

# View from the BRIDGE: information and digital literacy for primary schools.

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This presentation will report on BRIDGE (<https://bridgeinfo-literacy.eu/>), a transnational project funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ programme and covering six countries: Finland, Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey and England. BRIDGE aims to promote information and digital literacy (IDL) as a way of underpinning equality, diversity and inclusiveness and global citizenship values in primary school education, particularly for children aged 8-11. It provides a door to information and digital literacy activities that help to encourage enquiry-based learning and critical thinking.

There is a powerful socio-educational need to promote IDL in schools (Chu, Tse & Chow, 2011), but there is also variation internationally about how this is addressed institutionally in the school curriculum and in national legislation (del Mar Grandío, Dilli & O'Neill, 2017; Frau-Meigs, Velez & Michel (Eds.), 2017). Previous research has identified significant gaps that need to be urgently addressed, including the lack of a sound educational approach, an updated and transferable curricular design and substantial support, particularly for school libraries (PISA Programme (2018; Martínez-Piñero, Gewerc & Rodríguez-Groba, 2019).

BRIDGE includes four broad outputs:

1. A free interactive, multilingual portal available for at least 10 years (going live in Feb 2024). It will consist of a fully searchable and illustrated database containing two elements:
  - A selection of children's literature (picture books) to support educational activities for IDL in the context of learning about equality values.
  - A collection of open access educational guidance material and good practice information for use in the classroom.
2. A report on the national situation with regards to IDL, covering: (i) relevant policies, guidance and initiatives; (ii) a description of the relevant parts of the school curriculum; (iii) how school libraries support (or not) information and digital literacy in primary schools; (iv) lessons learned from Covid; and (v) a SWOT analysis and proposals for future strategies to support information and digital literacy learning. The report will underline the international variability mentioned above.
3. A survey of IDL practices in primary schools, with quantitative (Likert scale) and qualitative questions on information competencies, digital competencies, critical thinking/equality values and the school environment.
4. An online training workshop and material for educators, to be made available as an online resource (also from Feb 2024).

The presentation will provide an overview of the project results and outputs (in progress as of Nov 2023), drawing on comparative findings from the six countries, but focusing more specifically on the elements of the study relating to England. It will also be an opportunity to discuss the project's outcomes and how these relate to the place of IDL learning in primary schools; and to the particular role of school libraries.

*References:*

Chu, S. K. W., Tse, S. K., & Chow, K. (2011). Using collaborative teaching and inquiry project-based learning to help primary school students develop information literacy and information skills. *Library & Information Science Research*, 33, 132–143.

del Mar Grandío, M., Dilli, S., & O'Neill, B. (2017). Legal frameworks for media and information literacy. *Public policies in media and information literacy in Europe: Cross-country comparisons*, 116-129

Frau-Meigs, D., Velez, I., & Michel, J. F. (Eds.). (2017). *Public policies in media and information literacy in Europe: cross-country comparisons*. Taylor & Francis.

Martínez-Piñeiro, E., Gewerc, A., & Rodríguez-Groba, A. (2019). Nivel de competencia digital del alumnado de educación primaria en Galicia. La influencia sociofamiliar. *Revista de Educación a Distancia*, 19(61).

PISA. Programme for International Student Assessment (2018). PISA 2018 results. <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/pisa-2018-results.htm>.

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BRIDGE

# VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

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BRIDGE

# What is the BRIDGE Project?

<https://bridgeinfoliteracy.eu/>

PUENTE, KÖPRÜ, PONTE, SILTA, ΓΕΦΥΡΑ - GÉFYRA, BRIDGE



**Information and digital literacy  
at school.**

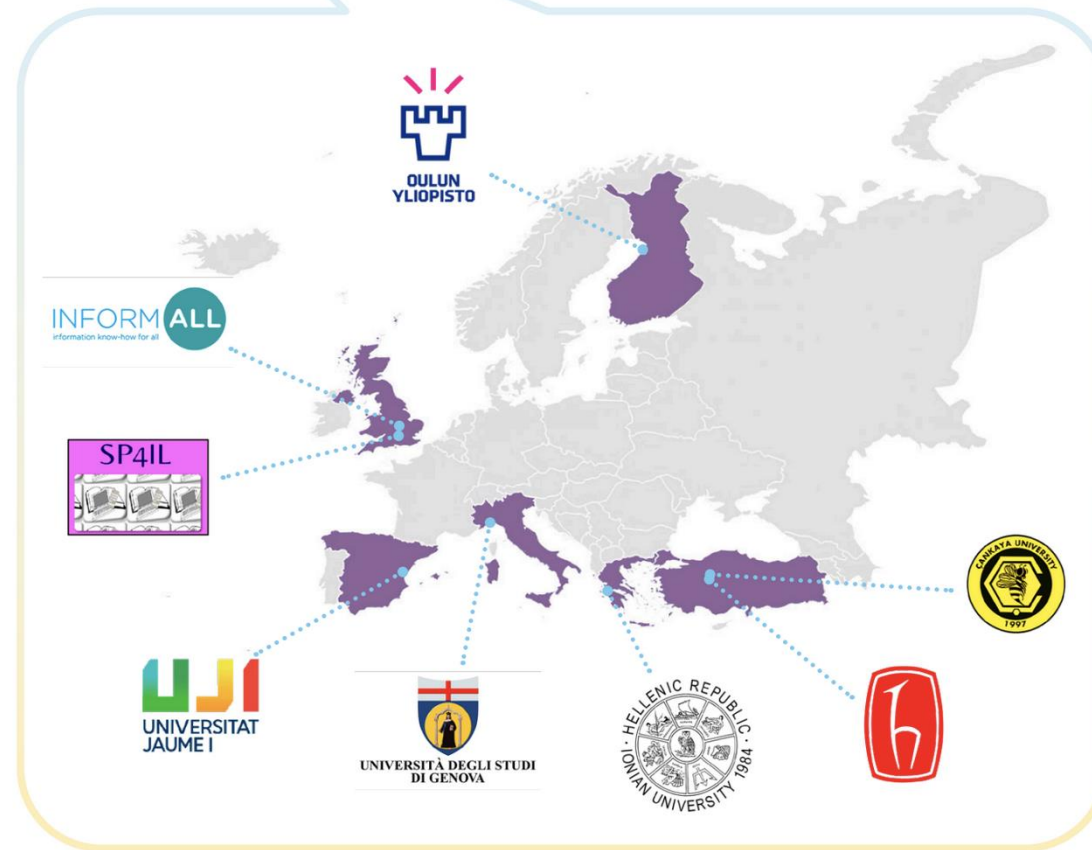
A bridge to support critical thinking and equality values for primary education using children's literature and transmedia.

*Funded by the European Union's  
Erasmus+ Programme.*



# Who are the partners?

8 entities from 6 countries



# Project aims and objectives

- ❑ To provide a practical resource for teachers, librarians, school leaders and others involved in the teaching of 8-11 year olds.
- ❑ To encourage curiosity and critical thinking in approaches to learning, particularly with regards to equality values.
- ❑ Four main outputs of the project:
  - A report on the national context in each of the six participating countries
  - A survey of information and digital literacy practices
  - A free, interactive portal of resources for use in the classroom
  - Online training material for educators

# 1. Report

For each of the six countries, the report describes:

- ❑ An overview of relevant policies, guidance and initiatives.
- ❑ A description of the relevant parts of the school curriculum.
- ❑ How school libraries support (or not) information and digital literacy in primary schools.
- ❑ Lessons learnt from COVID-19.

This is complemented by a SWOT analysis and proposals for future strategies to support information and digital literacy learning.

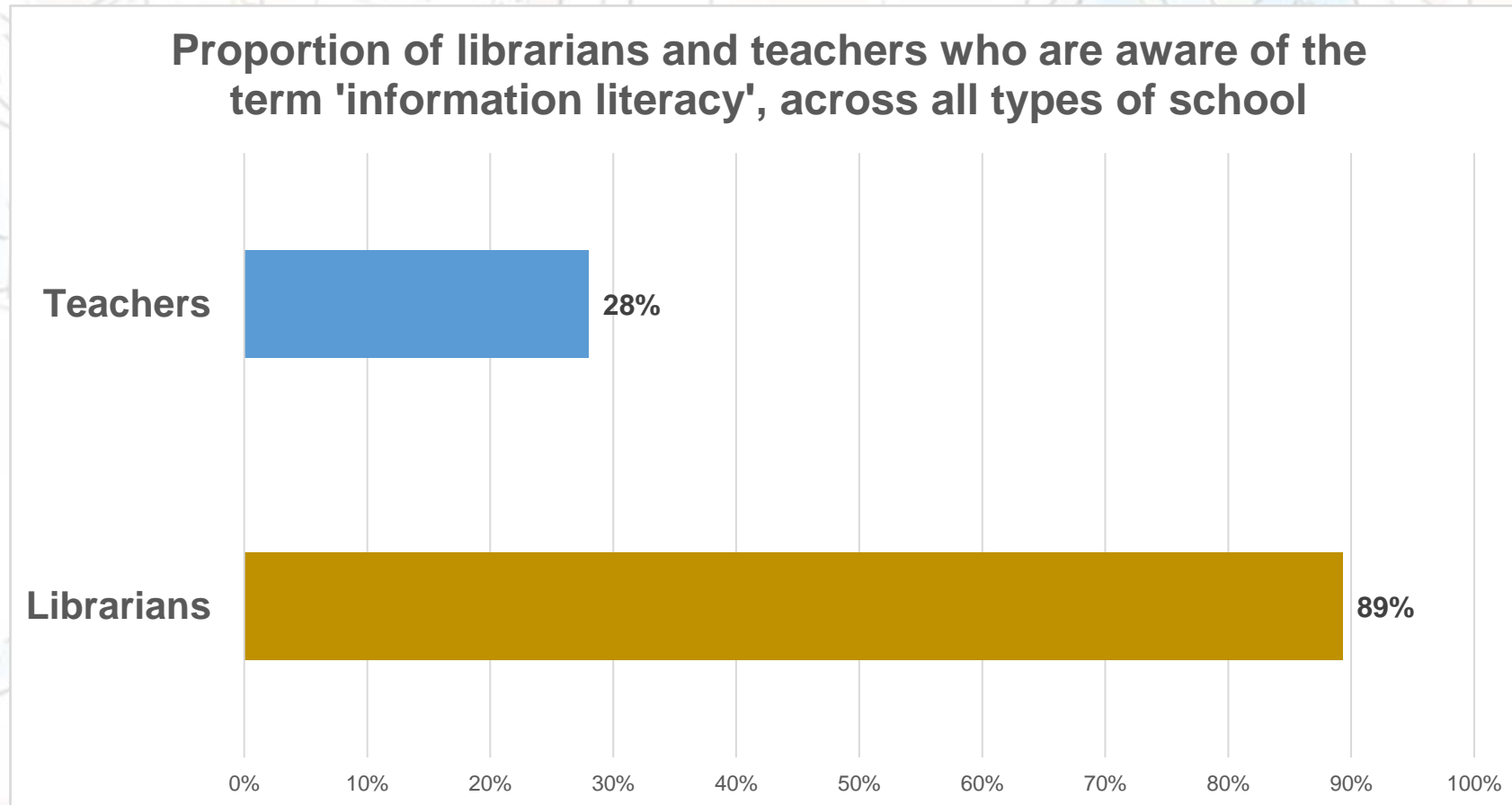


## 2. Survey

The UK arm of the survey covers England only. There were 60 responses, roughly 50/50 from teachers and librarians.

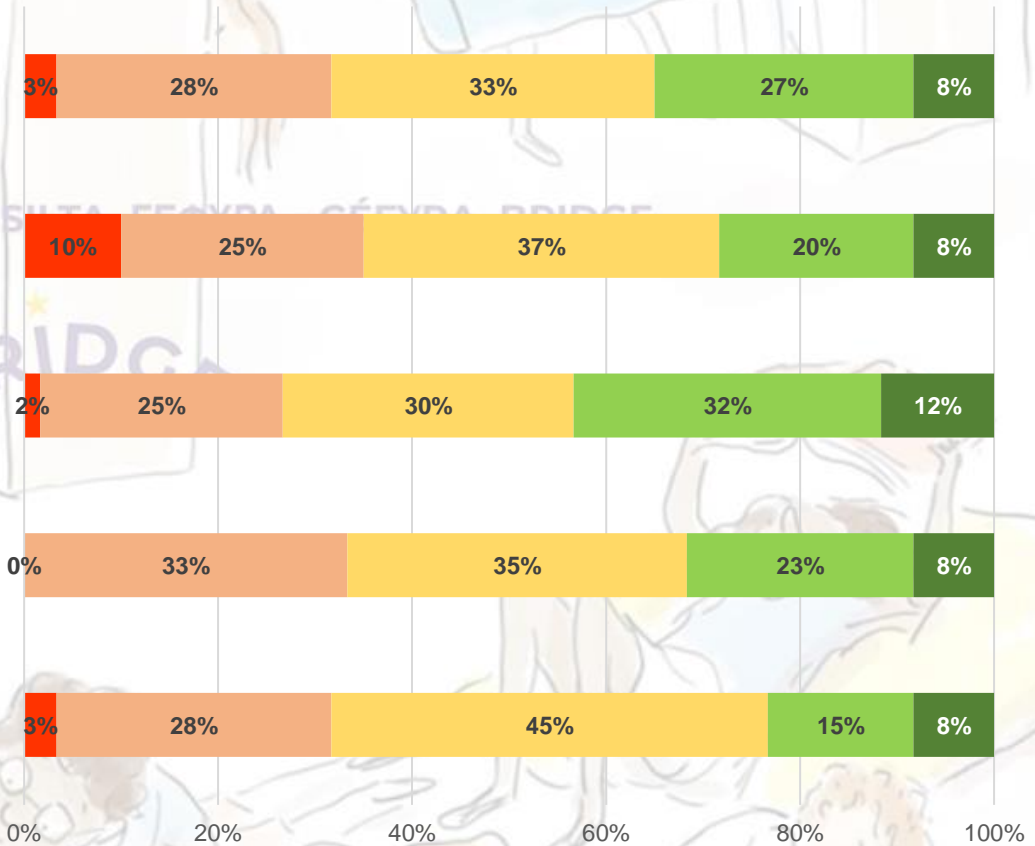
- ❑ Questions on information competencies, digital competencies, critical thinking/equalities values and the school environment.
- ❑ Quantitative (Likert scales) and qualitative (long-hand responses) questions.
- ❑ Responses shows significant variance between levels of information/digital literacy learning support provided by teachers and librarians.

*And here are a few selected charts drawn from the survey responses.*



## Critical thinking and equality values

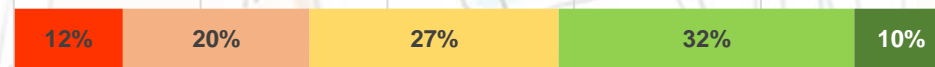
1. I support learners to be inquisitive/formulate their own questions
2. I support learners to seek information in order to support both sides in an argument
3. I support learners to use balanced information to understand diversity/inclusion/equality issues
4. I support learners to use balanced information to shape personal beliefs and worldviews
5. I support learners to understand the importance of informed decision-making/problem-solving



■ Not at all   ■ A little   ■ Moderately   ■ A lot   ■ To a great extent

## Digital competencies

1. I support learners to understand the principles and values of digital citizenship



2. I support learners to understand netiquette when sharing/communicating/collaborating...



3. I support learners to understand online safety



4. I support learners to understand online security



5. I support learners to develop digital creativity



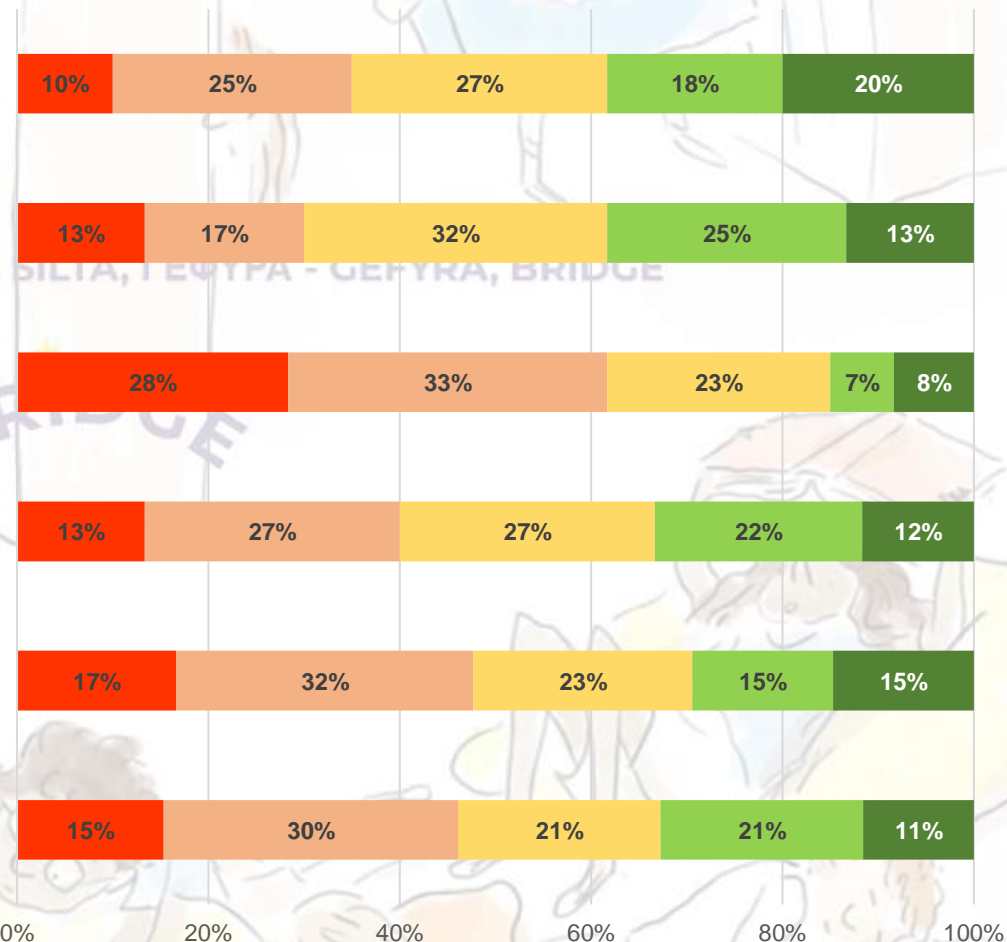
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Not at all ■ A little ■ Moderately ■ A lot ■ To a great extent



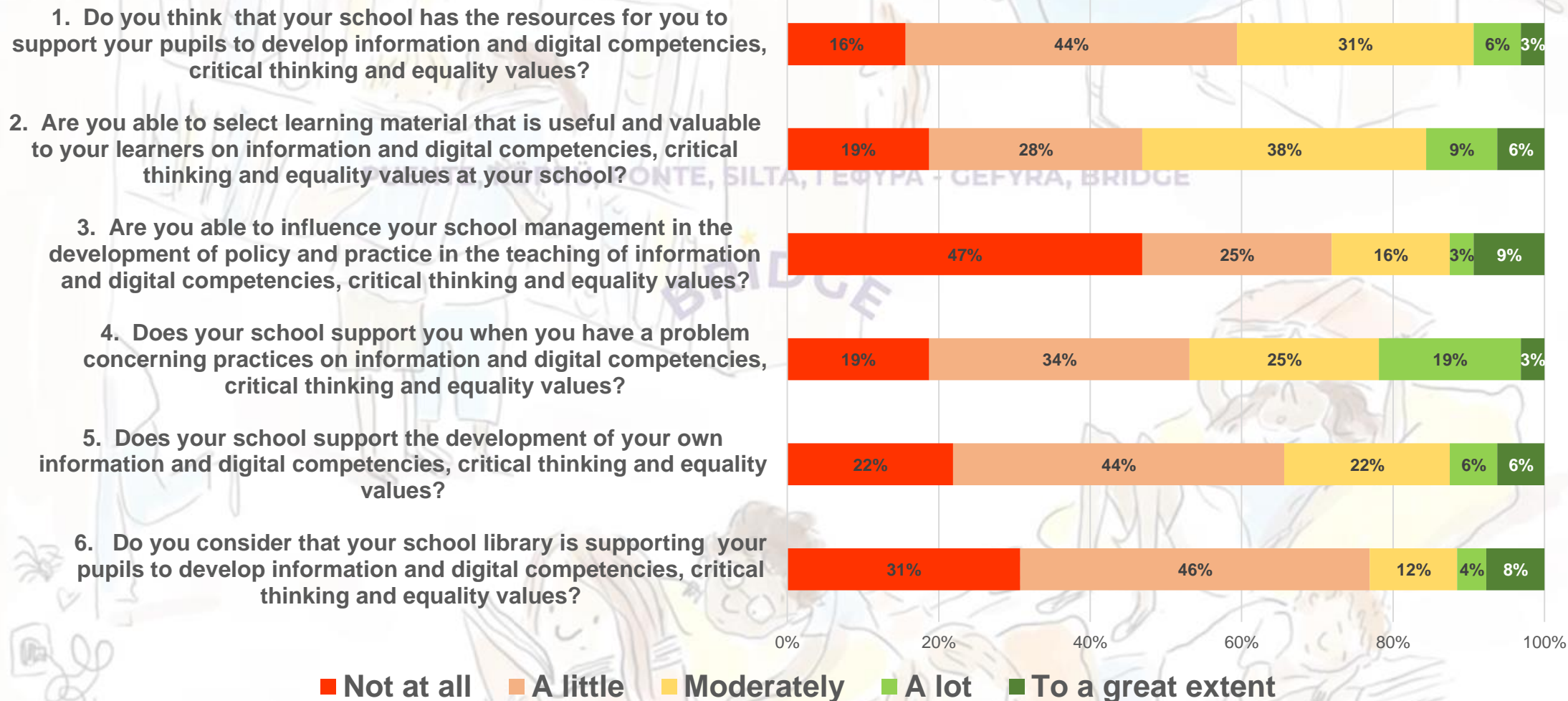
## School environment

1. Do you think that your school has the resources for you to support your pupils to develop information and digital competencies, critical thinking and equality values?
2. Are you able to select learning material that is useful and valuable to your learners on information and digital competencies, critical thinking and equality values at your school?
3. Are you able to influence your school management in the development of policy and practice in the teaching of information and digital competencies, critical thinking and equality values?
4. Does your school support you when you have a problem concerning practices on information and digital competencies, critical thinking and equality values?
5. Does your school support the development of your own information and digital competencies, critical thinking and equality values?
6. Do you consider that your school library is supporting your pupils to develop information and digital competencies, critical thinking and equality values?



■ Not at all 
 ■ A little 
 ■ Moderately 
 ■ A lot 
 ■ To a great extent

## School environment - state schools



### 3. Results by country: legislation

- **SPAIN:** Information literacy is mentioned in relation to digital competence (key competence in the official curriculum) and is also mentioned as a specific competence throughout the curriculum together with media literacy.
- **GREECE:** The national digital strategy addresses digital literacy, and it is aimed towards the development of a digital learning culture, where digital competences development takes place throughout formal education, while information literacy skills are embedded within digital literacy.
- **UK (ENGLAND):** Media and information literacy have recently started to feature in the national policy agenda in England, largely to counter online harms. The Online Safety Bill, which becomes law later this year, has a section on media literacy. However, information literacy is still not widely recognised specifically in education policy. There are many media literacy initiatives for young people, but more focus is needed on schools to develop these skills systematically.
- **FINLAND:** The Basic Education Act includes broad objectives such as supporting growth into humanity and ethically responsible membership of society, providing knowledge and skills needed in life & promoting equality and equity
- **TÜRKİYE:** The curriculum incorporates Information Literacy (IL) content with the goal of equipping individuals with the ability to develop problem-solving strategies for practical use in their daily lives. This includes the capacity to search for, gather, comprehend, critique, interpret, organize, and manage information through appropriate methods.
- **ITALY:** Lack of systematic research on digital literacy and information literacy, and a lack of real indications for the development of information and digital skills of teachers and pupils. Main emphasis on digital competences as the acquisition of technologies.



### 3. Results by country: school curriculum

- **SPAIN:** Generally focuses on the use of technologies from an instrumental perspective and less on critical thinking, but some regional regulations do explicitly connect information literacy (also digital and media) with the promotion of critical thinking and equality.
- **GREECE:** The new legislation for school curricula 2023 explicitly mentions individual information and digital skills, including those for finding, analysing, critically evaluating and presenting information, peer collaboration and problem-solving skills in several subjects (e.g. history, visual art, literature etc.) but not information literacy explicitly as a compound concept. Digital literacy is explicitly mentioned in a recently reviewed course for ICT which, under certain circumstances, may present a supportive direction for digital literacy.
- **UK (ENGLAND):** The National Curriculum in England prioritises core competencies over critical thinking skills. Information literacy is not systematically taught. School libraries lack resources and professional staff. Equality, diversity and inclusion policies exist but application depends on teachers. Relationships education covers respect and safety but not broader digital literacy.
- **FINLAND:** National core curriculum includes transversal competencies including T1 Thinking and learning to learn, T2: Cultural competence, interaction, and expression, T3 Multiliteracy, T5 ICT competence, T7: Participation and influence, building the sustainable future
- **TÜRKİYE:** The Turkish curriculum, as of 2018, has been structured to align with the Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF). Within this framework, qualifications related to Information Literacy, Information and Communication Technologies Literacy, Human Rights and Democratic Sensitivity Competencies, Basic Life Competencies, and more are incorporated.
- **ITALY:** Progressive acquisition of skills in the use of specific ICT tools to enable pupils to develop their own ideas, to find, interpret and exchange information, and to organise, process, store and reuse it. ICT can foster the development of critical and evaluative skills.



### 3. Results by country: challenges & opportunities

- **SPAIN:** School libraries are compulsory by law but lack stability and resources (both financial and human). The situation has worsened dramatically with the pandemic, when the physical space of the library was closed or its use was modified.
- **GREECE:** The pandemic increased the preparedness but also matured the responsiveness of the primary education system in Greece, highlighting the importance of school libraries, digital resources, information and digital literacy and the need for a more flexible and adaptable educational ecosystem. However, school libraries are underfinanced and understaffed. Empowering and strengthening school libraries and appropriately trained educators is a challenge.
- **UK (ENGLAND):** School libraries are not statutory in England. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted primary education in England, with school closures and distance learning. This has exacerbated inequalities and led to some learning loss, especially in maths. School libraries have been impacted through reduced staffing and access. The emphasis is now on core competencies rather than broader skills.
- **FINLAND:** School libraries non-existent or small, but schools collaborate with public libraries which is supported by the Library Act; highly educated and independent but overburdened teachers.
- **TÜRKİYE:** According to the 2021 statistics, the total number of school libraries in Türkiye was 32.690 (see Table 2). Which means about 75% (three-fourth) of the schools, today, have a library. However this does not mean that these are fully equipped effective libraries.
- **ITALY:** National Digital School Plan states school libraries should be “capable of assuming (...) the function of documentation and information literacy centres. However, not all schools have adapted to the ministerial guidelines and, often, have not even participated in the funding calls.

## 3. Results by country: suggested strategies

- **SPAIN:** To promote Integrated Documentary Projects (a way of working on information and digital literacy in a transversal and multidisciplinary way), and to encourage Reading Routes (as a sort of Integrated Documentary Project based on the use of children's literature to approach critical thinking). There is an urgent need to strengthen school libraries and provide ongoing teacher training.
- **GREECE:** Information and digital literacy values should be further embedded into the new primary school curricula and educators should further upgrade their information and digital literacy competences through appropriate training. Every school should have a full-time trained school librarian, a fully functional library providing access to various conventional and digital resources, sufficient infrastructure to support increased participation of children in information and digital literacy activities, and a reading culture as a sustainable practice.
- **UK (ENGLAND):** Strategies will need to focus on teacher training, policy advocacy, digital platforms, community engagement, and impact measurement to promote critical thinking, equality values, and digital literacy. Key objectives are developing resources, ensuring access, fostering partnerships, engaging stakeholders, and continuously evaluating policies and training to enhance student outcomes.
- **FINLAND:** Strengthening the collaboration between schools & public libraries in promoting critical information literacy; including this already in librarian & teacher training
- **TÜRKİYE:** In order to enhance information literacy across the country, Türkiye will need to focus on developing a national information literacy policy, fostering collaboration among different sectors, and working towards improving the conditions of school libraries.
- **ITALY:** Selecting good practices and designing the future of education, promoting teacher training and creating teacher and school networks on digital and information literacy, selecting and promoting quality digital products and practices.



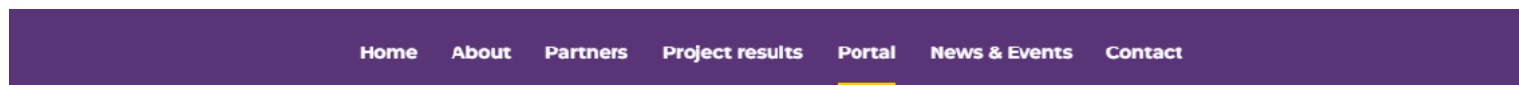
## 4. Interactive portal

Free interactive, multilingual portal available for at least 10 years on the BRIDGE website. Fully searchable and illustrated database with describing two sorts of resource:

- ❑ A collection of open access educational guidance material and good practice information from all six participating countries.
- ❑ A selection of children's literature and transmedia resources with potential for the development of educational activities for information/media literacy and education in equality values.

***The portal is now live on the BRIDGE website here.***

(In case the link to the portal doesn't work, here are a few screengrabs)



The filtering tags for Languages, Topics, General labels and Information and digital competences apply to both types of resources. Those in the Children's literature column only refer to this type of material.


The selected resources were open access available at the moment of the portal's creation.

Type of material	Language	Topics	Children's literature	General labels	Information and digital competences
<input type="checkbox"/> Children's literature book <input type="checkbox"/> Educational resource or good practice	<input type="checkbox"/> Basque <input type="checkbox"/> Catalan <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Finnish <input type="checkbox"/> Galician <input type="checkbox"/> Greek <input type="checkbox"/> Italian <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Turkish	<input type="checkbox"/> Anti-racism <input type="checkbox"/> Body diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Environment <input type="checkbox"/> Gender equality <input type="checkbox"/> Generic approach to social justice <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ+ <input type="checkbox"/> Migrations <input type="checkbox"/> Social class <input type="checkbox"/> Violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Activities <input type="checkbox"/> Book Trailer <input type="checkbox"/> Silent book	<input type="checkbox"/> Good practice <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional publication <input type="checkbox"/> On KidLit <input type="checkbox"/> Open access <input type="checkbox"/> Resource <input type="checkbox"/> Self-published	<input type="checkbox"/> Communicating information <input type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Information assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Information management <input type="checkbox"/> Information search <input type="checkbox"/> Online behaviour

Search




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Band Runner

EN




Be Internet Legends

EN


ChatGPT Suggestions / Prompts for Educators

EN EL




Critical Digital Literacy in Education: Teacher-to-Teacher Handbook (2021)

EN | TR



Cyber Security Challenges UK

EN



Data Detox X Youth (2021)

EN TR



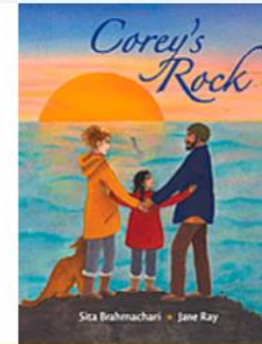
Beetles for Breakfast... And Other Weird and Wonderful Ways to Save the Planet (2021)

EN



Come un albero (2016)

EN | IT



Corey's Rock (2023)

EN



Good News: Why the World is not as Bad as You Think (2021)



Ihme ilmat! Miksi ilmasto muuttuu (2019)



In the Forest (1975)

EN EL

## 5. Online training

We ran an online training workshop on 16 January, which is also available as a recorded presentation.

The resource is based on a specially-produced booklet which offers ideas for teachers, librarians and other educators working with 8-11 year olds, to support their critical information literacy and digital literacy by using picture books as a starting point.

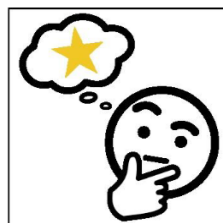
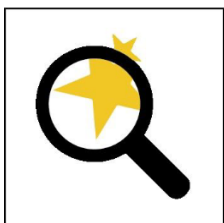
*The presentation and the booklet are available on the BRIDGE website at <https://bridgeinfoliteracy.eu/training/>*



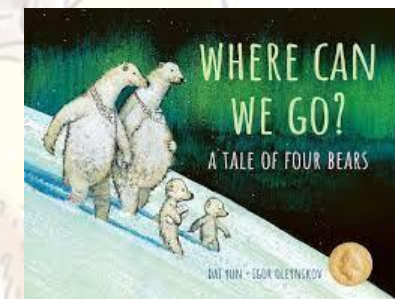
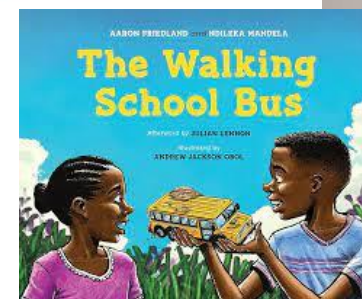
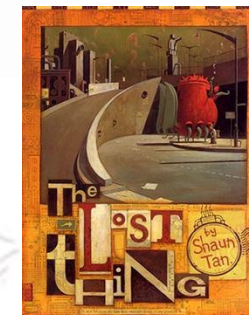
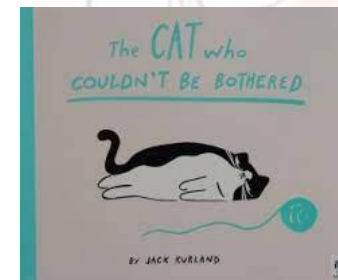
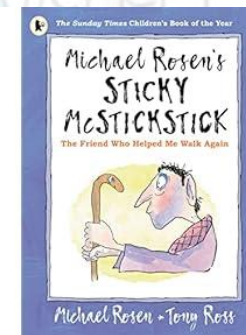
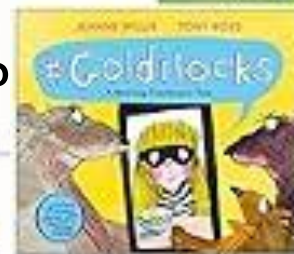
# Pick a Book

Choose a book from the selection  
One picture at a time you might ask...

- What do you think happens in this picture?
- Who and what is in the picture?
- What place could look like this?
- What do you think the colours tell?
- What about postures and facial expressions?
- What would you do in a certain character's situation?
- What would you do in this situation?



tips for managing-the-da-





# Any questions?



## Contact details

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***Thank you for listening.***

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your contacts and anyone else  
you know who might be  
interested***

***REMEMBER This is a FREE  
resource!***