the economic crisis in Portugal, a lot of relevant cinemas were closed and the Cineclubs programs also gained importance, especially in medium and small towns. This also means that this table only shows a part of the amount of Cineclubs.

As we have shown before, central public authorities' promoted initiatives are substantial, for instance related with the Ministry of Education (several initiates connected with school activities and especially target at young students and teachers/librarian teachers) and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Particularly in the last years, and with the shift from the large umbrella of media literacy to digital practices and literacies, there was an increase of civil society and industries promoters. This is of special importance if we consider that the Internet was used by only 65% of the population in 2014 and that 30% of the population had never used it at all (FCT, 2015).

Besides these main actors we should also consider Academia. If we look at the table of the main media literacy activities and practices which have been delivered since 2010 (Question3_Global), we can notice that there is a huge relevant activity in the promotion if media literacy practices, although very few exclusively targeted at the audiovisual spectrum (Question3_Short version). Different academic institutions all over the country made strong efforts to produce a media literacy agenda and, particularly in the last years, a digital literacy agenda.

Other relevant stakeholders in Portugal are second and third tier public authorities, linked to the availability of resources, to Policy Development, and to other activities (such as festivals, seminars, or media literacy promotion contests aimed at rewarding

students' best works). In comparison with Academia promoted initiatives here we can find a stronger prevalence of image and sound usage, even if in the majority of cases this promotion is tangential and not a main focus of the initiative.

Audiovisual content providers are especially related with resources and developed initiatives that offer resources for teachers to use at school, for instance during classes. In the cross sector intersection, we can say that in almost all of the cases there is a presence of the public authorities as well, in connection with other stockholders. In this particular area we should highlight the remaining initiative that was selected as one of the most significant media literacy activities: Sete dias com os media (Seven days with media). This national initiative aggregates every year, during the week of the 3th of May (Celebration of World Press Freedom Day), a considerable number of stakeholders and promotes several types of initiatives (in different contexts) all over the country and including all type of media.

As a final observation we should note that the majority of media literacy initiatives in Portugal (and especially those more connected with audiovisual) are targeted at ages bellow 18 years and that adults are mostly perceived as teachers, parents or elderly (a relevant absence of initiatives geared towards active adults is noticed).

Main references:

Comissão Nacional da UNESCO, Conselho Nacional da Educação, Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social, Gabinete para os Meios de Comunicação Social, Ministério da Educação, UMIC - Agência para a Sociedade do Conhecimento, Universidade do Minho/Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Sociedade (2011).

Literacia dos media: Declaração de Braga. In Sara Pereira (Org.), Congresso Nacional "Literacia, Media e Cidadania", 25-26 March 2011, Braga, Universidade do Minho: Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Sociedade.

FCT (2015). "Estratégia Nacional para a Inclusão e Literacia Digitais (2015 – 2020)". http://www.ticsociedade.pt/enild  Retrieved on the 20th May 2016

Pinto, M., Pereira, S., Pereira, L., & Ferreira, T. D. (2011). Educação para os media em Portugal: Experiências, actores e contextos. Braga: Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social.