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Media Literacy Legislation in the European Union and the UK: Six Recommendations for Türkiye

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the scope of media literacy regulations in audiovisual media legislation in the European Union (EU), EU Member States, and the United Kingdom (UK) and to present recommendations for media literacy for Türkiye's audiovisual media legislation. In this study document analysis and descriptive analysis methods were used. Firstly, the media literacy regulations within the scope of the AVMSD were examined. Then the regulations in EU member states and the UK were evaluated in terms of compliance with the AVMSD, and the regulations that exceed the AVMSD were discussed. After these analyses, six key recommendations are proposed to strengthen Türkiye's media literacy framework: 1) establishing responsibilities of video-sharing platforms, 2) providing funding for media literacy, 3) assuring media literacy for individuals with disabilities, 4) designing media literacy for parents, and 5) planning the regular evaluation of media literacy activities, and 6) ensuring cooperation between different stakeholders.

KEY WORDS

AVMSD. European Union. EU Member States. Media Literacy. Media Literacy Legislation. UK.

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1 Introduction

With the increase in digitalization, media literacy has become critical for individuals to access accurate information, protect themselves from misleading content, and become active media users. Media literacy has a clear role to assure active citizenship in today's information society (European Union, 2007). Fake news, disinformation and hate speech, especially spread on digital platforms, have further increased the importance of media literacy (Jang & Ko, 2023; OECD, 2021).

For the EU, the promotion of media literacy is an important way to increase individuals' access to services through media and communication technologies, and to enable them to make informed use of media content. In this context, various legal regulations have been introduced by the EU to promote media literacy. The EU's AVMSD, updated in 2018, is one of the main legal regulations for promoting media literacy in member states. Member states of the EU are obliged to integrate the provisions of the AVMSD into their national audiovisual media legislation, by making regulations according to the AVMSD. Article 2 of Directive 2018/1808/EU required Member States to transpose it into domestic law by 19 September 2020 (*Directive (EU) 2018/1808...*, 2018).

EU candidate countries undertake to adopt the *acquis communautaire*, the founding treaties and legislation of the EU (*Council Conclusions on Media Literacy in an Ever-changing World*, 2024). Therefore, just like the member states, EU candidate countries are also obliged to make regulations promoting media literacy in their national legislation in line with the AVMSD. Although Türkiye, as an EU candidate country, has tried to harmonize its legislation with the EU for full membership, regulations on media literacy are limited. In terms of audiovisual media legislation in Türkiye, when Law No. 2954 on the Turkish Radio and Television (*Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kanunu*, 1983), the Law No. 5651 on the Regulation of Broadcasts via Internet and Prevention of Crimes Committed through Such Broadcasts (*İnternet Ortamında Yapılan...*, 2007), and Law No. 5224 on the Evaluation, Classification and Promotion of Cinema Films (*Sinema Filmlerinin Değerlendirilmesi...*, 2004) are examined, regulation directly related to media literacy is not found. However, in subparagraph (r) of the first paragraph of Article 37 of the Law No. 6112 on the Establishment of Radio and Television Enterprises and Their Media Services (*Radyo ve Televizyonların...*, 2011), there is a provision regarding cooperation with public institutions, especially the Ministry of National Education, to spread media literacy to all segments of the society. When the current media literacy laws in Türkiye are evaluated, it becomes clear that developing regulations in this field is of great importance. As a matter of fact, Türkiye aims to strengthen its legal infrastructure in these areas by putting comprehensive regulations on media literacy in order to protect children from digital threats (Ekiz, 2024; Mete & Bayram, 2024).

This study aims to analyse media literacy legislation in the audiovisual field in the EU, 27 EU member states and the United Kingdom (UK), and to identify suggestions that can be developed for Türkiye's audiovisual media legislation. This research aims to answer three main questions:

- a) What are the regulations regarding media literacy in the EU audiovisual media legislation and their basic principles?
- b) What specific legal provisions do EU member states and the UK have in their audiovisual media legislation regarding media literacy that go beyond the AVMSD?
- c) Considering the media literacy legislation in the audiovisual field in the EU, EU member states and the UK, what recommendations can be made to develop regulations for media literacy in Türkiye's audiovisual media legislation?

In the literature review, no study draws attention to the shortcomings of media literacy regulations in Turkish media legislation and proposes solutions to overcome those. Most of the studies focus on the EU's media literacy policies and the basic principles of the AVMSD (Akkor Gül, 2013; Borg & Lauri, 2011; Pérez Cervi et al., 2010; Ergüney, 2023; Livingstone et al., 2012). This research differs from other studies in that it deeply analyzes the media literacy legislation

of the EU, 27 EU member states and the UK, and develops concrete proposals for Türkiye's audiovisual media legislation. These recommendations could be useful to guide legislators and policymakers in Türkiye.

1.1 Definition of Media Literacy

Over time, various definitions have been made in the literature for the concept of media literacy. Scholars generally agree that media literacy focuses on specific knowledge and skills that can help to understand and use media critically (Adams & Hamm, 2001; Aufderheide, 1993; Ciurel, 2016; Hobbs, 2010; Maksl et al., 2015; Martens, 2010; Silverblatt, 2001). Aufderheide (1993) described media literacy as the ability to critically access, interpret, and communicate messages across multiple forms of media. Adams and Hamm explained that

media literacy may be thought of as the ability to create personal meaning from the visual and verbal symbols we take in every day from television, advertising, film, and digital media. It is more than inviting students to simply decode information. They must be critical thinkers who can understand and produce in the media culture swirling around them. (2001, p. 33)

Silverblatt has defined media literacy as a “critical thinking skill that allows audiences to develop independent judgments about media content” (2001, p. 2). Ofcom defines media literacy as “the ability to use, understand and create media and communications in a variety of contexts” (2024, p. 3). Media literacy as an umbrella term, overlaps with different types of literacy, including information, news, digital and data literacy (Polizzi et al., 2024). Public authorities have considered the evidence, by whatever name, that establishes a positive relationship between greater audience education and better and more positive behaviour or habits in information and media consumption (Sádaba & Salaverría, 2022).

The Commission of the European Communities describes media literacy as individuals' capacity to access media, interpret and critically assess various forms of media and their content, and to engage in communication across different contexts (European Union, 2007). According to the definition by the Media Literacy Expert Group “media literacy is an umbrella expression that includes all the technical, cognitive, social, civic and creative capacities that allow a citizen to access, have a critical understanding of the media and interact with it” (European Commission, 2022, “Mission” section). There is an agreement that media literacy encompasses a wide range of skills and abilities that enable individuals to critically engage with media, understand its content, and create meaningful communication in various contexts.

2 Methodology

This study was designed as a qualitative research study. In this study, document analysis and descriptive analysis methods were used. Document analysis is a data collection method that aims to answer research questions by examining existing written documents systematically and in depth (Bowen, 2009). Descriptive analysis is an analysis method that aims to describe the relevant phenomenon or situation in an understandable and systematic way, by organising and summarising the data within a certain theme or category (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006).

The analysis covered the audiovisual media legislation of the EU, EU member states, and the UK, and included legal amendments and updates available in the European Audiovisual Observatory database up to January 2025. The regulations on media literacy in the audiovisual media legislation of the EU member states were accessed in English through the European Audiovisual Observatory database (AVMSD, n.d.). This database provides systematic information on how EU member states have transposed the provisions of the AVMSD into their national laws.

To identify relevant regulations, the search was conducted by entering the specific article numbers of the AVMSD related to media literacy – particularly Article 28b(3)(j) on video-sharing platforms and Article 33a(1) on the obligations of member states to promote media literacy (*Directive (EU) 2018/1808...*, 2018). For each country, the database displayed the corresponding national law and article in which the AVMSD provision had been implemented, together with the exact legal reference and year of adoption. This process allowed a systematic comparison of which member states directly transposed the AVMSD provisions and which interpreted them differently.

Firstly, EU member states and UK's audiovisual media legislation were analysed by using the document analysis method. The documents analysed were:

- a) Regulations within the scope of AVMSD;
- b) Media literacy regulations in EU member states and the UK in terms of harmonisation with the AVMSD;
- c) Regulations exceeding AVMSD standards in EU member states and the UK.

Secondly, regulations exceeding AVMSD standards in EU member states and the UK were categorised using the descriptive analysis method and explained in detail. Finally, on the basis of media literacy legislation in the EU member states and the UK, recommendations on media literacy were developed for Türkiye's audiovisual media legislation.

This study is primarily based on legislative texts and official regulations concerning media literacy. While these documents provide a systematic overview of the legal framework, they do not directly reflect how media literacy policies are implemented in practice or their societal impact. Legal provisions may often remain at the level of intention or be applied differently depending on political, cultural, and institutional conditions. Furthermore, the research is limited to media literacy provisions within audiovisual legislation; other domains directly related to media literacy, such as education, culture, and social policy, are excluded. This choice helped maintain the focus of the analysis but also represents the limitation of evaluating media literacy exclusively through audiovisual legislation. In addition, although the United Kingdom officially left the EU in 2020, its media literacy legislation shaped within the framework of the AVMSD remains relevant and has therefore been included in this study.

3 Findings

3.1 Development of EU Legislation on Media Literacy

The EU's work on media literacy began with the Lisbon European Council in 2000, which emphasized that media literacy was a critical element for the knowledge economy and democratic societies. A higher degree of media literacy was highlighted as a crucial factor in helping the EU build a more inclusive society and meet its objectives, particularly by strengthening its competitive knowledge economy (European Union, 2007).

Conclusions on media literacy have been issued by the EU Council of Ministers on various dates. Since 2008, these have generally covered issues such as ensuring that voters have access to accurate information to ensure a fair electoral environment, countering disinformation, promoting efforts to improve media literacy, identifying best practices in the field of media literacy, and ensuring that media literacy is included at all levels of education (European Union, n.d).

The AVMSD has a critical role to play in improving media literacy in the Member States of the EU. This Directive is a revision of the Television without Frontiers Directive – TWFD (1989 and 1997). The AVMSD, which regulates audiovisual media services in the EU, first entered into force on 19 December 2007. The AVMSD was revised in 2010 and 2018 to adapt to rapid changes in the digital media landscape and to respond to new challenges. Media literacy has been an important element throughout the revisions of the AVMSD. Member States are obliged to establish

the necessary inspection and enforcement mechanisms at national level to ensure that media service providers comply with the requirements of this Directive. The first legal definition of media literacy by the EU was introduced in AVMSD 2007/65/EC. Recital 37 defines media literacy as:

Media literacy refers to skills, knowledge and understanding that allow consumers to use media effectively and safely. Media-literate people are able to exercise informed choices, understand the nature of content and services and take advantage of the full range of opportunities offered by new communications technologies. (*Directive 2007/65/EC*, 2007, Recital 37, para. 1)

As can be seen, this definition addresses media literacy in terms of access to information and safe and informed use of media content. The AVMSD 2007/65/EC stated that the development of media literacy should be promoted in all segments of society and that this process should be closely monitored. Article 26 of the AVMSD stipulates that by 19 December 2011 and every three years, the European Commission shall submit a report on the implementation of this Directive and, where necessary, make new proposals in the light of new technological developments, competitiveness in the sector and levels of media literacy in the Member States. This provision aims to ensure that media literacy is regularly monitored and that policy makers adapt to technological innovations and societal changes in the field of media services. Periodic follow-up of the planned reporting is important in order to closely monitor the progress made in improving media literacy in Member States.

Updated on April 15, 2010, the AVMSD 2010/13/EU did not make any changes in the definition of media literacy. The 2010/13/EU AVMSD included proposed measures to promote media literacy in various sectors of society. In article 47, it specifically stated that media literacy is an important tool for children, young people and families and encouraged various educational approaches such as continuing education for educators, internet education for children and panel discussions for parents. It also recommended campaigns at the national level to promote responsible media use. The obligation to submit a report every 3 years set out in Article 26 of the 2007 version of the Directive is mentioned in the first sentence of Article 33 of Directive 2010/13/EU (2010).

The proposed amendments to 2010/13/EU AVMSD were put on the agenda in May 2016 and after two years of negotiations, the revised AVMSD was adopted on 14 November 2018. Although media literacy was included as an important concept in the 2007 and 2010 versions of the AVMSD, new problems emerging, especially in the digitalized world, have led to the need to redefine this concept. In particular, the proliferation of fake news and online disinformation has shown that the traditional definition of media literacy is insufficient. The revised 2018 AVMSD defines media literacy as follows:

Media literacy refers to skills, knowledge and understanding that allow citizens to use media effectively and safely. In order to enable citizens to access information and to use, critically assess and create media content responsibly and safely, citizens need to possess advanced Media Literacy skills (*Directive (EU) 2018/1808...*, 2018, Recital 59, para. 1).

The definition in Directive (EU) 2018/1808 (2018) takes a more comprehensive approach and includes competencies such as critical thinking, the ability to recognize disinformation and the responsible production of media content. In addition, Article 59 requires media service providers and video-sharing platforms to promote media literacy in all segments of society and to closely monitor this process in cooperation with relevant stakeholders. There are three separate provisions in Directive 2018/1808/EU on media literacy: Article 28b(3)(j) on video-sharing platforms; Article 30b(3)(b) on the responsibilities of ERGA (European Regulatory Authorities Group) on media literacy; and Article 33a on the responsibilities of Member States on media literacy.

3.1.1 Regulations for Video-Sharing Platforms

The growing importance of video-sharing platforms (YouTube, Vimeo, TikTok, Dailymotion, Twitch, Facebook Watch, Instagram Reels etc.) makes it necessary to include video-sharing platforms into media literacy efforts, as these may play a critical role in combating disinformation and enhancing online safety by promoting informed consumption of digital content. The Directive explicitly emphasizes the importance of multi-stakeholderism and recommends that media service providers and video-sharing platform providers cooperate with all segments of society (*Directive (EU) 2018/1808...*, 2018).

The new directive makes it clear that video-sharing platforms, as well as media service providers, have responsibility for media literacy. Article 28b of the AVMSD establishes, in the context of protecting users against illegal and harmful content, obligations for video-sharing platforms regarding media literacy. Article 28b (3)(j) of the AVMSD states that video-sharing platforms should provide effective measures and tools to promote media literacy and raise awareness of users about these measures and tools.

3.1.2 Responsibilities of Member States towards Media Literacy

The revision of AVMSD 2018/1808/EU defines more clearly the responsibility of Member States to promote media literacy. The responsibility for promoting and monitoring media literacy was also included in previous versions of the Directive, and this approach is seen to be continued and strengthened with Directive 2018/1808/EU. Article 33a of Directive 2018/1808/EU stipulates the responsibilities of EU member states as follows:

1. Member States shall promote and take measures for the development of media literacy skills.
2. By 19 December, 2022 and every three years thereafter, Member States shall report to the Commission on the implementation of paragraph 1.
3. The Commission shall, after consulting the Contact Committee, issue guidelines regarding the scope of such reports. (*Directive (EU) 2018/1808/...*, 2018, "Article 33a", para. 1)

The responsibility of the European Commission in the revised Directive to prepare guidelines on the scope of the reports, in cooperation with the Advisory Committee, is important in ensuring unity and harmonization among Member States in the reporting process. In this way, the reports on media literacy of each Member State will be brought into line with a certain standard and the comparability of the content of these reports will be increased. In line with Article 33a (3) of the AVMSD, "Guidelines pursuant to Article 33a (3) of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive on the scope of Member States' reports concerning measures for the promotion and development of media literacy skills" has been published by the Commission.

3.2 EU Member States Media Literacy Legislations

Considering Articles 28b (3) (j) and 33a (1) of the AVMSD, the two main issues that Member States should legislate on regarding media literacy are as follows:

- a) **Obligation to Promote Media Literacy:** Member States should legislate to promote media literacy in all segments of society.
- b) **Regulation of Video-Sharing Platforms:** Member States should legislate to require video-sharing platforms to provide media literacy tools to their users and raise awareness about these tools.

In this direction, since the revision of the AVMS Directive in 2018, Member States have developed various forms of legislation to transpose the Directive into national law. All member states have introduced legislation on media literacy. However, it is observed that Denmark and the Netherlands have not enacted any legislation pursuant to Article 33a (1) of the Directive.

The Netherlands has not made any adaptation in national law regarding Article 33a (1) of the Directive. The reason for this is explained in the 2023 Media Literacy Country Report as follows. The Netherlands already had a media literacy initiative, predating the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive. This network organisation (Netwerk Mediawijsheid) is funded through the regular media budget. This grant has a legal basis in the Media Act (Mediawet 2008, articles 2.180- 2.183). The scope of this task has been considered compatible with the AVMSD, therefore no changes have been made while implementing the revised Directive. (European Commission, 2023, “NL – Report on Media Literacy by The Netherlands”, “Legal and/or Policy Measures” section, para. 1)

Furthermore, the Netherlands does not directly specify the code of conduct for VSPs in relation to media literacy in national audiovisual legislation, but refers directly to the text of the Directive and provides that Article 28b (3) of the AVMSD should be consulted for the requirements in this respect (Mediawet, 2008).

When the media legislation of the Member States is examined, it is seen that the provisions of the Directive on 28b (3)(j) and 33a (1) are mostly consistent with the text of the Directive and that the majority of their legislation repeats these provisions.

3.2.1 Additional Regulations beyond AVMSD

The existence of common minimum broadcasting standards at Union level does not negate the fact that there are significant differences between Member States. The diversity of these regulations also explains the different forms and methods by which each Member State has chosen to apply the rules of the EU (Katsirea, 2008). When the national audiovisual legislation on media literacy in the Member States and the UK is analyzed, it is seen that the national audiovisual legislation of some member states repeats the standards set by the Directive, while others exceed these standards. These regulations exceeding the AVMSD standards were subjected to descriptive analysis, and the following headings were identified:

- Funding for Media Literacy
- Media Literacy for People with Disabilities
- Media Literacy for Parents
- Evaluation of Media Literacy Activities
- Collaboration between Media Literacy Actors

3.2.1.1 Funding for Media Literacy

Among the Member States, Germany, Croatia, Ireland, Austria and Slovenia have made specific provisions in their primary audiovisual legislation for funding media literacy projects. In Germany, Article 112(1) of the Interstate Treaty on Broadcasting and Telemedia authorizes the use of funds for projects promoting media literacy. This provision states that, with special authorization granted by the state legislature, state media authorities may utilize the funds set out in Article 10 of the Rundfunkfinanzierungsstaatsvertrag to promote media literacy projects (*Staatsvertrag für Rundfunk...*, 2019). In this way, media literacy projects in Germany are supported on a legal basis.

Article 71(2) of the Croatian Electronic Media Act (*Zakon o elektroničkim medijima*, 2021) stipulates that the resources of the Fund for the Promotion of Pluralism and Diversity in Electronic Media shall be allocated to projects, programs and content of public interest aimed at developing and supporting media literacy programs. Thus, the support of media literacy projects in Croatia is guaranteed by law.

In Ireland, Art. 159F(2)(b)(ii) of the Broadcasting Act (2009) allows Coimisiún na Meán (Irish Media Commission), after consultation with Fís Éireann (Screen Ireland), to prepare plans for the provision of funding to support the development of media literacy projects.

In Austria, Article 20a of the *Federal Act on the Establishment of an Austrian Communication Authority (Bundesgesetz über die..., 2024)* assigns RTR-GmbH the task of providing information on media literacy in the digital age. Furthermore, a certain amount of funding is transferred to the RTR-GmbH each year to provide information and tools to increase media literacy and to implement literacy measures for media service providers. Austria operates funding mechanisms set by law to support media literacy initiatives.

In Slovenia, pursuant to Article 11a(1) of the Act on Audiovisual Media Services (*Zakon o avdiovizualnih medijskih storitvah, 2011*), measures to promote, support and develop media literacy are financed by funds provided by the ministry responsible for the media. In providing this funding, laws promoting the public interest are taken into account.

3.2.1.2 Media Literacy for Persons with Disabilities

Belgium and Portugal both have made specific provisions in their national audiovisual legislation on media literacy activities for persons with disabilities. In these countries, media literacy projects are carried out with an inclusive approach to all citizens and include efforts to develop accessible services especially for persons with disabilities.

As stated in Article 29 of the Fifth RTBF Management Contract of the Belgium (*Cinquieme contrat de gestion de la RTBF, 2020*) (French Community) Decree on Audiovisual Media Services and Video-Sharing Services, RTBF (Belgian Radio-television of the French Community) is responsible for developing a media literacy plan that includes the critical analysis of media content and the evaluation of commercial communications. This plan contains specific measures to enhance access to non-linear audiovisual media services and information society services. Additionally, the plan includes specific steps to support media access for individuals with sensory disabilities. RTBF will submit this plan to the Ministry and provide annual reports on the implementation status of the plan.

In Portugal, pursuant to Article 51 of Law 27/2007, of 30th July – Television and Audiovisual On-Demand Services Law (*Lei n.º 27/2007..., 2007*) specifically emphasises media literacy activities for persons with disabilities. Broadcasters are obliged to produce media literacy content in accessible formats such as sign language and subtitles. Additionally, broadcasters are expected to collaborate with relevant stakeholders in this field and to produce and disseminate content related to media literacy.

3.2.1.3 Media Literacy for Parents

In Spain, under the General Audiovisual Communication Law (*Ley 13/2022..., 2022*), Article 10 (4) emphasizes the importance of promoting media literacy for parents. This regulation mandates that the competent audiovisual authority, audiovisual media service providers, and video-sharing platforms work collaboratively with stakeholders, particularly educational authorities, parent and teacher associations, and organizations focused on media literacy.

The goal is to support parents, guardians, and legal representatives in guiding minors toward a safe, balanced, and responsible use of digital devices, audiovisual media, and video-sharing services. Such measures aim to protect and foster minors' development, dignity, and fundamental rights, as outlined in Article 84 of Organic Law 3/2018 (*Ley Orgánica 3/2018..., 2018*).

3.2.1.4 Evaluation of Media Literacy Activities

Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Lithuania and the UK are countries that have legal regulations for regular monitoring and evaluation of media literacy activities.

The arrangement for the evaluation of media literacy activities under Latvia's Electronic Media Sector Development Strategy 2023-2027 (*Elektronisko plašsaziņas līdzekļu..., 2022*) includes the implementation of data-based activities for the promotion of media literacy. It is envisaged that once funding is secured, a survey will be conducted every two years to determine the level of media literacy in society, including qualitative and quantitative data. The results of the survey will

be shared with stakeholders, and these findings will be used to determine the next steps towards media literacy. In addition, media literacy training will be continued, and the target audience of these trainings will be determined in line with the research results.

In Poland, Article 6-2(14) of the Broadcasting Act (*Ustawa o radiofonii i telewizji*, 1992) states that a review and assessment of the state of media education, including an assessment of measures taken by media service providers and video-sharing platform providers, should be carried out in this area.

In Slovakia, under the Media Services Act (*Zákon č. 264/2022 Z. z. o mediálnych službách*, 2022), Article 110(3)(g), the national regulatory authority is tasked with initiating and conducting media research and analytical activities to monitor and evaluate the state of the media environment, including media literacy.

In Lithuania, the Law on Provision of Information to the Public (*Lietuvos Respublikos visuomenės informavimo įstatymas*, 1996), Article 28(6) requires the authority authorised by the Government in the field of public information, in cooperation with other bodies, to periodically assess the implementation of media literacy activities and their impact on the public.

In the UK, OFCOM plays a significant role in promoting media literacy under the Communications Act (2003). OFCOM has an important role in regularly evaluating media literacy activities and reporting on their effectiveness. The Communications Act states that OFCOM has an obligation to establish a media literacy strategy, review this strategy periodically and submit annual reports. OFCOM's annual report should include a media literacy statement summarizing media literacy activities and assessing the level of success of these activities. This statement should summarize the initiatives taken and progress made to improve media literacy during the relevant financial year.

3.2.1.5 Collaboration between Media Literacy Actors

Media literacy necessitates wide-scale cooperation in order for the society to gain a conscious and safe stance in the digital world. Some countries such as Spain, Bulgaria, Poland, Latvia, Ireland, Belgium, Portugal, Greece and the UK foresee the inclusion of many actors in media literacy studies in their audiovisual media legislation. In these countries, media literacy is not limited to the work of state bodies but is addressed in a more inclusive and collaborative framework with the contributions of social actors. In this regard, various stakeholders—such as government agencies, national regulatory authorities, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and media companies—are also involved in the process.

For example, in Spain the competent audiovisual authority, media service providers and video-sharing platforms, in particular in collaboration with educational authorities, parent-teacher associations and other stakeholders interested in media literacy, ensure that children use their digital devices and media services in a safe, balanced and responsible manner. This authority is responsible for encouraging their use (*Ley 13/2022...*, 2022). Similarly, in Bulgaria, the Radio and Television Act (*Zakon 138/1998 za radioto i televizijata*, 1999) provides that the Electronic Media Council, in cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders such as the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Science, other public authorities, media service providers, academia, non-governmental organizations and consumers, aims to improve media literacy. provides for its operation (Art. 33a(3)). Media literacy regulations in Poland, according to Article 6 of the Broadcasting Act (*Ustawa o radiofonii i telewizji*, 1992), assign the National Broadcasting Council the duty to promote media literacy and emphasize that this task should be carried out in cooperation with other government institutions, non-governmental organizations and relevant stakeholders.

In Latvia, the 2023-2027 National Electronic Media Strategy (*Elektronisko plašsaziņas līdzekļu...*, 2022) emphasizes the cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Culture to strengthen and expand the media literacy network, and encourages the involvement of NGOs, universities and higher education institutions in this process. In Ireland, the

Broadcasting Act 2009 – Article 7(3)(g) provides that the Commission shall promote education and research initiatives related to media literacy and cooperate with educational institutions, sports organizations and community representatives to this end. This collaboration aims to improve media literacy and raise public awareness of the commission’s mandate. In Greece, Law no. 4779 of 20 February 2021 (*Nómos 4779/2021...*, 2021) – Article 35 (1) stipulates that the General Secretariat of Communication and Information, the National Council for Radio and Television (ESR), relevant public bodies, media service providers and video-sharing platforms should work together to improve citizens’ media literacy skills.

In Belgium, RTBF is obliged to actively cooperate and maintain a constant dialogue with the Higher Council for Media Education to achieve media literacy goals (*Contrat de gestion consolidé RTBF 2019-2022*, 2019). At the same time, the Licensing and Control Committee is obliged to make recommendations on media literacy in consultation with the High Council on Media Literacy (*Décret relatif aux services...*, 2021, Art. 9.1.2-3 §1 17). In Cyprus, Article 18D of the Broadcasting Corporation Act (*The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation Law, Chap. 300A*, 2021) requires the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC) to cooperate with the Radio Television Authority to develop and disseminate media literacy skills. This cooperation includes providing clear information to citizens and supporting awareness-raising campaigns about the production of digital content, the responsible use of the internet and the functioning of search engines. In the legislation of Belgium and Cyprus, it is observed that inter-stakeholder collaboration in media literacy is predominantly limited to governmental institutions.

In the UK, OFCOM is responsible for preparing, implementing and reporting on media literacy strategies (*Communications Act, 2023*, Art. 11 and 11A). There is no specific institution, organization or person with whom OFCOM will cooperate. However, it has been stated that OFCOM should “consult such persons as it considers appropriate” when preparing and revising its media literacy strategy (11A, (5)). In Portugal, emphasis has been placed on broadcasting organizations’ cooperation with relevant stakeholders in order to promote media literacy (*Lei n.º 27/2007...*, 2007, Art. 51(2)(f)).

4 Media Literacy Regulations in Türkiye

In order for the audiovisual media legislation in Türkiye to be compatible with AVMSD in terms of media literacy, it is necessary to include the regulations in AVMSD articles 33a (1) and 28b (3)(j). In paragraph (r) of Article 37 of Law No. 6112 (*Radio ve Televizyonların...*, 2011), it is envisaged that the Supreme Board of Radio and Television will cooperate with the Ministry of National Education and other public institutions in order to spread media literacy to all segments of society. This regulation directly aimed at media literacy is compatible with AVMSD article 33a (1). However, audiovisual media legislation in Türkiye does not include the responsibility of video-sharing platforms to promote media literacy in terms of compliance with Article 28b (3)(j) of the AVMSD. Therefore, there is a need for regulation on video-sharing platforms. In addition, the regulations implemented by EU member states and the UK to support media literacy by going beyond AVMSD can serve as an example for the development of media literacy in Türkiye.

4.1 Six Recommendations for Turkish Audiovisual Media Legislation

Considering the deficiencies in Turkish audiovisual media legislation in terms of AVMSD and the good examples in the legislation of EU member states and the UK, six recommendations have been developed for Türkiye in terms of media literacy. These recommendations are as follows:

- a) **Establishing responsibilities of video-sharing platforms:** Legislation can be introduced to require video-sharing platforms to actively promote media literacy. In this context, platforms should provide tools that enable users to combat disinformation, perform fact-checking and better understand content. Platforms should also be legally obliged to raise user awareness of fake news and misleading content through informative messages, guides and other resources.
- b) **Providing funding for media literacy:** A regulation to provide funds for the sustainability of media literacy projects can be added to the legislation.
- c) **Assuring media literacy for individuals with disabilities:** Arrangements can be made to increase access to media literacy content for individuals with special needs, such as the visually and hearing impaired. Applications such as subtitles, sign language and audio description support can be evaluated in this context.
- d) **Designing media literacy for parents:** Arrangements can be made to provide awareness-raising training programs and guidance services for parents in order to ensure that children use digital devices, audio-visual media and video-sharing platforms in a safe, balanced and responsible manner.
- e) **Planning the regular evaluation of media literacy activities:** Regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms can be established to measure the contribution of media literacy activities to society.
- f) **Ensuring cooperation between different stakeholders:** In paragraph (r) of Article 37 of Law No. 6112, cooperation between the Supreme Board of Radio and Television and the Ministry of National Education is envisaged regarding media literacy studies. In addition, regulations can be made to include media service providers, video-sharing platforms, non-governmental organizations, private sector and educational institutions in media literacy cooperation processes.

In order for Türkiye to create a strong and inclusive structure in the field of media literacy, it would be useful to make comprehensive regulations which take into account the recommendations listed above. These recommendations can make significant contributions to Türkiye's achievement of its media literacy development goals and can be put into effect by adding them to Law No. 6112, which regulates audiovisual media services.

In general, regulations for video-sharing platforms are included in Law No. 6112 and Law No. 5651 in Türkiye. Internet Law No. 5651 (*İnternet Ortamında Yapılan...*, 2007) includes more technical and internet security-related regulations such as combating online crimes, internet security, and content removal requests. Law No. 6112 includes regulations on audiovisual media services such as broadcasting principles, content control and child protection. In this context, regarding media literacy, it would be also appropriate to include the regulations for video-sharing platforms within the scope of Law No. 6112. As a matter of fact, in EU member states, media literacy regulations for VSPs are included in audiovisual media services laws with similar content to Law No. 6112 in Türkiye

5 Discussion

This study reveals that some EU member states and the United Kingdom have adopted regulations that go beyond the minimum requirements of the AVMSD in order to strengthen media literacy. In particular, the regulation of video-sharing platforms, the establishment of financing mechanisms, the promotion of inclusivity, and the strengthening of multi-stakeholder cooperation stand out among these measures. These patterns offer important lessons for Türkiye.

Video-sharing platforms are one of the main areas of risk. Davidson et al. (2021) emphasize that these platforms involve threats such as inappropriate content, privacy violations, and the unauthorized sharing of live broadcasts. For Türkiye, introducing media literacy provisions for these platforms is important in terms of enhancing digital security.

Financing and monitoring mechanisms also appear as decisive elements. Aroldi et al. (2017) argue that without sustainable resources and systematic evaluation, policies cannot be realistically implemented. Therefore, the establishment of similar financial and evaluative structures in Türkiye could serve as a guide for improving the applicability of media literacy policies.

Inclusivity is another significant dimension of European policies. Persons with disabilities continue to face various barriers in accessing, analyzing, and producing media content. Ressa (2021) highlights that accessibility measures are critical for empowerment and preventing exclusion. Adding such provisions to Türkiye's legislation may contribute to ensuring equal participation.

The role of parents is also becoming increasingly important. Karaboğa (2019) notes that parents need training in digital media literacy, while Gabrielli et al. (2018) show that parental guidance plays a crucial role in shaping children's media habits. Haywood & Sembianti (2023) demonstrate that structured programs strengthen families' capacity to manage digital environments. For Türkiye, integrating such initiatives into legislation could support families in becoming more resilient in the digital ecosystem.

Finally, multi-stakeholder cooperation plays a central role in the effectiveness of media literacy. Lacourt (2024) emphasizes that empowering users depends on the joint efforts of policymakers, regulators, educators, industry actors, and civil society. Encouraging broad partnerships in Türkiye is important for bridging the gap between the legal framework and practical implementation.

6 Conclusion

The aim of this study is to comprehensively analyze the regulations on media literacy in the audiovisual media legislation in the EU, EU member states and the UK and to develop strategic recommendations to strengthen media literacy in Türkiye's audiovisual media legislation. Although there are some regulations regarding media literacy in the current audiovisual media legislation in Türkiye, these regulations are limited in their scope and effectiveness. The results of this study reveal that Türkiye can benefit significantly from the regulations implemented in the EU, member states and the UK in strengthening audiovisual media legislation for media literacy. In this context, six recommendations were developed for audiovisual media legislation in Türkiye including establishing responsibilities of video-sharing platforms, providing funding for media literacy, assuring media literacy for individuals with disabilities and for parents, planning the regular evaluation of media literacy activities, and ensuring cooperation between different stakeholders.

Future studies could go beyond legal analysis to examine media literacy in a more comprehensive way. Complementing legal analysis with empirical methods such as stakeholder interviews, policy evaluations, and case studies would help capture not only the existence of media literacy provisions in texts but also their effectiveness and societal outcomes in practice. Expanding the scope of research beyond audiovisual legislation to include education, culture, and social policy would also provide a broader understanding of the different dimensions of media literacy. Moreover, examining media literacy regulations in non-EU countries could enrich comparative perspectives and contribute to a deeper understanding of how policies are developed and implemented across different contexts.

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