| MEDIA EDUCATION WITHIN FORMAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM | Country profile MALTA | | Resources; other usable datas |
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| Context – educational system | **Overview** | The Ministry of Education and Employment (MEDE) is responsible for education in Malta. The Government's education policy is underscored by two main premises; equity and quality. Compulsory education covers the ages 5 to 16 years and is divided into two main cycles; primary education (5 – 11 years) and secondary education (11 – 16 years). Following compulsory education students can choose to follow either a general education or a vocational education path. The Government subsidises Church schools which do not charge tuition fees and gives tax rebates to parents sending their children to private schools. | https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php?title=Countries |
| | **Primary education** | Primary education is a two-pronged process. The first phase connects with the two-year kindergarten period while the second connects with the secondary school years. The National Minimum Curriculum must ensure a smooth transition from one level to another. The National Minimum Curriculum regards the first two years of primary schooling as a continuation of the two-year Kindergarten period. This entails that the teachers adopt a pedagogy that develops knowledge, attitudes and skills which derive from concrete experiences. The 3-7 year period , considered as the pre-conceptual phase, must be regarded as the formative period which precedes the one during which the school experience becomes more formal. The four years that follow early childhood education, considered as the concrete operational phase, mark the beginning of a progression, at a faster rate, towards greater formality in education. This does not imply that one eschews creativity, spontaneity, exploration, play, experimentation, incidental learning, the integration of knowledge and flexibility in the planning and methodology of learning. Children should therefore remain active in their process of development.<br>At the end of primary education pupils should have the ability to explore knowledge and experiment with it and be able to communicate this knowledge by means of information technology. They can engage in this exploration of knowledge both individually and in groups. The educational experience involved should be based on an appreciation of the manner in which information technology is influencing language, the way we speak, write, listen, and observe and understand the world around us.<br>At primary level, the basic subjects are: Maltese, English, Mathematics, Religion, Social Studies, Media Education, Physical Education and Sport, Science, Technology, and Creative Expression.<br>At this level, the general goals in the areas of media and personal and social education can be integrated in the established subjects.<br>This document regards the integration of knowledge, centring around themes, as the kind of pedagogical approach that comes closest to the idea of a holistic education. This methodology should be the dominant feature of our schools. | |
| | **Lower and upper secondary education** | Teaching and learning in general lower secondary education is guided by the National Curriculum Framework which builds upon the National Minimum Curriculum (NMC) document. The NMC provides the vision, objectives and values which guide the curricular aspect of secondary education. It also provides the framework in which schools construct their educational goals and guides teachers to develop adequate teaching strategies and resources. The following table lists the compulsory subjects that are studied during the secondary cycle, together with the optional areas of study.<br><br><table><tr><td>Compulsory subjects</td><td>Maltese, English, Mathematics, Integrated Science (first two years), Physics (the final three years), a foreign language (from among French, German, Italian, Spanish and Arabic), Religious Knowledge, Physical Education, History, Geography, Expressive Arts, Personal and Social Development and ICT.</td></tr><tr><td>Elective subjects offered during the first two years of secondary education (one subject to be chosen)</td><td>Design and Technology, Graphical Communication, Home Economics, Textile Studies</td></tr><tr><td>Elective subjects offered during the final three years of secondary education (one subject to be chosen in Area Secondary schools, a combination of two subjects to be chosen in Junior Lyceums)</td><td>Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Computer Studies, European Studies, Design and Technology, Geography, Graphical Communication, History, Home Economics, Physical Education, Social Studies, Textile Studies, and another foreign language from among Arabic, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish. Since school year 2011/2012 four vocational subjects namely: Engineering, Hospitality, IT Practitioner and Health and Social Care were introduced as a plot exercise in four state schools and four non-state schools.</td></tr></table><br>The NCF proposes a smooth transition from primary to secondary school whereby the learning experiences in primary education are further consolidated in the secondary level. The NCF aims for secondary education to reinforce and extend the eight learning areas proposed in primary | |

| | | education. The Secondary curriculum put forward in the NCF is based on the 2 + 3 model, in which the first two years of secondary schooling have a curriculum that is practically common to all and options are then taken for years 9, 10 and 11. | |
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| | **Structure of the national education system 2012/13** |  | https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php?title=Countries |
| Media literacy in the curriculum | ML education in top level curriculum | Media Education in the school curriculum was formalized by the Ministry of Education when it published the National Minimum Curriculum - "Creating the Future Together" - in December 1999. This was a very important step in the development of Media Education. It listed fourteen educational. Objective 8 was about the teaching of Media Education. It outlined the knowledge, skills and attitudes that such a programme should help students acquire.<br><br>The National Minimum Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1999) - which is binding on all schools - includes Media Education as one of the objectives of a holistic education that should be taught in all schools, State, Independent and Church Schools. Authoritative Church documents on the international and local level as recent as 2003 (Arcidjocesi ta' Malta, 2003) make the teaching of media education mandatory as part of education in Church schools. | Joseph Borg and Mary Anne Lauri Empowering Children in a Changing Media Environment: Media Education in the Maltese Educational System In: Leaning, M. (Ed.). (2009). Issues in Information and Media Uteracy: Criticism, Histoty and Policy. Santa Rosa, California: Informing Science Press, (pp. 109-128). Chapter 7 Media Education in Malta: Historical Perspectives and Current Developments by Joseph Borg, Mary Anne Lauri |
| | resources | Ministry of Education. (1999). Creating the Future Together. National Minimum Curriculum<br>Department for Curriculum Management. (2006).<br>Borg, J. (1987). Media Education in Church schools in Malta in Education. The Journal of the Faculty of Education 3, (4), 32-38.<br>Borg, J. (1997). Media literacy developments in Malta. In A. Silverblatt & E.M. Enright Eliceiri. Dictionary of media literacy. London: Greenwood Press.<br>Borg, J. & Lauri, M.A. (1994). Media Education in Malta.<br>Borg, J. & Lauri, M.A. (2003). Exploring media languages. Media Education for Form 1. Malta: Media Centre Publications Borg.J. & Lauri, M.A. (2004). Exploring the media landscape. Media Education for Form 2. Malta: Media Centre Publications<br>Lauri M. A. & Borg, J. (2006).Children's mastering of the information society: a Maltese contribution. Journal of Maltese Educational Research, vol4(l), 1-17 | |
| | Media literacy in education from a historical wiew | Media education was formally introduced in schools in Malta in October 1981 at a time when on the international scenario, the inoculation approach was still prominent in several Media Education programmes, in many countries. Of particular interest and influence regarding the approach to Media Education in Malta was the position taken by the Catholic Church. Authoritative Church documents emphasized the moral dimension of Media Education. The Pastoral Instruction Communio et Progressio (1971) stated that Media Education must be systematically given a regular place in schools curriculum at every stage of education. It further stated that it is never too early to start encouraging artistic tastes in children together with, a keen critical faculty and a sense of personal responsibility based on sound morality.<br><br>In 1980, Malta was one of the countries which took part in a project launched by the international Catholic association for television and radio and UNESCO to evaluate a ten lesson course in Media Education. This international scenario in the beginning of the Eighties pro-vided the context, and some influence, for the introduction of Media Education in Malta in 1981. | |

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| | | The Maltese model of Media Education used in these schools was more akin to the aesthetic and communicative model than to the moral model proposed by Minnkkinen. Besides, it used the experiential method of teaching encouraging students to carry out many practical media projects. This model helped students' progress from passive media consumers to empowered media users. The media workbooks used in the primary level as well as the textbooks used in the secondary level reflected this objective.<br><br>Workbooks were written to be used in grades four to six (ages 8-10) of primary schools and a textbook was produced for Forms 1 and 2 of the secondary schools. These texts were periodically updated to reflect new media developments in Malta, for example, the 1993 edition reflected the introduction of radio pluralism in Malta and the resurgence of the cinema while the edition of 1998 reflected the introduction of television pluralism and the Internet. Following feedback from teachers, two new books were produced for the first two years of the secondary level. Exploring Media Languages. Media Education for Form 1' and 'Exploring the Media landscape. Media Education for Form 2' were published.<br><br>The books for the primary schools are basically workbooks. Information is intentionally held to a minimum while practical activities are emphasized. Consequently students learn more by actively involving themselves in projects than by passive instruction. The very basic and elementary elements of the language of television, newspapers, magazines, picture stories, radio and signs are introduced to students but television is given the most importance.<br><br>The book for Form 1 used in the secondary level (age 11) builds up on media languages though it introduces new aspects and information. The book used in Form 2 book discusses issues related to media content such as news, advertising and stereotyping within the context of Maltese society. The secondary school books are textbooks more than workbooks. Both sets of books include many media activities.<br><br>Empowering the Stake-Holders<br><br>The concept of involving different stakeholders in the promotion of Media Education was recognized from the early years. In 1982 UNESCO sponsored the "Grunwald Declaration on Media Education" and advocated an integrated strategy for the introduction of Media Education. This holistic strategy was adopted in Malta. School administrators, teachers, parents and students were targeted when introducing the subject in Church schools. Through one to one encounters and meetings for stakeholders these important target groups were persuaded that Media Education should be considered as important as any other subject taught in the curriculum. | |
| | Media literacy in the curriculum – recent wiew | In Malta, while the National Minimum Curriculum explained in detail the aims and objectives of the programme, it did not however specify whether Media Education should be taught as an interdisciplinary subject or as a subject on its own. As a result State and Church schools could choose different strategies.<br><br>The option adopted by state schools was that Media Education should be taught as part of other subjects.<br><br>As a result of this decision, very limited components of Media Education were introduced in Social Studies and Personal and Social Development at the primary and secondary levels (Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment, 2005; Department of Curriculum Management, 2006). There were also limited references in the religion text book for Form 5. Much more importance to aspects of Media Education is given in ICT courses that are an integral part of the curriculum of the primary schools and secondary schools (Department of Curriculum Management, 2006). Such programmes are being enhanced in line with Government policy to bridge the digital divide.<br><br>The decision to integrate Media Education with a number of subjects meant that in actual fact, the onus was on the individual teachers who had to integrate Media Education in their own subject.<br><br>Objective 8 of National Minimum Curriculum, with regard to media use, says, inter aha, that a selective attitude should be developed regarding media consumption. | |

| | KNOWLEDGE | ATTITUDE | SKILLS |
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| MEDIA AND SOCIETY | Basic knowledge of different sectors of the media's social function; Relations with political and economic institutions; Symbiotic relations with society; The Press Act and censorship; Media and democracy | Readiness to defend freedom of speech; Critical attitude towards the media | Analysis of media's role in society and in our culture; Render information technology accessible to all, including children with different abilities |
| MEDIA ORGAN-ISATION | Ownership structures; Importance of social impact in consumption; Roles of different media workers; Different financing systems | Critical attitude in connections with the organisational need of production | Analysis of product in light of organisational limitations; Familiarisation with process of production including sign language, Braille and sub-titles. |
| MEDIA CONTENT | Media's interpretative aspect (e.g. stereotypes); History of important media sectors; Internet | Critical attitude based on a system of personal values; A selective attitude regarding media consumption | Basic skills in writing letters, reports, investigative stories and simple TV and radio scripts; Expressing oneself through use of computers; Analysing advertising; Balance between educational and entertainment programmes |

One of the aims of the Maltese programme is to raise the students' awareness of the amount of time they dedicate to using the media and therefore their importance in the formation of their attitudes and lifestyle.
The media books for the primary and secondary level help students monitor their use of TV, radio, and the Internet/email. Monitoring of newspapers and magazines use is discussed at a later stage when the students are more mature.
'Enable students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to assess critically media content and language and produce simple media products.'
The critical assessment of media content and language is an important feature of media education. The production of simple media products is a practical way of mastering the media and achieving empowerment. The National Minimum Curriculum gives importance to these three aspects.
Out of all aspects of media content, the Maltese programme gives special attention to news, advertising, stereotyping and the portrayal of violence and sexual images. The different aspects of news, its gathering and reporting, is referred to in the primary level; however, it is tackled in depth in the secondary level. Advertising and the language of persuasion is treated in a similar way. Stereotyping and negative content such as violence and pornography are only discussed in the secondary level. The notions of genres, bias and representation are studied in both levels. A more detailed discussion of the books is given in Lauri and Borg. The second aspect of empowerment is that of understanding media language. The third aspect is helping students acquiring the ability of producing simple media products. Such productions by students are considered to be of particular value to develop both a more indepth critical understanding of the media as well as an exploration of students' emotional investment in the media.
The Media Education programme in Church schools stresses the production or "writing" element by giving importance to the class activities, class projects and exercises meant to stimulate the interest of the children in issues related to the media. The students, even at the primary level, are encouraged to learn

that the techniques and technologies used by each medium influence the language of that medium. They are expected to be able to produce their own simple media products. Secondary students are invited to build a web page, produce a radio programme, produce the front and back pages of a newspaper and a magazine, create their own advertising campaign, produce their own advertisements among many other projects. Such production or "writing" skills enhances children's understanding of the media and the pleasure that they get from different media. Moreover, students feel empowered as a result of their "reading" and "writing" abilities.

'Enable students to look beyond what is in theframe, the printed page, the web page or radio programme. The societal and organisational aspects help the better understanding of what is produced and why.'

**Objective 8:**
**Media Education**

Knowledge/Information
Through the curricular experience, students should acquire knowledge in the following areas:
- the Media and Society: basic knowledge of the different sectors of the media; knowledge of the media's social function; the media's relations with political and economic institutions; the symbiotic relationship between the media and society; how the school and the media influence each other; the Press Act and Censorship; the media and democracy;
- the organisation of the media: knowledge of the media's different property structures and of the media as a transnational industry; recognising the importance of the social impact on the consumption of media products; knowledge of the different roles of people working in the media; knowledge of the different systems concerning the financing of the media;
- media content and language: knowledge of the different genres found within different media systems, their differences and relevance for the audience; knowledge of the media's interpretative aspect (eg. Media stereotypes); knowledge of the history of the most important media sectors; knowledge of the Internet;
– the media as an educative agent: the educational possibilities provided by the media; different modes of participatory and individual learning that have become possible; the media as a catalyst of change and transformation in education;
– issues concerning the way the media operates: the invasion of privacy, the distortion of truth, slanted views and propaganda, partisan bias, etc;
- understanding conventions concerning the media.

Skills
Through the curricular experience in this field, students develop skills in the following areas:
– language of the media: basic skill in using equipment, techniques and materials connected with different aspects of the media; the production of simple media items; use of the computer and Internet facilities as: (1) a vehicle for using the media, (2) a unique medium in itself;
– media content: the development of basic skills in writing letters, reports and investigative stories; writing simple TV and radio scripts; expressing oneself through the use of the computer; sifting through and analysing what appears in the media, including advertisements; striking a balance in one's choice between educational programmes and others which provide entertainment;
– society and the media: an analysis of the media's role in society and in our specific culture; working to render information technology accessible to everyone, including children with disabilities or different abilities;
– media organisation: analysis of the product bearing in mind the limitations of the organisation which produces the product; familiarisation with the process of production by different media, including different forms such as sign language, the Braille method, subtitles, etc.

Attitudes
Through the curricular experiences in this field, students develop these attitudes:
– language of the media: the development of a critical attitude towards the media; appreciation of the aesthetic value and the cultural impact of the media's different sectors;
– media content: development of a critical attitude based on a system of personal values; the development of a selective attitude regarding media consumption;

| | | – society and the media: readiness to defend freedom of speech; a critical attitude towards the media;<br>– media organisation: development of a critical attitude in connection with the organisational need of production. | |
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| | Comments, annexes | While the National Minimum Curriculum explained in detail the aims and objectives of the program, it did not however specify whether media education should be taught as an interdisciplinary subject or as a subject on its own. The decision by the state schools' authorities to integrate media education with a number of subjects meant that in actual fact, the onus was on the individual teachers. Different teachers had to integrate media education in their own subject. Since the majority of teachers have not been given any training in media education teachers find this difficult to do and as a result media education is not being given the importance it deserves<br>(from: Borg-Lauri: MEDIA EDUCATION IN MALTA: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS)<br><br>If Media Literacy is taken up as a cross curricular activity, it would be an enriching experience especially if the study of film is annexed to such subjects as Literature. In 2008 the Department for LifeLong Education organized a seminar for teachers of both Primary and Secondary schools re: Film Education. He organized it in collaboration with the Department for Curriculum Management and eLearning and in conjunction with the distributors of film in Malta KRS which in turn sponsored the visit of a director from *Filmeducation* – a British non profit organization which main aim is to highlight the cultural importance of film and literature. Following that seminar we had the most interesting experiment wherein the John Boyne celebrated book *The Boy in the Striped Pygamas* was turned into film and a group of Secondary school students with different subject options, first went to the cinema to watch the film, read the book and during follow up lessons in their school did different project work. They later put up their work on their school's web site.<br>In 2010 a teacher from *Filmeducation* came to Malta to deliver a series of talks to Year 5 and 6 students in a number of schools re: films, pictures and language. She also gave a Public talk re: Shakespeare and film.<br><br>***In May 2011 a new draft National Curriculum Framework was launched and at the moment it is still in a consultative stage. However, at this point media literacy is not included in the Documents issued. As Media Education Officer I have sent in my suggestion that media literacy should be kept as a cross-curricular subject with the aim of enhancing the arts and Humanities' subjects such as languages, PSHE, and Social Studies. The Education Officers for PSHE also put in a similar suggestion.***<br>***It is still early to see whether the suggestions made have been taken on board since no report has been issued yet.***<br><br>(from: Questions to the media literacy expert group – replay from the Maltesen expert, manuscript) | |
| Ad<br>Teacher profession development | | The study by Lauri and Borg (2007) investigated how prepared teachers in Malta felt in teaching Media Education. The results collected from 206 participants from eighteen state schools in Malta show clearly that a high percentage of the teachers interviewed felt unprepared to tackle issues such as television and radio production and ownership and bias in the media | |
| Specialized network for media educators | | – | |