



Thematic Sheet 3/6

SOCIETY, MEDIA AND CITIZENSHIP

Sec. I and II

Eduki Competition 2025/2026

- Interconnected: humain – digital – sustainable

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C) SOCIETY, MEDIA AND CITIZENSHIP

The Impact on Democracy, Society, Media and Our Safety

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

In a world where public space is increasingly unfolding online, digital technologies and media play a decisive role within democratic societies. Citizens get informed, debate, vote, and exercise their rights in an environment where both reliable knowledge and misleading, sometimes maliciously falsified, information circulate. Protecting privacy, ensuring online security, and regulating platforms are therefore key challenges to maintaining trust in democratic institutions.

This section invites us to explore the **effects of digital technology on our lives in society**, both positive and negative, and to promote a **more balanced, healthy, and thoughtful use of digital tools**.

TO START THE DEBATE

This sub-theme can be approached from different angles. Here are some possible directions:

→ Democratic challenges, information, privacy, and elections:

- Can we still easily distinguish reliable information from fake news online?
- Do algorithms promote a diversity of opinions, or do they reinforce filter bubbles and echo chambers?
- Are elections more vulnerable to manipulation and interference in the digital age?

→ Online safety:

- What risks does digital technology pose to citizens' privacy?
- What habits should be adopted to protect accounts (passwords, two-factor authentication, etc.)?
- Who is responsible for online safety (users, platforms, the state)?

→ Protection of intellectual property:

- What is intellectual property and why is it important in the digital age?
- Are creators (artists, writers, developers...) sufficiently protected online?
- Does the rise of artificial intelligence challenge the notion of authorship and copyright?

SOME KEY STATISTICS

- Several studies show that social media influences participation in civic life. For example, in Poland, 87% of young people aged 18 to 29 believe that social media has a positive effect on democracy, compared to only 46% of people aged 50 and over. ([Pew Research Center, 2022](#)).
- In 2021, a group of Swiss experts concluded that digital technologies could facilitate citizen participation, notably through popular initiatives, provided that risks such as fake news are addressed ([TA Swiss, 2021](#)). A report from June 2024 warns about influence campaigns and disinformation targeting Switzerland, highlighting the need for collaboration between authorities, platforms, and media to protect democracy and strengthen public trust ([Federal Council, 2024](#)).
- The issue of online privacy is being questioned in several countries, including Switzerland. For several months now, a revision of the surveillance law, known as "OSCPT", has been under consideration. This revision would require VPN providers, messaging services, and other platforms to store metadata and share it with authorities. The proposal is controversial, as it threatens online anonymity ([TechRadar, 2025](#)).
- The status of intellectual property rights for works created by artificial intelligence (AI) remains unclear and differs from country to country. In Europe, AI is not recognized as an author or inventor, meaning that no one holds rights over such creations. In the United Kingdom, the rights belong to the person who performed the necessary actions to generate the work. Meanwhile, the government of Hong Kong has decided to recognize AI as a legal entity, on equal footing with a human being ([Dentons, 2025](#)).

However, digital technology can also play a positive role for society, the media, and citizenship, notably:

- It facilitates access to information for populations that are not necessarily reached by traditional media.
- It offers spaces for expression that are sometimes perceived as freer than traditional public forums.
- It enables wider sharing of artistic content.

... And your students, what do they think?

DID YOU KNOW? (CASE STUDY)

Interference and Political Influence: When Artificial Intelligence Visually Replaces Humans with Deepfakes

→ An original example of the threats the digital world poses to society and democracy

In February 2024, the British multinational Arup fell victim to a \$25 million loan fraud. The perpetrators used deepfake technology to realistically replicate the face of a company executive, then called an employee via video conference to convince them to transfer \$25 million to a bank account in Hong Kong. This attack, one of the most sophisticated to date, allowed artificial intelligence to carry out large-scale identity fraud without any use of violence, highlighting the serious dangers AI can pose when used with malicious intent.

SOME NON-EXHAUSTIVE PROJECT IDEAS

CATEGORY: ARTWORK 🎨

Project idea	Description
Comic Strip – « Citizenship »	Creation of a collective comic strip illustrating civic dilemmas. Each panel presents a dilemma and encourages discussion.
Play – « My Life Today and My Life Yesterday »	Students create a play illustrating the evolution of society, media, and citizenship over the past 50 years.
Digital illustrations – « In 50 years, life will be like this »	Students are invited to imagine and illustrate, using digital tools, what society might look like in 50 years.
Collective sculpture – « The voice of young citizens »	Students create a collective sculpture using recycled or natural materials, symbolizing the role of young people in today's and tomorrow's society.

CATEGORY: MEDIA CREATION 🎙️

Project idea	Description
Video – «Fake News Hunters»	Students create a mini-series video or podcast where they analyze age-appropriate false information and demonstrate how to spot it: verifying sources, comparing multiple media outlets, identifying misleading images or headlines. The project can take the form of a news broadcast or a role-playing game, with a screening during a themed day.

Podcast – « Online safety »	After a thorough reflection on digital security issues (personal data protection, cyberbullying, misinformation, privacy, etc.), the students create a podcast.
Street interviews – « Citizen Voices »	Street interviews where students question various citizens about what it means to be a citizen today
Documentary – « Fake news : how to identify them »	Podcast or radio show hosted by students, in which they analyze viral articles or posts, identify fake news, and explain how to verify sources

CATEGORY: CONCRETE ACTION

Project idea	Description
Survey – « Should the voting age be lowered to 16? »	Conduct interviews with various people to gather their opinions on this proposal.
Awareness Day – « Youth, media and disinformation »	Organization of workshops at school where students present to other classes how to recognize fake news, how to properly cite their sources, etc.
« Neighborhood media suggestion box »	Install in a neighborhood or in the school a « suggestion box », inviting citizens to propose topics that should be covered by local media.
My right, my voice !	Students explore their rights and responsibilities as citizens through investigations, interviews, and role-playing. They can create posters, videos, or podcasts to explain a specific right (freedom of expression, right to privacy , etc.) and present their work during a citizen forum within the school.

DRAW IDEAS FROM PREVIOUS WINNERS OR OTHER EXISTING PROJECTS

- [Hive'Five](#) - Blaise-Cendrars High School (Françoise Demole Award 2024)
- [Combien de murs?](#) – HPI group / Villars-Vert et Avry Schools (FR)
- [Déetective-énergie](#) – CO Vuillonnex, GE

USEFUL RESOURCES

WEBSITES

Title	Description
Voting rights at 16? Link	The Swiss Federation of Youth Parliaments (SFYP) provides information on the debate about lowering the voting age to 16 in Switzerland.
Citizens educated in media and information Link	This innovative program presents a comprehensive competency framework for media and information education, along with structured teaching suggestions for educators and learners.
Citizenship education videos Link	Educational videos (in french) explaining Swiss politics and how young people can get involved. They show concrete ways to participate, even without the right to vote. Goal: to encourage civic engagement from a young age.

PRESS ARTICLES

Title	Description
Youth and social networks: the Federal Council urged to better protect them Link	The Federal Council has accepted a motion calling for better protection of the health of connected young people.
An anti-fake news platform from UNIGE aims to connect experts and internet users Link	Disinformation is spreading in the media, especially on social networks. In response to this phenomenon, the University of Geneva created Certify, a platform designed to quickly verify online information with expert review.

Digital platforms pose a threat to Swiss democracy, according to experts Link	Digital giants have market power and influence over public opinion which, combined, make them dangerous for democracy, warns a federal commission.
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EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Title	Description
Educating for democracy Link	The handbook, the first in a series published by the Council of Europe, introduces teachers to the core principles of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education (EDC/HRE), along with approaches and tools to address them.
We have our say! Link	Scenario cards (in french) on the theme of living together and participation.