

July 2019

Welcome to the Ofcom Media Literacy Bulletin, in which we announce the launch of our **[Making Sense of Media Network](#)**.

These updates bring together summaries of Ofcom's work in the media literacy field, as well as news, initiatives and events on this topic, submitted by stakeholders in this area, both in the UK and overseas. Inclusion here does not imply endorsement by Ofcom.

Each summary is included under one of the five categories below; please click on one of the links if you would like to go directly to this category.

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Ofcom's media literacy activity

Publications

On 30 May 2019, Ofcom published four reports:

- Our annual **[Adults' Media Use and Attitudes](#)** report. The report sets out the latest findings on the ways in which adults aged 16 and over in the UK use, understand and create media, and how this has changed over time.
- Alongside this report, we published the fourteenth wave of our **[Adults' Media Lives](#)** report. This qualitative study tracks the evolution of adults' relationship with digital media, from use to understanding and concerns. Using a sample of 19 adults, this study gives a human face to our adults' media literacy data and findings.
- Ofcom also published its new annual report, **[Online Nation](#)**. This report looks at what people are doing online, how they are served by online content providers and platforms, and their attitudes to and experiences of using the internet.

- On 30 May, we also published quantitative research into [Internet users' experience of harms online](#). This research, which looked at the experiences of both adult internet users and those aged between 12 and 15, was commissioned by Ofcom, with advice on the research design provided by the Information Commissioner's Office. The main objectives were to quantify concerns about, reported experiences of, and potential sources of, online harm in three key categories:
 - content that people view, read or listen to online and interactions with other users;
 - data/privacy; and,
 - hacking/security.

This research also explored awareness of and opinions about the current level of regulation that applies in the broadcast and online environments.

Events

Building on these recently published reports, Ofcom's next 'Making Sense of Media' event will take place today, Thursday 18 July 2019 at The British Library, London, NW1 2DB.

This event will showcase our latest Making Sense of Media research, including key findings relating to online harms and media literacy. We are bringing together thought leaders, experts and practitioners to discuss and debate the latest insights and challenges in online media literacy.

In the morning plenary session attendees will hear from Sharon White (Chief Executive, Ofcom), Yih-Choung Teh (Group Director for Strategy and Research, Ofcom), and a number of other speakers including Professor Sonia Livingstone OBE (LSE), Rachel Coldicutt (Chief Executive, Doteveryone) and Stephanie Comey (Senior Manager, Broadcasting Authority of Ireland).

And, in the afternoon there will be break-out sessions on the following topics:

- online harms and bullying – we will consider what the research tells us and what initiatives exist to help those affected by online bullying;
- people's understanding of data – we will look at people's understanding of data and discuss which types of intervention, to which groups, might be most effective in raising awareness;
- levels of critical understanding (including news literacy) – we will discuss the core measures of critical understanding - with a particular focus on disinformation; and, explore which groups and which issues are the biggest priorities;
- digital divides and vulnerable groups – as well as looking at the latest developments in online take-up (notably, the growth in smartphones and tablets being the only

means of getting online) we will examine the variable levels of online engagement among some groups, and which areas are of biggest priority or concern.

At the event we will also announce our new [Making Sense of Media Advisory Panel](#). The new panel comprises 11 expert representatives from across industry, academia and the third sector, who will meet quarterly to debate and help inform the overall direction of Ofcom's online media literacy programme. The panel will help find potential new research areas; share best practice from across the UK and internationally and assist in identifying effective ways of evaluating the impact of media literacy initiatives on people's skills and understanding.

Ofcom is also inviting individuals and organisations with relevant expertise or an interest in online media literacy to join its wider [Making Sense of Media Network](#). Network members will be encouraged to work together, and with Ofcom, to help develop initiatives to improve the online skills, knowledge and understanding of adults and children, and disseminate the latest research in this area.

Research

In conjunction with Thursday's *Making Sense of Media* event, we are also publishing two Ofcom-commissioned research reports related to online harms, and new information for consumers on sharing data online:

- Ofcom commissioned qualitative research from Ipsos MORI to understand how people use the internet, their experiences of online harm and their responses to it. This study also explores what type and level of protection from harm people expect when they go online. It has involved 16 household case studies, three friendship groups with children and young adults, eight workshops with adults aged 18+ and six mini focus groups. The fieldwork took place between February and April 2019. This study complements our quantitative study on [Internet users' experience of harms online](#) which was published in May.
- Ofcom also commissioned a research report, from Cambridge Consultants, looking at the use of [Artificial Intelligence](#) in online content moderation: This report examines the ability of artificial intelligence technologies to moderate online content. The paper assesses how these capabilities might improve over the next five years, and the potential policy implications.
- [Sharing your data online – what you need to know](#): This consumer guide explains how people might be sharing information about themselves online, and how this data could be used by websites and online services. The guide also offers practical advice on how people can protect their data from being used and shared in ways that they're not happy with.

Both the reports and the consumer guide will be available on our [Making Sense of Media](#) pages from Thursday 18 July 2019.

If you have any queries about Ofcom's media literacy activities, please get in touch with the media literacy team at Media.Literacy@ofcom.org.uk.

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Research

Oxford Internet Institute

We are currently collecting data for the 2019 wave of the Oxford Internet Survey (OxIS). The survey has been completely rethought since the last wave 4 years ago, including new or expanded sections on mobile use, online harassment and safety, social media, and political uses of the Internet. A public presentation of findings will be made at a launch in early September. To find out more please contact [Dr Grant Black](#).

Global Kids Online

[India](#) is the latest country to join [Global Kids Online](#) and carry out research on children's internet use. With a population of 247 million children aged 9 to 17 years old, India can provide important evidence on children's experiences in South Asia. While we wait for the new research, existing findings from [Bulgaria](#), [Chile](#) and [South Africa](#) suggests a '[ladder](#)' of [online participation](#). Many children, especially younger ones, enjoy some of the fun and sociable opportunities that the internet provides, but do not climb the 'ladder' to reach the civic, informational and creative activities that are often heralded as crucial opportunities of the digital age. Sign up for research updates from the project [here](#).

LSE: Children's Data and Privacy Online – Growing up in a digital age

Following our recent report on [children's data and privacy online](#), we argued that in a datafied age children's online activities are [neither personal, nor private](#). When [speaking to children](#), we discovered their struggles with digital literacy and gaps in understanding of how their personal data is collected, stored and used in the digital environment, particularly when it comes to [commercial and institutional contexts](#). You can [follow us](#) and get [project updates](#).

Internet Matters

The Generation Game

We recently released our latest research on parents and children's views on gaming. The [Parenting Generation Game](#) report explores how gaming habits change as children get older, what parents think is good about online games and what their expectations of gaming companies are. Click on the link above for a summary of our findings or to read the whole report.

DCMS

Online harms research

On 26 June DCMS published a webpage bringing together several pieces of research relating to [online harms](#). The research available includes:

- [a review of existing evidence on online harassment \(including cyberbullying and trolling\)](#);
- [a review of existing evidence about the prevalence and impact of online trolling](#);
- [an analysis of research into online platforms' operating models and management of online harms](#); and,
- [a literature review of evidence relating to children's online activities and safety](#).

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Events

How Digital Champions can support the learning of workforce digital skills

To celebrate Learning At Work Week (13-19 May) Digital Unite released a new infographic which highlights how Digital Champions can support and cascade digital skills learning in the workplace. Despite the huge opportunities for digital in the workplace there are significant skills and learning issues. A supported champion model can help to cascade skills and understanding to use digital media and create a learning organisation where employees can support and inspire each other. To find out more click [here](#).

PARENT ZONE

Digital Families Conference

The [Digital Families](#) conference on 9 October will focus on Wellbeing in a Connected World. The conference, in partnership with NCA-CEOP, brings together leading experts to explore digital wellbeing and resilience for children and young people. Last year 300 delegates, including educators, policymakers and safeguarding professionals, joined us.

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Projects and initiatives

Citizens Online

Citizens Online is delighted to announce the launch of three new Switch projects with Epping Forest District Council, Harrogate Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council. Switch is an award-winning approach to tackle digital exclusion, based on evidence and sustainable partnerships. Switch ensures that ensure that everyone can access online

services and has the skills to use them. Switch projects benefit from up to 50% funding from the National Lottery Community Fund. Please get in touch with [Citizens Online](#) if you're interested in a Switch project in your area.

Future Girl

Girlguiding has launched the UK's biggest ever manifesto for girl-led change: [Future Girl!](#) Future Girl is the result of 76,000 of our young members giving us their views. Created by girls, for girls, Future Girl is how we're working around the UK to shape a better future for us all. Through the topics, our members of all ages will explore and act together on the things they really care about – from breaking barriers to making spaces, both online and offline, safer and more respectful for all. For more information about the topics please click on the link above.

BBC Young Reporter

[BBC Young Reporter](#) is now part of '[Beyond Fake News](#)', a series of events, conferences, hackathons and research launched by BBC World Service Group. Initiatives in Kenya, India and most recently Brazil have involved BBC staff going into schools to deliver workshops, helping young people spot fact from fiction in news and information.

This is a global extension of the specific BBC Young Reporter initiative to tackle 'fake news' and false information running in schools and youth groups in the UK.

The BBC Young Reporter and 'Beyond Fake News' resources and content is available on the [BBC News website](#) and www.bbc.co.uk/realnews.

Digital Unite

How Digital Champions can support the learning of workforce digital skills

To celebrate Learning at Work Week (13 to 19 May) [Digital Unite released a new infographic](#) which highlights how digital champions can support and cascade digital skills learning in the workplace. Despite the huge opportunities for digital in the workplace there are significant skills and learning issues. A supported champion model can help to cascade skills and understanding to use digital media and create a learning organisation where employees can support and inspire each other.

Parent Zone

Be Internet Legends

[Be Internet Legends](#) is a free educational programme developed in partnership with Google to help Key Stage 2 children in the UK stay safe and become confident online explorers. It includes a free curriculum pack with resources for teachers including PSHE Association-accredited lesson plans. We've been running a series of workshops across the UK to help teachers build their confidence in teaching internet safety.

BBC Children in Need

This year we are starting a project with the BBC Children in Need, A Million & Me programme to facilitate communication between children and parents around early-stage mental health and emotional wellbeing online.

Dove self-esteem project

The Dove Self-Esteem Project is helping boost children's body confidence with [free PSHE Association approved resources](#) that help teachers and professionals to deliver engaging workshops and support families with a free parent guide.

Online trust

We have also been running co-design sessions with young people to explore online trust and how they navigate disinformation. These sessions are supported by the US Embassy in London and will shape a new online service for teens that will be launching soon.

Internet Matters

New resources

Internet Matters has created new resources on a range of issues to help families keep their children safe online. These include:

- Resources to help children challenge the idealised images they see online and help them understand issues around body image. See some [tips to help empower children to develop positive body image](#).
- Advice to help parents understand the scope and impact of the forthcoming age verification process for adult content and, based on our research, how and when to have the 'porn talk' with your child. See [advice on age-verification for adult content](#).

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International

Sarajevo

European media regulators meet to discuss media literacy

The EPRA Media Literacy working group met as part of the regulatory network's Spring Meeting, in Sarajevo on 30 May. This represents the next stage of development of a small taskforce of regulators meeting in 2018 to discuss common work in this field. It also demonstrates the growing importance of media and information literacy activities for media regulators. On the agenda was a discussion of campaigns and international cooperation, set in the context of this year's EU Media Literacy Week; a special focus on media literacy in the Balkans; and a look at how existing media literacy projects can be repurposed. The meeting was attended by the European Commission, and the Chair of the Irish Media Literacy Network, Brian O'Neill.

Two themes to emerge from the meeting were the importance of cross sectoral collaboration and the benefits of sharing resources when funding is tight. The attendees also agreed on the importance of national strategic coordination and getting media literacy onto the political and legislative agenda. The group has expanded significantly and is now considering how best to develop its work. Regulators are planning to launch a discussion thread via the EPRA website, as there is growing appetite to discuss, share experiences and ask for advice from this community.

As a reminder, [EPRA](#) (the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities) is a network of European media regulators, comprising over 50 authorities from 47 countries. EPRA meets twice a year to exchange best practices and information, and if there is interest among practitioners in connecting with the network and regulators active in this area, they should contact [Maria Donde](#) at Ofcom.

North Macedonia

Launch of new media literacy policy

The [Agency for audio and audiovisual media services](#) (AVMU) adopted a media literacy policy paper on 29 March 2019 to meet its legal obligation to promote the development of media literacy. This policy builds on its three-year programme promoting media literacy, which expired at the end of last year. The policy was drafted by EAVI Secretary General Paolo Celot, within the framework of the project on “Enhancing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in Southeast Europe” (JUFREX) and is jointly supported by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

The media literacy policy aims to present a broad concept which is sufficiently general and comprehensive to incorporate the recent trends and developments in the field of media literacy and to respond to shifts in media uses and habits. This policy paper outlines the new, upgraded understanding of media literacy by European institutions, which incorporates not only a basic set of skills (technical, cognitive and participative), but also a number of more comprehensive personal stances and approaches that need to be developed.

It is structured into four different components covering: critical thinking, awareness of emotions, digital wellness and full citizenship; and, it aims to empower all citizens and help them learn how to live within and benefit from this new media system.

More information and a link to the paper can be found [here](#).

Sweden

UNESCO Global media and information literacy week

As part of Global media and information literacy (“MIL”) week, UNESCO will hold its ninth feature conference under the theme “MIL Citizens: Informed, Engaged, Empowered”; as well as a youth agenda forum – an event designed by and for youth.

These events will be co-hosted by the County Council Region Västra Götaland and the University of Gothenburg and take place between the 24 and 26 September 2019 and so

coincide with the 2019 Gothenburg Book Fair. An agenda for the feature conference will be available nearer the time and you can register your interest in taking part [here](#).

Finland

Finnish Media Literacy Conference

[Towards a Good life in the 2020s:– Enhancing citizenship and social cohesion through media literacy](#) will be held on 10 September in Helsinki. This conference will promote dialogue, collaboration and networking between EU member states representatives and other relevant stakeholders all around the world, including civil society, industry and academia. It is organised as part of the [AV policy conference: 'Creation, innovation and promotion - Competitiveness of European audiovisual industry'](#) and the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

For more information, the programme and registration visit: www.medialiteracy.fi

Europe-wide

New Neighbours Project

20 May saw the launch of a new EU-funded project, New Neighbours, which is aimed at creating intercultural media spaces that will provide factual information and stories about migration.

The aim of New Neighbours is to highlight the positive social and economic contributions that are made by migrants and refugees throughout communities across Europe. It is hoped that by promoting direct participation in media production and intercultural dynamics, tolerance and acceptance for migrants and refugees will be fostered in EU member states.

To find out more about this project and the activities taking place under its aegis please visit the [New Neighbours](#) website.

The European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)

To fight fake news the [European Centre for Press and Media Freedom](#) has launched campaigns for truth and transparency in elections.

Fighting fake news takes a lot of time and resources and we, the ECPMF do not have much of either. So, in May 2019 the ECPMF used the hashtag #IFightFakeNews to spread awareness of fake news and inspire our 9,000 social media followers. Together with the use of its twin hashtag #IVote4PressFreedom, ECPMF is working to inspire participation in the democratic process. ECPMF staff also deliver classroom training in English and German through its partner organisation Lie Detectors.

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