

DEPARTMENT FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA & SPORT ONLINE SAFETY - MEDIA LITERACY STRATEGY

Mapping Exercise and Literature Review - Phase 1 Report

April 2021



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1. BACKGROUND

Introduction

RSM UK Consulting LLP was commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to conduct an analysis of online media literacy initiatives for UK users. The findings presented in this report provide a factual overview of existing provision in the UK, and any evaluations which accompanied existing initiatives or providers. It will allow DCMS to understand the existing provisions for development of media literacy, broken down by different target/user groups and issue areas. It will also highlight any gaps in provision.

The aim of this research is to support a commitment set out in the 'Online Harms White Paper' for government to "develop an online media literacy strategy" and contribute to its objectives to empower users "to understand and manage risks so that they can stay safe online".

The research outputs were delivered in two broad phases: Phase 1, a mapping exercise to identify existing initiatives to build digital media literacy, and Phase 2, a literature review on levels of media literacy and the barriers/enablers for developing greater media literacy. This report presents the Phase 1 findings. The findings of Phase 2 are presented in a separate report.

Methodology

Our approach to Phase 1 of this research involved the following 4 stages:

1. **Project Inception and definition workshop** – to discuss and agree:
 - the draft methodology;
 - a working definition of media literacy;
 - the organisations and initiatives in scope; and
 - the initial mapping framework.
2. **Desk Research** – to develop the structure of the framework and populate it with details of providers and initiatives. This was then further developed through the survey (see stage 3b).
3. **Primary research and consultation** – including:
 - a. **Stakeholder consultations** – telephone interviews with four sector representatives to: test and refine our mapping framework, and identify additional media literacy initiatives and evaluation evidence.
 - b. **Provider survey** – a short online survey based on the mapping framework to be distributed to providers via DCMS mailing lists.
4. **Analysis** – a written report was prepared, containing the synthesised findings of our desk research, stakeholder consultations, and provider survey. This comprehensively mapped the existing media literacy initiatives by user group and issue area, including current provision in the UK, existing evaluation evidence, and gaps in both provision and the evidence base.

Report Structure

The remainder of this report is structured under the following headings:

- Mapping framework – presentation of the final framework of in-scope organisations and initiatives, and their distinguishing characteristics (organisation types, target/user groups, issues addressed, delivery methods).
- Existing provision and gaps – summary of the findings of the mapping exercise in terms of existing provision in the UK and evaluation evidence where available; identification of gaps in both provision and evidence of impact and effectiveness.
- Conclusions and recommendations – findings from the mapping exercise, and recommendations for Phase 2 of our research.

The questionnaire developed for the provider survey is included in Appendix 1.

2. MAPPING FRAMEWORK

Introduction

This section sets out the approach for the comprehensive mapping exercise, providing a detailed description of the final framework of in-scope organisations and initiatives, as well as their key distinguishing characteristics. This framework was used to understand the current landscape by identifying existing online safety and digital media literacy initiatives, as well as their respective features. The framework has then been used to highlight any gaps in provision; this analysis follows in section 4 of the report.

The main characteristics identified were as follows:

- target/user groups;
- delivery organisation type;
- longevity;
- scale (geographical);
- issue areas addressed;
- delivery method/approach; and
- skills/capabilities addressed.

The approach for this research has been to provide a fine-grained categorisation for each of these characteristics, focused on reflecting detail and breadth of the framework. This is reflected in the extensive list of categories per characteristic seen below. The categories can however be grouped together for analysis purposes.

The mapping framework was built using the list of known organisations and initiatives provided by DCMS policy officials and our strategic advisors, a review of the Ofcom Media Literacy Bulletins, and a web search, including relevant sites and publications such as: UK Safer Internet Centre; UNESCO Media and Information Literacy; Journal of Media Literacy; Journal of Media Practice; Learning Media and Technology; Media Education Research Journal; and Media Practice and Education. Examples of the key search terms that were used are: online safety, digital well-being, online protection/prevention, predatory/unwanted behaviours, radicalisation and fake news/disinformation/misinformation, deepfakes, and online fraud prevention. This list was then reviewed through consultations with stakeholders.

Target user groups

Most of the initiatives that were identified in the mapping framework have a specific group of users that the provider identifies as their main target audience. In some cases, the initiative caters specifically for a primary target user group, but other users are also able to benefit (e.g. online resources targeted at parents which can be accessed by all). In other cases, the initiative is exclusive to users inside their target group (e.g. workshops specifically for parents). Some target groups were very specific (e.g. children in Key Stage 3), whilst some initiatives did not mention any specific group. Where the target user group was not specifically mentioned, it was assumed that there was no targeting and that the initiative was open to all.

In the mapping framework, a comprehensive and granular list of target user groups was identified (41 groups in total). These can then be grouped more broadly into five major categories as follows:

Table 1: Target user groups

Major category	Target user group
<i>Children</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children (all ages/age unspecified) ● Children (aged 3-4/Early Years) ● Children (aged 5-6/KS1) ● Children (aged 7-10/KS2) ● Children (aged 11-13/KS3) ● Children (aged 14-15/KS4) ● Children (aged 16-17)
<i>Adults</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adults (all ages/age unspecified) ● Young adults (aged 18-24) ● Adults (aged 25-29) ● Adults (aged 30-34) ● Adults (aged 35-39) ● Adults (aged 40-44) ● Adults (aged 45-49) ● Adults (aged 50-54) ● Adults (aged 55-59) ● Adults (aged 60-64) ● Adults (aged 65-69) ● Adults (aged 70-74) ● Adults (aged 75-79) ● Adults (aged 80-84) ● Adults (aged 85+)
<i>Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents (children of all ages/age unspecified) ● Parents (child aged 3-4/Early Years) ● Parents (child aged 5-6/KS1) ● Parents (child aged 7-10/KS2) ● Parents (child aged 11-13/KS3) ● Parents (child aged 14-15/KS4) ● Parents (child aged 16-17)
<i>Other groups including those particularly vulnerable to online abuse (detailed definitions below table)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New users ● Device specific users ● People from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds ● Older people ● People with a disability ● People who have undergone gender reassignment ● People from an ethnic minority background ● People who may face discrimination due to their religion or belief ● Women/girls ● LGBT people ● Looked-after children
<i>Everyone</i>	No specific targeting

'New users' describe people who self-identify as 'newly online' or people who are uncomfortable with technology. 'Device specific users' are people who self-identify as only using particular devices to access the internet (e.g. smartphone only users). 'Users from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds' can be defined broadly as people who are from, for example, socio-economically deprived families or neighbourhoods, or people who can be categorised as C1/C2/DE households based on the socio-economic classification produced by the ONS. 'Looked-after children' are children

who are under local authority care for a period of more than 24 hours, such as children in care, children who either live with foster parents, live in a residential children’s home, or other residential settings such as schools or ‘secure units’. Also included in this comprehensive list are those from protected groups under the Equalities Act 2010, namely those listed as ‘older people’, ‘people with a disability’, ‘people who have undergone gender reassignment’, ‘people from an ethnic minority background’, ‘people who may face discrimination due to their religion or belief’, ‘women/girls’, and people from ‘LGBT’ communities. In this report, these groups have been listed as ‘vulnerable to online abuse’.

This mapping exercise categorised target groups depending on how the initiative defined their target group, but the exact definitions of categories may differ between initiatives. In particular, there may be an overlap between ‘older people’ and some of the categories under ‘adults’, due to a lack of an exact definition; for instance, whether the initiative mentioned ‘older people’ or specifically mentioned an age range. For users who fall under one of the disadvantaged groups, irrespective of their age they would be grouped under their corresponding subset of disadvantaged group. For example, children from disadvantageous socio-economic backgrounds were grouped under ‘people from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds’. The exception is for female children as organisations will often include female children under the count of ‘children’ unless females/girls are specifically targeted.

Delivery organisations

For each initiative, the main organisation that delivered it was identified. Organisations in scope of this mapping exercise have been categorised into nine groups:

1. Social media companies
2. Media organisations
3. Charity or foundations
4. Individual consultants
5. Regulators
6. Public sector organisations
7. Faith-based organisations
8. Other third sector organisations (e.g. Universities)
9. Other private sector organisations (i.e. excluding social media, media organisations or individual consultants)

Other characteristics of initiatives

Initiatives in scope include all projects which have the objective of equipping users with the skills they need to spot dangers online, critically appraise information, and take steps to keep themselves and others safe. The initiatives do not necessarily need to be large scale – for example, they could be local initiatives provided by the local council – and the provider does not necessarily need to focus on online safety and digital media literacy. For example, the provider could be focusing on the vulnerability of a specific protected group in all aspects of life, but also provide online safety resources amongst their other resources for addressing and overcoming their vulnerabilities.

This mapping exercise looked in detail at the many characteristics of initiatives, based on the European Audiovisual Observatory’s (EAO) mapping report of media literacy (2017)¹ and stakeholder feedback. This included areas such as their longevity, issue areas, delivery methods/approach, and the skills/capabilities that they focus on. These areas were then categorised as follows:

Table 2: Other characteristics of initiatives

Characteristic	Categories
Longevity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indefinitely recurring

¹ Mapping of media literacy practices and action in EU-28: EAO report, European Audiovisual Observatory, 2017

Characteristic	Categories
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One-off/fixed lifespan (due to its funding contract) ● One-off lifespan (for another reason)
<i>Geographic scope</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local/regional ● National ● Multinational
<i>Issue Areas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding use of private data: algorithms, encryption, targeted advertising etc. ● Managing privacy, data, and the online footprint, including how people use different types of sites (e.g. Facebook vs LinkedIn) and how they might choose to share different information depending on the site used ● Preventing/challenging online grooming ● Preventing/challenging online harassment ● Preventing/challenging cyber stalking ● Preventing/challenging cyber bullying ● Preventing/challenging hate speech/content online ● Preventing/challenging online trolling ● Preventing/challenging coercive behaviour online ● Preventing/challenging other unwanted behaviour online ● Avoiding upsetting or potentially harmful content ● Reporting inappropriate content, and what to expect when you do (eg follow-up by authorities) ● Understanding terms of service ● Understanding the legal framework online (laws which apply to online activity) and your rights online ● Recognising disinformation, misinformation, hoaxes, fake news, and use of technology for deception e.g. deepfakes ● Recognising catfishing and people using a false identity ● Challenging extremism and radicalisation ● Improving health and wellbeing online (including mental and emotional health and wellbeing) from, for example, screen time, managing the pressure from online media on mental health from beauty standards, and the effect of online media on general health from, for example, gambling, in-game purchases, and dietary habits
<i>Delivery Method/ Approach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resources ● End-user engagement ● Research ● Networking Platforms ● Provision of funding ● Campaign ● Policy development
<i>Skills/ Capabilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Media use: ability to search, find, navigate, and use media content and services safely ● Critical Thinking 1: understanding how the media industry works and how media messages are constructed ● Critical Thinking 2: questioning the motivations of content producers in order to make informed choices about content selection and use

Characteristic	Categories
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Critical Thinking 3: recognising different types of media content and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability, and value for money ● Critical Thinking 4: recognising and managing online security/safety risks ● Creative Skills ● Participation and Engagement 1: interaction, engagement, and participation in the economic, social, and cultural aspects of society through the media ● Participation and Engagement 2: promoting democratic participation and fundamental rights. ● Intercultural dialogue: including challenging radicalisation and hate speech

Many of the 'skills/capabilities' are interrelated, and so the categories overlap, with no clear boundaries. This is also the case for the 'issue areas' with many of the issues coming hand in hand. For example, 'understanding algorithms, encryption, targeted advertising' relates to the user's understanding of how data is used by companies to, for instance, infer preferences and interests, and how this can affect their online experience through targeted advertising and content. Related to this, 'managing privacy, data, and the online footprint' relates to user understanding on how to take control of their privacy and the information they provide online, and the consequences of the content they share online. Furthermore, many of these 'skills/capabilities' may be more relevant to certain issue areas and user groups than others. For example, 'managing privacy' is often related to 'media use', and 'recognising disinformation, misinformation, hoaxes, fake news, and use of technology for deception' is often related to critical thinking.

The delivery methods follow the definition and groups provided by the EAO (2017)². 'Resources' are defined as all the themed output related to a single media literacy initiative. It could include TV, and/or content published online, including information leaflets, video, audio, lesson plans, curriculum modules, and websites. 'End-user engagements' are defined as grass-roots projects that provide support and information to end-users via face-to-face contact, phone contact, or online contact, while 'research' is any significant qualitative or quantitative research on any aspect of media literacy, which has been published and/or is widely used by the media literacy practitioners. 'Networking platforms' include conferences, seminars, meetings, online and offline forums, newsletters, and databases.

'Provision of funding' is the provision of funding for media literacy activities delivered by third parties. While many initiatives have been funded by various funding programmes, such as that by the Connecting Europe Facility, only initiatives whose sole purpose is to provide funding will be categorised under 'provision of funding'. Funding may be provided via grants, open competition, and invitations to tender.

'Campaigns' is a combination of awareness-raising with a desired behaviour change. A campaign will usually have a specific 'call to action' e.g. 'Don't share too much online' or 'Know how to check the truthfulness of online information'. Campaigns can be multi-stakeholder campaigns such as Safer Internet Day or cross-platform campaigns, and can include promotion across TV/radio/online and/or other forms of public engagement. Finally, 'policy development' is defined as major consultations, published reports, and recommendations.

There was very limited information on total cost of initiative and source of funding in the public domain, so while included in the framework, the statistics provided little value and have been excluded from this report.

² Mapping of media literacy practices and action in EU-28: EAO report, European Audiovisual Observatory, 2017

Evaluation evidence

Initial consultations with the DCMS project team and other stakeholders suggested that formal, robust impact evaluation was very uncommon for the media literacy initiatives in scope. As a result, all methods of evaluation were in scope for this mapping exercise, ranging from full impact reports to simple statistics. The following categories were used:

1. Number of users – including the number of participants in offline events such as workshops
2. Number of visitors to the webpage
3. Number of times resource downloaded
4. Other evidence of user engagement

‘Other evidence of user engagement’ captures all other evidence, including qualitative evidence such as quotes from participants/users from an initiative.

A small number of providers had formally evaluated their effectiveness in building online media literacy. As part of our Phase 2 research, we devised a framework for assessing the available evaluation evidence with reference to:

A. Fitness for purpose of the evaluation

1. Was it completed by an independent/reliable source?
2. Is the method robust?

B. Significance of the initiative

3. Was the initiative significant in terms of scale, impact, or public awareness/perception?

C. Effectiveness in improving users’ media literacy

4. Did the initiative increase users’:
 - creativity;
 - critical thinking;
 - intercultural dialogue;
 - media engagement;
 - civic participation and interaction through the media?

An assessment of the available evaluation evidence using this framework, and a literature review, are included in our Phase 2 report.

4. EXISTING PROVISION AND GAPS

Summary

Our analysis considered the media literacy landscape in the UK. Key findings showed that:

- **Most initiatives were specifically targeted at children: either directly (through the children themselves), or indirectly (through their parents and carers or teachers).**
- **The most common types of organisation providing online media literacy initiatives were charities or foundations.**
- **Nearly all initiatives were indefinitely recurring, as opposed to being projects with a fixed duration.**
- **The most common issues addressed by initiatives were privacy and disinformation/misinformation.**
- **The most common delivery method for initiatives was provision of resources such as printable online guides, information pages, informational videos or games.**
- **All media literacy skills and related issues identified in our framework are addressed to some extent by the initiatives. However, some target groups are under-represented, such as children in key transitional ages, and users whose first language is not English.**

Introduction

This section presents descriptive statistics and analysis of the 170 online media literacy initiatives that were incorporated into the framework. It also attempts to use these to identify gaps in provision. Percentage statistics are calculated based on the number of initiatives; as consistent information on the number of users per service is not available, and there would also be significant double-counting between services, we are not able to provide statistics based on the number of beneficiaries affected.

Existing provision

Target Groups

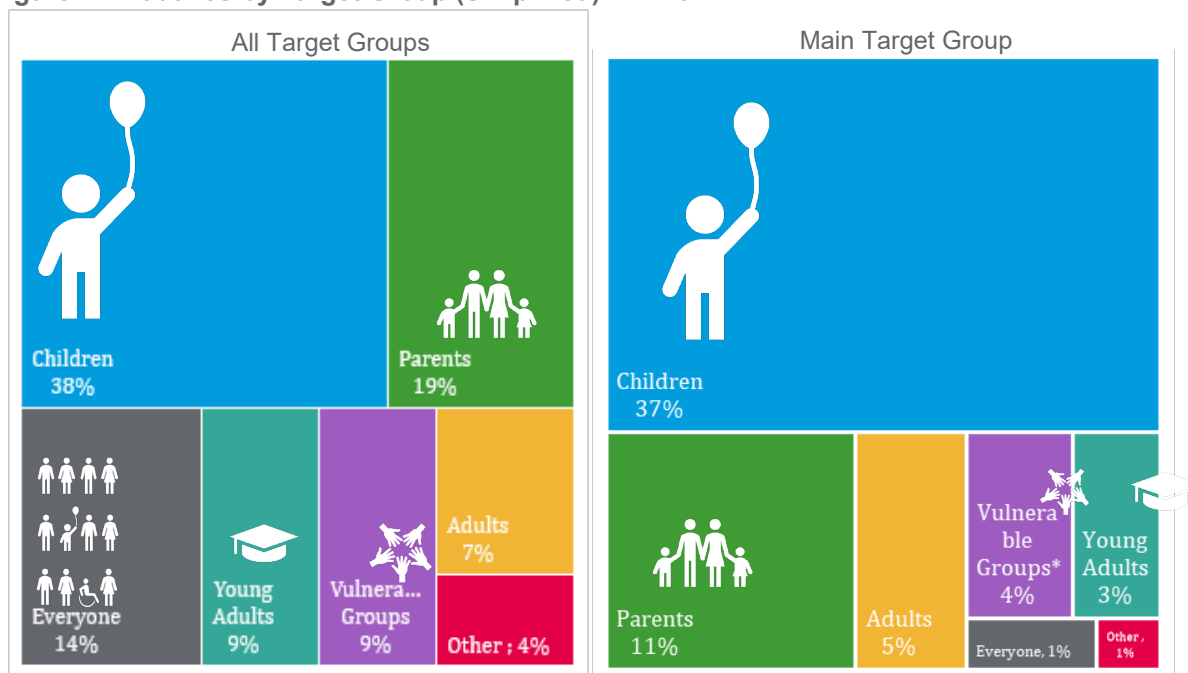
Most initiatives target children: either directly, or through their parents, carers, or teachers.

Most initiatives were specifically targeted at children: either directly (through the children themselves), or indirectly (through their parents and carers or teachers). In total, 38% of all initiatives had children as one of their target groups, and 19% of all initiatives targeted parents. For the purposes of this classification, initiatives targeted at vulnerable children such as 'looked-after children' have been classified under 'groups vulnerable to online abuse' rather than 'children'.

The next most frequently targeted group was 'everyone' with 14% of initiatives targeting this group. 'Young adults' were covered by 9% of initiatives, and 7% targeted 'adults' generally. Groups vulnerable to online abuse (labelled 'vulnerable groups' in the figure below), comprising some of the most vulnerable groups to online harms such as new users, protected groups and older people, were

specifically targeted by only 9% of initiatives. Only 4% targeted 'others', usually consisting of initiatives targeted at professionals such as 'information professionals'.

Figure 1: Initiatives by Target Group (Simplified) n= 170



*'Looked-after children' who are under 'vulnerable groups'.

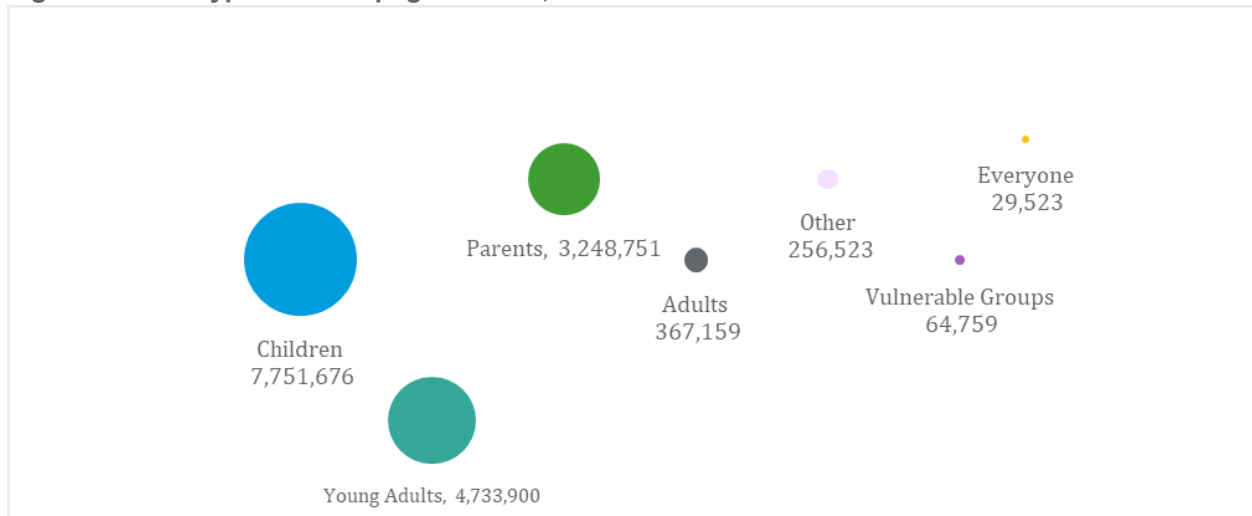
**The percentages sum to more than 100 as many initiatives cover more than one target group.

When looking at the **main** target group of each initiative (rather than one of a list of target groups), the results are similar to the findings above. Children were the most frequently targeted main group (37%), followed again by parents (11%). 'Everyone', however, is much less likely to be the main target group than one of a list of target groups. Groups vulnerable to online abuse were also less specifically targeted, with 4% of all initiatives citing this as their main target group, compared to 9% including this group in all their target groups.

We have estimated the 'reach' of the initiatives by adding together the number of webpage visits for each initiative, where available, according to its main user type (Figure 2 below). As a result, we are aware of 7,751,676 visits to webpages for initiatives targeted at children; the most visited category, followed by 'young adults' (4,733,900 visits) and 'parents' (3,248,751 visits). It should be noted, however, that this information was not available for all initiatives; the information provided consists mainly of data provided in the survey.

Our mapping database records 7.8m visits to webpages for initiatives mainly targeted at children, 4.7m for young adults, and 3.2m for parents.

Figure 2: User Type and Webpage Visitors, n=44



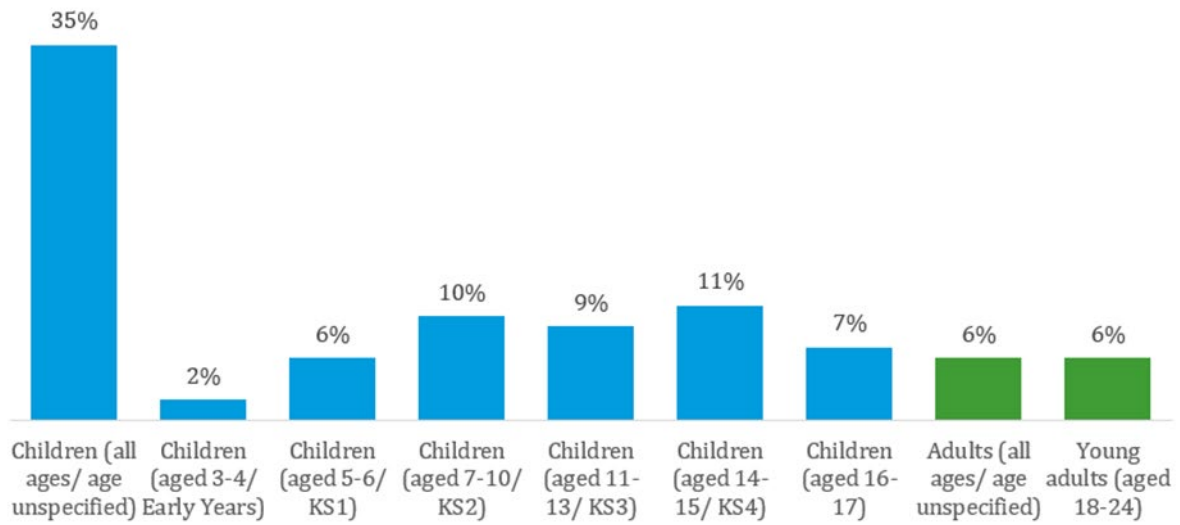
**Bubble sizes to scale*

Considering data from the desk-based research and stakeholder consultations, there were no initiatives targeting a specific age range of adults, only initiatives which targeted 'young adults' and adults in general. Out of the 12% of initiatives that targeted 'adults' (when excluding survey data), roughly half were targeting young adults and half were targeting adults in general. This is likely due to adults often being grouped under 'everyone'.

Initiatives aimed at children can be broken down into the specific age groups that the initiative aimed to target – see Figure 3 below. Data shows that there has been an effort to cater to the needs of specific children within different age ranges, especially compared to other target groups. For example, 11% of all initiatives targeted children in Key Stage 4, compared to only 6% of all initiatives targeting specifically 'adults.'

35% of initiatives target children; age-specific initiatives are slightly more likely to focus on the early teenage years than younger or older children

Figure 3: Initiatives by Target Groups, Excluding Survey Data (Children) n= 102



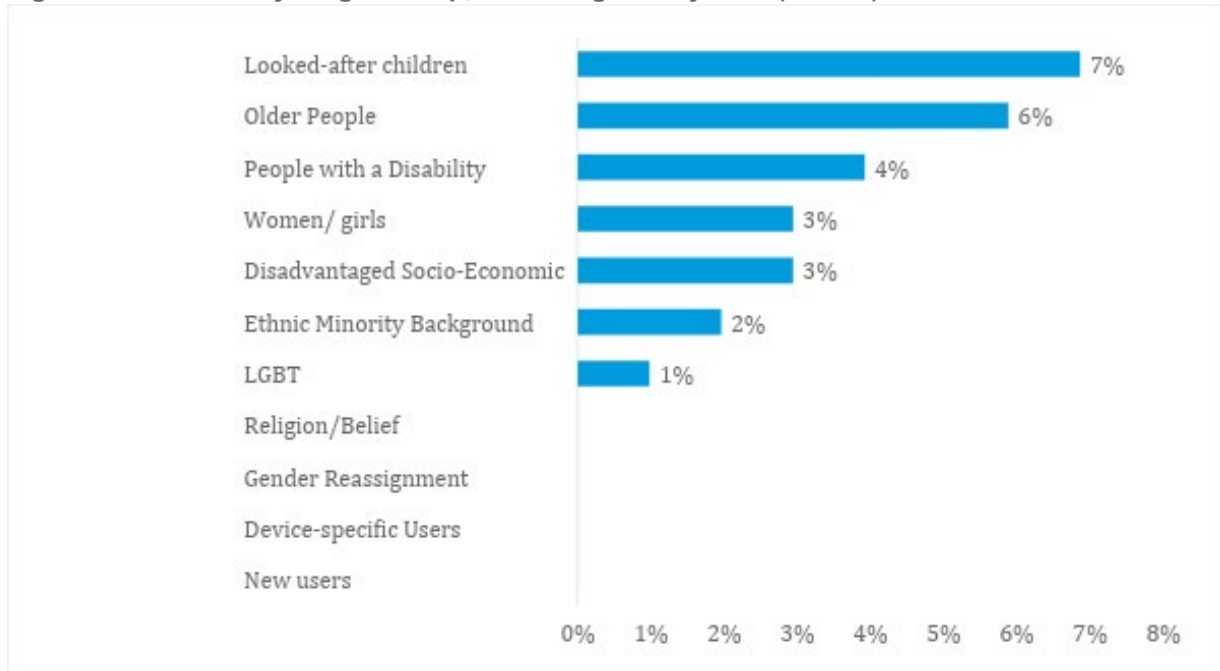
*The percentages sum to more than 100 as many initiatives cover more than one target group (overlap).

Figure 3 shows that while 35% of all initiatives in the desk research³ targeted children, there is variance in the incidence of initiatives targeting across children age groups; there seem to be slightly more initiatives focusing on the early teenage years compared to children of older or younger age groups.

The more underrepresented groups from the mapping exercise (excluding survey data) are shown in Figure 4 below by breaking down the 'others' group into more granular categories.

³ Excluding survey research for strict comparability in this figure; across all data in the mapping framework, 38% of initiatives targeted children

Figure 4: Initiatives by Target Group, Excluding Survey Data (Others) n= 102



**Note that these figures total to more than 16% (the percentage of all initiatives which target groups vulnerable to online abuse) as many initiatives cover more than one target group, including less relatively vulnerable groups.*

Only 7% of all initiatives in the desk research cover 'looked-after children'. These initiatives, however, targeted all people who had some responsibility over the safety of children, such as teachers, care-workers, youth club leaders, sport coaches, and GPs, rather than specifically targeting looked-after children – there was no initiative with looked-after children as their primary target group. Furthermore, only 3% of initiatives primarily focused on people from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Not all the protected groups were specifically targeted; people who may face discrimination due to their religion or belief and people who have undergone gender reassignment were not the primary target group for any media literacy initiative. New users and device specific users were also not specifically mentioned at all by the initiatives in the mapping exercise.

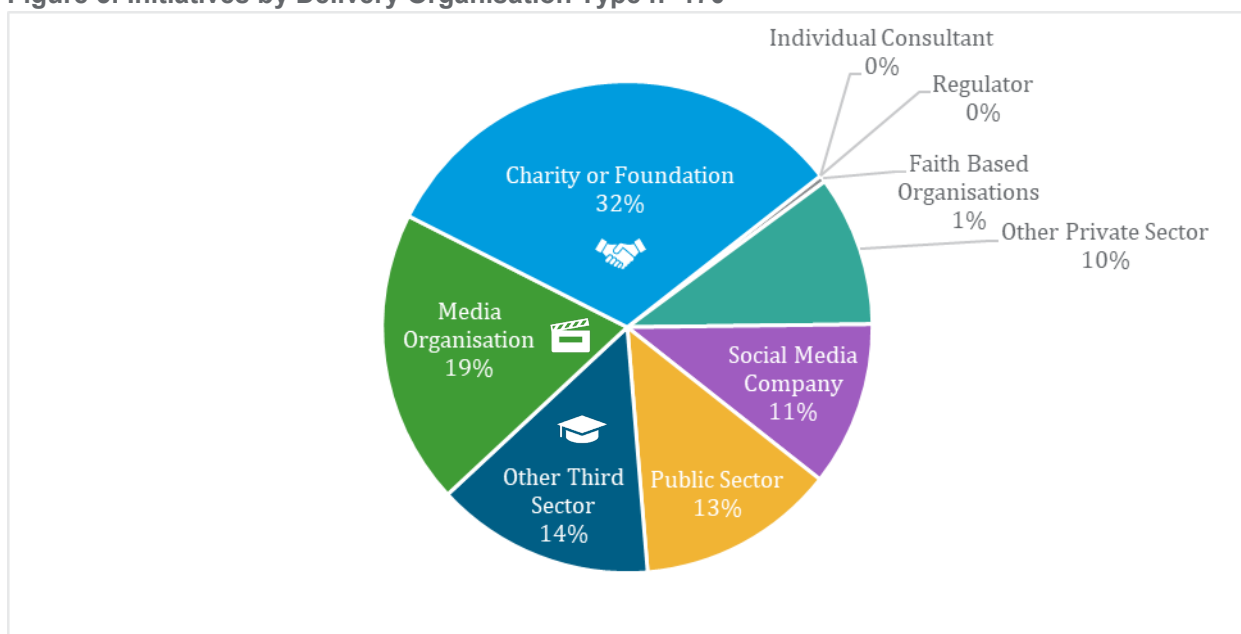
This analysis cannot be reproduced using survey data as user types for providers were not as granular.

Delivery Organisation Type

The most common type of organisation providing online media literacy initiatives were charities or foundations, followed by media organisations and public sector organisations.

The most common type of organisation providing online media literacy initiatives were **charities** or foundations (32% of providers of total initiatives), followed by **media** organisations (around 19%) and **other third sector** organisations (14%). Public and private sector organisations also made up a significant proportion of providers; social media companies were the main type of private sector organisation, with banks and health and beauty companies also relatively common among private companies. Unsurprisingly, they tended to focus on aspects of online harm related to their industries, with beauty companies focusing on improving health and wellbeing online, and online games popular with children providing advice on information sharing and reporting abuse. Universities and private consultants provided up to 3% of initiatives each. Regulators such as Ofcom signposted resources and initiatives but did not offer any initiatives themselves. Where an initiative was delivered by multiple organisations, we identified the main provider.

Figure 5: Initiatives by Delivery Organisation Type n=170



Source of Funding

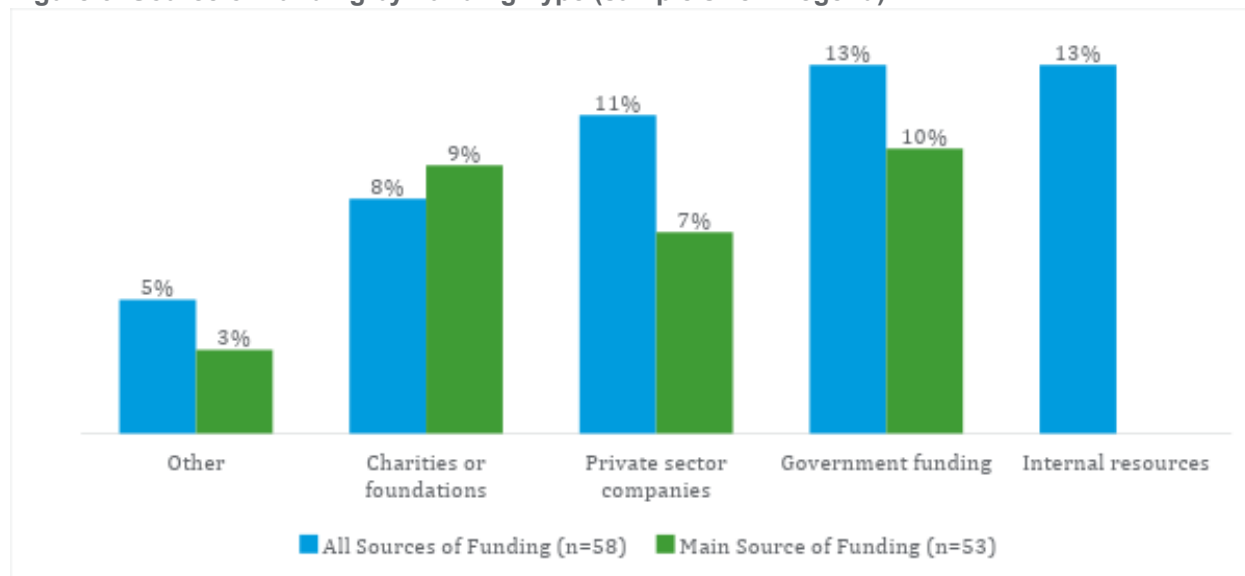
Providers typically use multiple funding sources, including Government funding, their own internal resources, charities and foundations, and private sector companies.

The most commonly reported sources of funding in the survey were internal resources (reported by 13% of all initiatives) and government funding (reported by 13% of all initiatives). This was followed closely by private sector companies (11% of initiatives). However, when only considering the main source of funding, this was often through private sector companies. It is important to note, however, that information on the sources of funding for initiatives is limited compared to other information captured by the framework due to the fact this was only captured through the survey. 'Other' included payment for services, memberships, and TV license.

As shown by the disconnect between 'all sources of funding' and 'main sources of funding', media literacy initiatives were often funded by different types of organisations. The private companies (often social media, media, and technology companies) often sponsored such initiatives provided by other organisations such as charities. For example, Internet Matters is a not for profit organisation (main

delivery organisation) run in partnership with BT, and sponsored by a list of private sector organisations such as Sky, TalkTalk, Virgin Media, Google, and Facebook.

Figure 6: Source of Funding by Funding Type (sample size in legend)

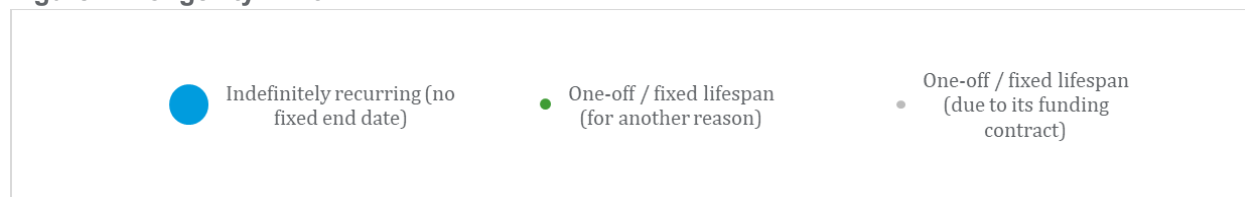


Longevity and Geography

Most initiatives were indefinitely recurring, rather than of fixed duration. They are available throughout the UK for the most part, rather than locally.

Based on information in the public domain and in the survey, nearly all (83%) of all initiatives were **indefinitely recurring**, as opposed to being a project with a fixed duration. The remaining 17% were either one-off initiatives or pilots (due to funding and other reasons) or provided no information on longevity of the initiatives.

Figure 7: Longevity n=161



**number and size are the frequency of responses*

A large proportion of initiatives (81%) were based **throughout the UK**, likely due to the fact many initiatives were online resources or initiatives designed to run throughout the UK. There were some local initiatives by local councils and police forces, and while this mapping exercise has included some, it is likely that there are many more which could not be located given the time and resources available for this study. Therefore, the figures presented in this report for local/regional initiatives are likely to be understating the proportion of local initiatives available. Furthermore, many initiatives claimed to deliver services across the UK; little information has been released to the public domain on where specifically these initiatives have taken place and so whether the distribution of services across the UK was equal cannot be determined within this mapping exercise.

Figure 8: Initiatives by Region of Provision n=170

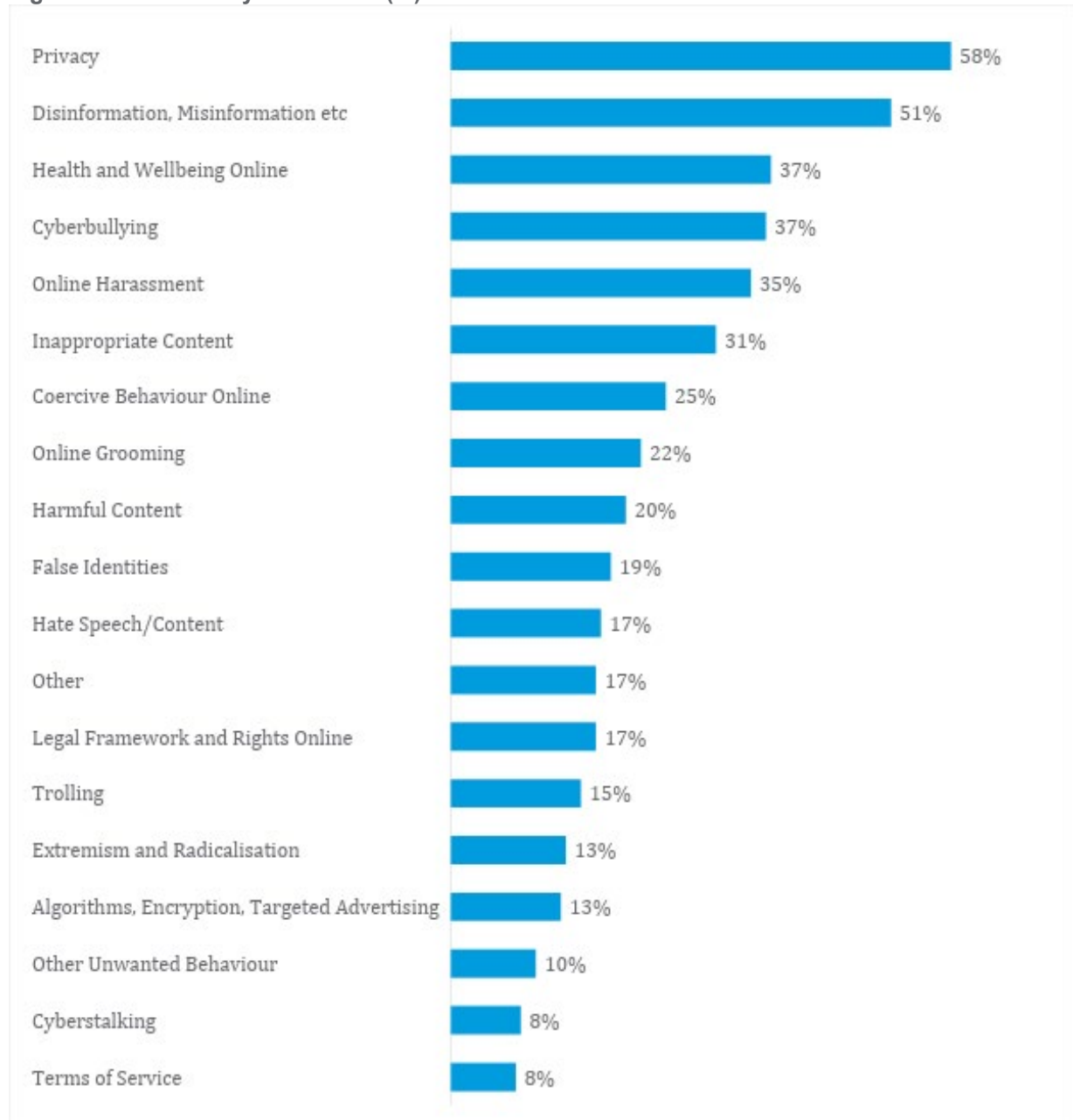
	(%) Initiatives by Region of Provision
Throughout the UK	82%
Regional	3%
Not classified/Other/Not UK-based	15%

Issues Addressed

Initiatives typically address multiple issues, and more than half address two main issues: “managing privacy, data, and the online footprint”; and “recognising disinformation, misinformation, hoaxes, fake news, and use of technology for deception”.

All the issues that were identified for inclusion in the framework have been addressed at least once by the initiatives included in this research. Therefore, there are no gaps around the issues identified. However, there does not appear to be equal coverage across all issues raised, with underrepresentation of certain issues in some cases, and a strong emphasis on some other issues, as can be seen in Figure 9. ‘Managing **privacy**, data, and the online footprint’ was the most common issue targeted, with 58% of all initiatives targeting this issue. This was followed by ‘recognising **disinformation, misinformation**, hoaxes, fake news, and use of technology for deception’ which was addressed by 51% of all initiatives, and by health and wellbeing online, and cyberbullying, which were covered by 37% of initiatives each.

Figure 9: Initiatives by Issue Area (%) n=170



**The percentages sum to more than 100 as many initiatives cover more than one issue type (overlap).*

However, while more than half of all initiatives address ‘managing privacy, data, and the online footprint’ (58% of initiatives), only around 8% of initiatives covered ‘understanding terms of service’ and ‘cyber stalking’ each.

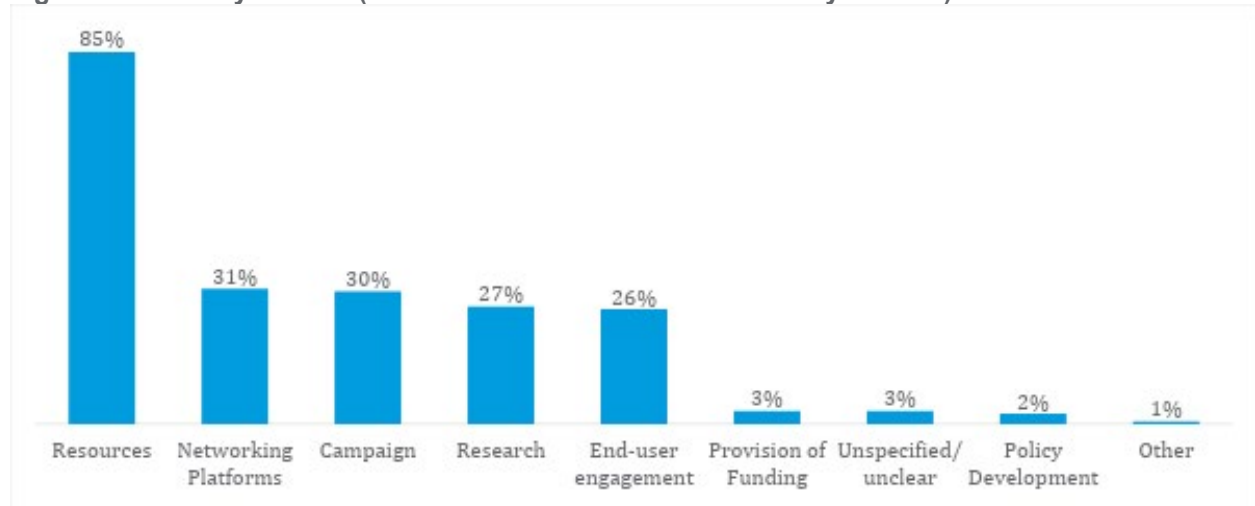
Delivery method

Most initiatives are delivered through the provision of resources such as printable online guides, information pages, videos, or games.

The most common delivery method for initiatives was provision of resources (such as printable online guides, information pages, informational videos, informational games), with 85% of initiatives offering this in some form. This was followed by ‘networking platform’ (mainly in the form of workshops) with nearly a third of initiatives opting for this approach (31%) and then ‘campaigns’, with 30% of initiatives offering this service. However, most initiatives often used multiple methods of delivery rather than just

one specific type. For example, 27% of initiatives provided resources as well as providing through a campaign, 27% of all initiatives provided resources and research, and finally 11% of initiatives provided research and campaigns. End-user engagements consisted of, for example, live helplines where users can ask for advice for a variety of issues.

Figure 10: Delivery Method (% of initiatives that use each delivery method) n=170



**The percentages sum to more than 100 as many initiatives use more than one delivery method (overlap).*

***Refer to the explanation of 'funding' in section 3.*

Skills/Capabilities

Initiatives are most likely to cover the ability to use media safely, and various kinds of critical thinking such as recognising and managing risks.

As a whole, the initiatives are most likely to cover 'media use' and 'critical thinking'. Relative to these skills, 'creative skills', 'intercultural dialogue', and 'participation and engagement' are less well-represented. Figure 11 below shows the breakdown of skills and capabilities represented by the initiatives (Please see **Table 2** above for more information on the characteristics of initiatives.)

Figure 11: Skills/Capabilities (% of Skills by Initiatives) n=170



**The percentages sum to more than 100 as many initiatives targeted more than skill type (overlap).*

The majority of initiatives covered 'media use' (75% of initiatives). The next most addressed skills, in order, were:

- 'Critical thinking 4: recognising and managing online security/safety risks', covered by 70% of initiatives
- 'Critical thinking 3: recognising different types of media content and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability, and value for money', covered by 42%
- 'Critical thinking 2: questioning the motivations of content producers in order to make informed choices about content selection and use', also 42%

These skills can then be broken down further, by issue area as well as target group. 'Other' included encouraging conversations between adults and children.

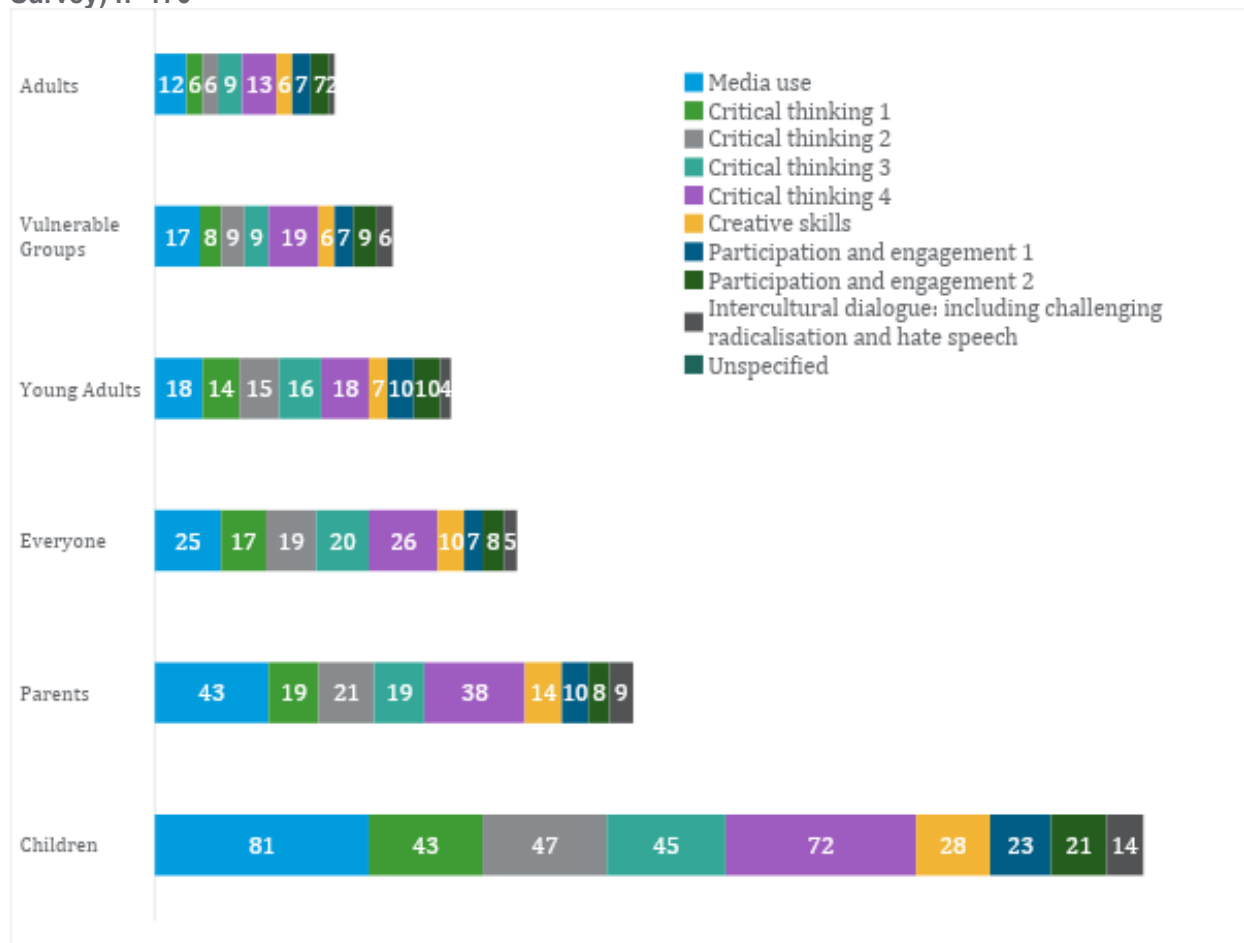
Figure 12: Number of Initiatives by Issue Area and Target Group n=170



*Total sums up to more than 'n' due to overlap, where initiatives cover more than one issue and user type.

The figure above shows that nearly all issues are covered by all target groups, apart from 'online harassment' which was not covered among the 'everyone' group. The proportion of each issue area focussing on each target group remains broadly consistent regardless of issue, although the proportion focussing on adults does vary. This is likely to be as a result of the variation in user type targeted by initiatives. An equal proportion of focus for all user types may not be optimal as different user types may be more prone to specific issues.

Figure 13: Number of Initiatives by Skills (Simplified) and Target Group (Simplified) (Excluding Survey) n=170



**Initiatives can cover more than one skill or target group.*

Media use is the most commonly addressed skill across all target groups, with 47% (81 initiatives) of all initiatives that target children focused specifically on media use. This is followed by various forms of critical thinking around recognising and managing online risks. Critical thinking in this analysis embodies all types of critical thinking: understanding how the media industry works and how media messages are constructed; questioning the motivations of content producers in order to make informed choices about content selection and use; and recognising different types of media content and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability, and value for money.

There appears to be a lack of initiatives addressing creative skills, participation and engagement (including both the interaction, engagement, and participation in the economic, social, and cultural aspects of society through the media and the promotion of democratic participation and fundamental rights) and intercultural dialogue (including challenging radicalisation and hate speech). There is only one initiative specifically targeting participation and engagement for other groups vulnerable to online abuse, and only one initiative targeting ‘everyone’ which covers creative skills.

There are no initiatives that specifically target groups vulnerable to online abuse and intercultural dialogue. There are also no initiatives targeting ‘everyone’ and specifically participation and engagement, or intercultural dialogue.

Gaps in provision

All skills and media literacy issues are addressed to some extent by the initiatives. However, some target groups are under-represented, such as those groups particularly

vulnerable to online harms in general, children in key transitional ages, and users whose first language is not English.

While there is an abundance of online safety and digital media literacy initiatives which cover a range of target users, issues, and skills, this mapping exercise allows us to see that there are indeed gaps in provision, and some areas where groups are underrepresented. These can be summarised below:

Table 3: Gaps in Provision

	Gaps	Lower levels of specific provision
<i>Target User Groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who may face discrimination due to their religion or belief (desk-based research) • People who have undergone gender reassignment (desk-based research) • Device specific users (desk-based research) • New users (desk-based research) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people • Looked-after children • Device specific users • People with a disability • Women/girls • LGBT • Users from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds • People from an ethnic minority background • Adults • Young adults
<i>Delivery Organisation Type</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith-based organisations • Social media companies
<i>Scale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not clear – most initiatives claim to provide national coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While most initiatives claim to cover the entirety of the UK, this does not necessarily mean that they cover every region. For example, ‘The Student View’ mention “even if your school is in a region we are not currently working in, we would still love to hear from you”, suggesting that there may be gaps in geographical locations within the ‘national’ category
<i>Issue Type</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding terms of service • Preventing/challenging cyber stalking • Preventing/challenging online trolling • Avoiding upsetting or potentially harmful content • Understanding algorithms, encryption, targeted advertising • Challenging extremism and radicalisation • Preventing/challenging hate speech/content online • Understanding the legal framework online (laws which apply to online activity) and your rights online
<i>Delivery method</i>	n/a	n/a
<i>Skills/ Capabilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and engagement: promoting democratic participation and fundamental rights

	Gaps	Lower levels of specific provision
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intercultural dialogue: including challenging radicalisation and hate speech ● Participation and engagement: interaction, engagement, and participation in the economic, social, and cultural aspects of society through the media ● Creative skills: creating building and generating media content
<i>Cross-cutting aspects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiatives which cover both the issue of 'understanding terms of service' and specifically target 'adults' ● Initiatives which cover both 'understanding the legal framework online' and specifically target 'adults' ● Initiatives which cover both 'preventing/challenging cyber stalking' and target specifically 'young adults' ● Initiatives which cover both 'preventing/challenging online trolling' and specifically target 'young adults' ● Initiatives which cover both 'avoiding upsetting or potentially harmful content' and specifically 'young adults' ● Initiatives which cover 'preventing/challenging coercive behaviour online' for specifically 'young adults' ● Initiatives which cover 'groups vulnerable to online abuse' and 'intercultural dialogue' ● Initiatives cover 'everyone' and 'intercultural dialogue' ● Initiatives which cover 'everyone' and 'participation and engagement' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiatives which cover 'groups vulnerable to online abuse' and 'participation and engagement' ● Initiatives which cover 'creative skills' and 'everyone'

Based on the desk-based research and stakeholder consultations, there are many gaps and areas of underrepresentation in target user groups. Those most vulnerable to online harms in general are often the most underrepresented in regards to provision of online safety and digital literacy provisions; the

exception is in provision for children, which has good coverage excepting specific provision for looked-after children. Stakeholder consultation raised the vulnerability of children in key transitional ages and users whose first language is not English. There is a higher number of initiatives that specifically target children in Key Stage 3, and there are initiatives that focus on groups vulnerable to online abuse, which include people from minority ethnic groups and could therefore cover to some extent users' whose first language is not English. However, the total number of initiatives covering these groups is limited in comparison to other user groups.

There is evidence of public organisations, charities, and media organisations taking responsibility for preventing online harm and improving digital media literacy.

There appears to be large variability in the relative levels of provision for the types of issues addressed. However, although certain issue types have been much less frequently addressed when compared to others (such as 'managing privacy'), this does not necessarily mean that these issues have rarely been addressed. The number of issues raised (779) and total number of initiatives included in the mapping framework (170) are relatively large, so the variability is mainly driven by the large number of initiatives for the most common issue types.

In addition to this, while 'preventing/challenging online trolling' is the second least addressed issue, there is an initiative which targets this issue specifically. When looking at variation in target groups and issue types between initiatives, not every issue type is covered proportionally across all user group types. This is likely to be due to the differing needs between user groups. However, whether this coverage adequately addresses the specific vulnerability of each target group will need to be further investigated. In addition to these high-level gaps, there are some gaps in initiatives for certain user groups for specific issue types (see Figure 12 above).

This table, however, is **limited** as it does not consider the scale of the initiatives in terms of reach/impact/size – how many people were reached, how long campaigns were run for, how much information and detail was provided in informational resources, whether media literacy was the main topic of the initiative or just one of the many topics they cover. This may therefore present an inaccurate view of the issue types and target groups that are covered.

Not all possibilities of cross analysis have been presented (e.g. delivery type by target group) but future analyses can be investigated in the future. Not all initiatives were UK based.

Evaluation evidence

Evaluation activity is rare; some providers had taken steps to monitor their activities, and a small number had formally evaluated their effectiveness in building online media literacy.

There is little evidence of evaluation of these initiatives. When there is evidence, it is often based on very simple metrics focusing on outputs (rather than outcomes), 'reach', receipt of awards, or limited qualitative evidence such as quotes from participants. For example, the information provided by these initiatives mainly involved the number of users, number of events, and number of participants. The most common piece of quantitative evidence captured was a count of the number of users, which was undertaken for 24% of the initiatives. The definition of "user" differs from initiative to initiative, and could include followers of a social media account or participants in the initiative. The full breakdown of types of evaluation evidence gathered can be seen below in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Evaluation Evidence n=142

Evaluation Evidence	% of Type of Evaluation Evidence
No. of users	24% (35)
No. of visitors to webpage	9% (15)

Evaluation Evidence	% of Type of Evaluation Evidence
No. of times resource downloaded	7% (12)
Other evidence of user engagement (Please specify)	31% (51)

As mentioned in the EAO report (2017)⁴, a big limitation in comparing the evidence of evaluation is the lack of a common evaluation framework between the broad range of online harm and digital media literacy initiatives. Much of the evidence was grouped under ‘other evidence of user engagement’.

⁴ Mapping of media literacy practices and action in EU-28: EAO report, European Audiovisual Observatory, 2017

5. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Categorisation

This mapping exercise has identified and characterised 170 online safety and digital media literacy initiatives available in the UK. Our framework categorised the initiatives according to the following characteristics:

- target/user groups;
- delivery organisation type;
- longevity;
- scale (geographical);
- issue areas addressed;
- delivery method/approach; and
- skills/capabilities addressed.

Key Findings

The mapping exercise generated the following key findings:

- Parents and children were the user groups with the highest number of media literacy initiatives targeted at them, and these initiatives had the highest levels of engagement (recorded by web page views).
- Children are the only user group where providers have attempted to target specific age ranges within the group.
- Media literacy providers consist mainly of media organisations and charities, although there is a sizable portion of contributors from other types of organisations.
- Many issues and skills were addressed by multiple providers. The most common issues addressed are privacy, disinformation, health and wellbeing, and the most common skills taught are media use, and critical thinking.
- All issues in our Framework are addressed by at least one initiative. Some user groups have a limited number of initiatives targeted at them, such as children in key transitional ages, and users whose first language is not English.
- Certain issues are covered more by initiatives that target specific user types, likely reflecting specific risks (eg cyberbullying initiatives aimed at young people).

Evaluations

Some of the providers had taken steps to monitor their activities, and a small number had formally evaluated their effectiveness in improving media literacy initiatives. As part of our Phase 2 research, we have devised a framework for assessing the available evaluation evidence, using the following criteria:

- A. Fitness for purpose of the evaluation
 - Was it completed by an independent/reliable source?
 - Is the method robust?
- B. Significance of the initiative
 - Was the initiative significant in terms of scale, impact or public awareness/perception?
- C. Effectiveness in improving users' media literacy
 - Did the initiative increase users':
 - a. creativity;
 - b. critical thinking;
 - c. intercultural dialogue;
 - d. media engagement; and
 - e. civic participation and interaction through the media?

An assessment of the available evaluation evidence using this framework, and a literature review, will be included in our Phase 2 report.

APPENDIX 1: PROVIDER SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The goal of this research is to increase the Government's understanding of media literacy initiatives, focused on online safety and minimising harm, which are available for users in the UK.

The data provided in this survey will be used to inform research that will be made public and may be shared with RSM, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and the relevant regulator. All data will be anonymised.

1. Do you represent an organisation that provides media literacy initiatives, focused on online safety and minimising harm, to users in the UK?

- [Yes / No (thank and close)]

Provider questions

2. What is the name of your organisation?

- [Text field, mandatory]

3. Which of these best describes your organisation?

- [See "Lists" in framework; Types of Organisation (social media company, media organisation, charity etc.)]

4. Is your organisation based in the UK?

- Yes: my organisation is based solely in the UK
- Yes: my organisation is multinational but has an office and/or staff in the UK
- No: my organisation is based overseas and has no staff in the UK

5. Please provide the postcode of your main UK location

- [Postcode entry box]

6. In which region(s) are your services available in the UK? Please tick as many as apply, or "Throughout the UK" if they are available in all regions.

- Standard UK regional list, tick as many

7. What sources of funding does your organisation use to fund media literacy initiatives, and which is the main source?

- [Two lists: tick as many, tick main]
- Government funding
- Charities or foundations
- Private sector companies
- Internal resources

Thank you. We would now like to ask you some questions about the media literacy initiative or initiatives that you provide, focused on online safety and minimising harm: their target user groups, the issues they cover, their delivery method and so on.

Please complete the questions on the next page for the main initiative that you provide; once you have done that, you will have the opportunity to add further initiatives as well, up to a total of five.

Initiative question block (repeats)

8. What is the name of this initiative?

- [Text entry line]

9. If this initiative has its own web page, please enter or paste in the link below? Please tick all that apply.

- [Text entry line]

10. What are the target user groups for this initiative? Please tick all that apply.

- [See "Lists" in framework; two lists, one tick as many, one tick one (main): compressed version of target user group list; finishing with "No target group in particular"]

11. If there is a main target group, please select it below:

- [See "Lists" in framework; two lists, one tick as many, one tick one (main): compressed version of target user group list; finishing with "No target group in particular"]

12. What issues does this initiative deal with?

- [See "Lists" in framework; tick as many: issue area, ending with "All the above"]

13. What delivery methods or approaches does this initiative use? Please tick all that apply.

- [See "Lists" in framework; tick as many: delivery method/approach]

14. What skills or capabilities does this initiative aim to address?

- [See "Lists" in framework; tick as many: skill/capability addressed]

15. What sources of funding does this initiative use? Please tick all that apply.

- [Two lists: tick as many]
- Government funding
- Charities or foundations
- Private sector companies
- Internal resources

16. Which of the sources above is the primary source of funding for? Please select one option.

- [Two lists: tick as many]

17. When did this initiative start? (Please provide the date in mm/yyyy format if possible)

- [Date entry box, mm/yyyy]

18. Which of the following best describes this initiative? Please select one of the options below?

- It's indefinitely recurring; it has no fixed date
- It has a fixed lifespan due to its funding contract
- It has a fixed lifespan for another reason

19. (If recurring) If you are willing and able to disclose this information: what is the annual cost of this initiative in GBP (£ Sterling)? (Please estimate if necessary)

- [number entry box]

20. (If fixed lifespan) How many years is it expected to last?

- [number entry box]

21. (If fixed lifespan) What is the total cost of this initiative?

- [number entry box]

22. Have you measured the take-up of this initiative?

- [Yes/No]

23. Can you please indicate the approximate take-up of this initiative to date, using any of the following measures as appropriate?

- [text box to enter the type]
- [number entry box]

24. Is your information on take-up an accurate count or an estimate?

- [Count/Estimate]

25. Have you conducted any research to evaluate the effectiveness of this initiative? If you have, and it is publicly available, please insert the page link/URL below. If there is an evaluation report that you wish to send us, please email it to amy.hau@rsmuk.com.

- [Yes/No]

Looping section

26. Thank you. You have now completed the questions about [pipe: Initiative Name 1]. Would you like to add another initiative?

- [Yes and loop/No, thank and close]

27. Thank you. You have now completed the questions about [pipe: Initiative Name 1] and [pipe: Initiative Name 2]. Would you like to add another initiative?

28. [Yes and loop/No, thank and close]

29. *...repeat, allow up to five initiatives*

Closing page

30. Thank you. May we contact you further to discuss the initiative(s) you provide and any evidence that you have gathered to evaluate their effectiveness?

- [Yes/no]
- If Yes, please provide email or phone contact details below.
- [Text box]

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