

Media Literacy Project YouThink

Goals

Enhance youth media literacy and critical thinking skills.

Increase the country's resilience to information integrity challenges.

Duration

May 2021–May 2026

Total Funding

\$6,420,000

Implementing Partners

IREX in collaboration with the Macedonian Institute for Media, the Institute for Communication Studies, and Youth Education Forum

Key Counterparts

Universities and Secondary Schools Primary
Youth Clubs
Ministry of Education and Science
Bureau for Development of Education
National Examination Center

Contact

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CHALLENGES

North Macedonia has been ranked among the European countries which are least resilient to disinformation. This leads to societal divisions, lack of trust, polarization, and reduced social cohesion. At the same time, there is recognition that to become involved in and contribute to democratic processes, all citizens—especially youth—should have better developed media literacy and critical thinking skills as a foundation for active participation in society. USAID contributes to North Macedonia's efforts to empower citizens and youth to take an active role and have a voice in the country's development.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

This activity enables citizens and youth to distinguish high-quality, fact-based information from that which is biased, poorly researched, false, or malign. Components integrate critical information engagement and media literacy competencies into primary and secondary school curricula and higher education institutions, including pre- and in-service teacher training institutions and journalism schools. To support media literacy and critical thinking through non-formal education, the program works with a network of youth clubs to provide peer-to-peer training, online courses, and blended learning opportunities. Activities provide youth opportunities to practice these new skills and use information to form, present, and defend positions on issues of concern to them through constructive participation in decision-making processes. Further, the activity enhances the quality, quantity, and relevance of media information targeting youth by strengthening training offered to journalists, both through the country's journalism schools and by honing the skills of young practicing journalists.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Media literacy will be better integrated into formal education.
- Youth will be able to assess the value, authenticity, authority, and intention of the information they encounter.
- Young journalists will provide more relevant and higher quality information targeting youth.

KEY RESULTS IN 2023

Media Literacy in Education

Media literacy and critical thinking skills have been incorporated into the revised curriculum for all primary schools, grades one to nine.

Twenty two new Media Literacy courses have been introduced into the teaching curricula of eight higher education institutions, including the four pedagogical faculty and one institute for pedagogy ensuring that future educators are competent in media literacy.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Media literacy has been introduced in the **teaching curricula** of **8 higher education institutions** including all four teacher training faculties in Skopje, Shtip, Tetovo, and Bitola to ensure future educators are competent in media literacy.

Media Literacy Clubs were established in the country's only special **high schools** offering instruction to students with hearing and visual impairments.

Journalism in the Era of Digital Information course and Master Classes developed and offered at the Institute for Communication Studies. **180** young practicing or future **journalists** were trained on the use of **modern digital tools**.

Youth Critical Thinking Application



27 Youth Debate Clubs offer peer-to-peer media literacy education, annually reaching **500** youth. Media literacy learning resources have been adapted to be accessible for youth with hearing and visual impairments.

Information Resilience



40 Journalism Clubs were established in 30 primary and 10 secondary schools to engage students in improving information integrity and producing high quality content by youth, for youth.

