Annex 6: country comparison of critical thinking and digital literacy in the education system

Table 22: country comparison of critical thinking and digital literacy in the education system.

Country	Media literacy rank[145]	PISA reading literacy 2018[147]	National strategy(ies)	Critical thinking in the curriculum	Digital skills in the curriculum
Finland.	1	520	Multiple national strategies see Section 2.1.	Critical thinking is embedded throughout the curriculum.	Digital skills are embedded throughout the curriculum.
Norway.	2	499	Action plan for digitalisation in primary education (2020-2021). The report acknowledges the rapidly changing online environment. Schools should be equipped with physical digital infrastructure and the resources and digital tools needed to deliver the curriculum. Outlines steps to better equip teachers and provide more support to schools. Highlights the importance of data protection and privacy.[562]	Critical thinking is a value of basic education, with the importance of scrutiny and critique of established ideas.[563] Democracy and participation is another value, which includes the ability to understand minority and majority opinions and create a space for disagreement and dialogue.[563]	Digital skills are acknowledged as one of the five basic skills that young people should gain through education, alongside oral skills, reading, writing, and numeracy. Acknowledges that digital skills are an essential part of educating young people.[564] Digital skills include the ability to use digital tools, media, and resources efficiently and responsibility, to find and process information. Digital skills include gaining digital judgement and understanding of how to use the internet responsibly.[564]
Denmark.	3	501	National Strategy for Digitalisation: together in the digital development, is an all of government strategy.[565] The strategy includes Vision 9: a population ready for a digital future. This vision outlines:	Critical thinking is a cross-curricular subject area. The purpose of the subject is to strengthen a student's ability to take a critical position and focus on freedom of expression.[566] Critical thinking is embedded in social science studies, but also in general teaching practice for every	IT and Technology is a cross curricular subject area, spanning across the curriculum.[568] The curriculum acknowledges the rapidly changing social media environment and that it has altered the way that teachers teach and young people learn.[568] Digital judgement, the ability to behave as digital citizens, is

			• All Danes should have digital skills to take advantage of the digital environment.[565] • Every Dane should be able to navigate social media critically and safely.[565] • Digital technology must be a core part of the education system, including relating to this technology critically and constructively.[565]	subject, ensuring that critical thinking is taught across the curriculum.[567]	acknowledged. The curriculum sets out four student positions: • The student as a critical examiner. • The student as an analysing recipient. • The student as a purposeful and creative producer. • The student as a responsible participant.
Estonia.	4	523	Estonia's education strategy for 2021-2035 has digital skills and inclusion embedded within it, identifying the importance of these to the future of education,[569] following on from the lifelong learning strategy 2020.[569] Some key areas raised in this strategy, include: • Developing digital pedagogy, ensuring teachers are developing and using digital skills for educational innovation.[569,570] • Learners are aware of the risks and benefits of an information society[569,570] • Digital skills, inclusion, and literacy are essential for learners to have to meet the needs of society and the labour market.[569,570]	• Developing critical thinking is acknowledged as a goal for basic schools in the curriculum.[571] • Appropriate critical thinking skills are expected as a competence at each stage of study.[571] • Critical thinking is mentioned across cross-curricular topics.[571]	Digital skills are acknowledged as a key part of the curriculum. In 2014, the national curriculum required every student to develop digital literacy; not just practical skills, but also system and algorithmic thinking.[572] • Cross-curriculum competency entitled 'Digital competence in basic and secondary schools', with appropriate skills sought at different age groups and across subjects.[571] • 'Information environment' is a cross-curricular topic in basic and general secondary schools, focussed on ensuring young people become information-conscious and are able to critically analyse information.[571] • 'Technology and innovation' is a cross-curricular topic.[571]

Sweden.	5	506	The Swedish National Digitalisation Strategy for the School System 2017-2022 includes the following key objectives: • Children have adequate digital skills to achieve digital competence, with a focus on infrastructure as well as technical and pedagogical support.[573] • Staff who work with children and young people are competent in digital tools.[573] • Principals and school leaders can lead digital development in their schools.[573] • Digital tools must be accessible to staff and young people.[573]	The curriculum was revised in 2018: • Schools are responsible for ensuring that young people can make use of critical thinking by the time they leave compulsory school.[574] • Critical thinking and critical examination is mentioned across subjects in the curriculum, from civics education, to Swedish, to chemistry and biology.[574]	• The curriculum acknowledges the importance of digitalisation throughout.[574] • Digital skills are identified as a key competence.[574] • The curriculum sets out both the opportunities and risks of the digital environment that need to be navigated.[574]

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