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Médiakutató, az Eszterházy Károly Katolikus Egyetem Andragógiai és Közművelődési Tanszékének adjunktusa. Fő kutatási témái: tanulás és a média: a rövid formátumú videók szerepe a tanulásban. Médiatudatosság: az álhírek, manipulációs technikák, adathalász próbálkozások, egyéb online és offline csalások jelei és felismerési technikái. A közösségek segítő szerepe a csalások kivédésében.

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Media literacy among young Hungarians in Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia in relation to fake news, phishing scams, and fake sweepstakes

The widespread use of the internet and social media undoubtedly has many positive benefits, but it also has a number of negative effects on society. These include various forms of disinformation, such as fake news, as well as widespread attempts at fraud, such as phishing, fake sweepstakes, and fake financial investments. In this challenging and complex media environment, it is critical for individuals to develop an adequate level of media literacy, which will enable them to critically evaluate media content from multiple perspectives and identify fake news and fraudulent content. Although several studies have examined the media literacy of young people from various perspectives, most of them were based on self-reported media literacy or focused on only one country. Few studies have examined the practical skills of young people across multiple countries. Our research fills this gap in relation to Hungarian young people in Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania. During the Media Detective for Young People program in 2023 and 2024, we measured the media literacy of 1,864 Hungarian young people in Hungary, Slovakia and Romania between the ages of 11 and 25 regarding fake news, phishing scams, and fake sweepstakes using an online fake news quiz. The questionnaire consisted of 20 screenshots containing real social media posts, emails, Messenger and SMS messages. Each contained either verified false or real information, but the participants did not know this and had to make a decision about the perceived truthfulness of the message based on the leaking clues in the message. In this study, we review the main results of the research and analyze the differences between countries, age, gender, type of settlement, and subjective financial status. In summary, among the three countries studied, young Hungarians in Romania scored the lowest in all three categories of fraud, and men achieved better results in all countries.

We also discuss the possible reasons for these differences and the pedagogical implications of the results in the article.

Keywords: media literacy, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, fake news

