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 <https://ror.org/0583g9182>

## **Editorial**

 <https://doi.org/10.15633/sce.02100>

Research clearly shows that in the era of digitalization, information overload, and the widespread presence of social media, the ability to critically analyze content, recognize disinformation, and use media in a conscious and responsible manner has become one of the key conditions for functioning in social and civic life. Media competences today go far beyond passive reception of information; they also include its interpretation, selection, creation, and ethical dissemination. This is particularly important in the context of the growing scale of fake news, information manipulation, and algorithmic mechanisms that shape how users perceive reality.

Contemporary studies emphasize that media education should be continuous and systemic—encompassing both children and youth as well as adults, who also operate in a rapidly changing communication environment. The dynamic development of technologies, platforms, and forms of communication means that these competences require continual updating. Their absence may lead not only to susceptibility to manipulation and disinformation, but also to digital exclusion, disorientation in the information space, and difficulties in making informed social and political decisions. For this reason, media education is increasingly recognized as a fundamental component of civic education and an essential element of preparation for life in the information society.

These issues are addressed extensively in the first article by Małgorzata Laskowska, *Teaching media ethics through civic education in Poland: Assumptions of the core curriculum*. The text demonstrates how the new subject “Civic Education” in Poland responds to the challenges of the contemporary world, in which young people function primarily within digital media environments. The author analyzes the extent to which the Polish core curriculum incorporates key issues such as disinformation, manipulation, responsibility for communication, and critical thinking. This is an engaging and timely article for anyone interested in understanding how the education system prepares students for conscious participation in democracy in the age of information. The article also highlights specific skills, such as source verification, message analysis, and the recognition of manipulation, that are now considered fundamental civic competences. In doing so, it shows how education can counteract social polarization and strengthen young people’s resilience to disinformation.

The issue of media education, particularly its urgent necessity, is also indirectly addressed in the second article by Tomáš Dvorský, Gabriel Eštok and

Mária Denciová, *Disinformation ecosystem and its impact on Slovakia youth*. The authors analyze the growing phenomenon of disinformation in the Slovak online space and its impact on young people. They demonstrate how social media, algorithms, and so-called information bubbles shape the attitudes of youth, increasing their susceptibility to manipulation, radicalization, and polarization. This insightful study helps explain why young people often struggle to distinguish between true and false information and what consequences this has for democratic life and social stability. The authors also present empirical research findings, including differences related to gender and type of schooling, and propose practical solutions, from strengthening media education to using technological tools, that can help reduce the impact of disinformation and increase societal resilience.

A different yet equally important issue is explored in the third article by Maciej Nowakowski, *Social networks and minority language speakers: A pan-European comparison of development, initiatives and challenges*. The text focuses on the place of minority languages in the digital world, showing that their survival today depends not only on their presence in education or traditional media, but above all on their visibility in digital spaces, especially social media. The author compares four cases: Silesian, Provençal, Andalusian, and Scottish Gaelic, demonstrating how different models of institutional support and grassroots activity influence their prestige, usage, and attractiveness among younger users. The article makes clear that the absence of a language in digital spaces may lead to its gradual disappearance from the everyday communicative practices of future generations. At the same time, it suggests that combining grassroots creativity with well-designed language policies and institutional support can effectively strengthen linguistic diversity in Europe.

The final article in this issue addresses the fundamental problem of truth in the media. In *The media in the face of truth: Speaking, listening and conversion*, Maciej Radej offers a profound reflection on the place of truth in media communication, arguing that the contemporary crisis concerns not truth itself, but rather the human attitude toward it. The author explores the distinction between “true speech” and “spoken truth,” emphasizing the importance of responsibility, attentive listening, and an inner openness to truth. This is a reflective and inspiring text for those who wish to better understand how media shape our thinking, choices, and social relationships. The article also highlights the dangers of fragmented communication, relativism, and

habituation to illusion, all of which weaken the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood. At the same time, it demonstrates that only a genuine turn toward truth, on the part of both media producers and audiences, can transform media into a space of authentic dialogue, freedom, and responsibility, and help rebuild trust in social communication.

Although the articles presented in this issue address diverse topics, they share a common concern: the quality of communication in a world dominated by digital media. Together, they show that the future of democratic societies depends not only on access to information, but above all on the ability to understand, evaluate, and use it responsibly.