AI LITERATE

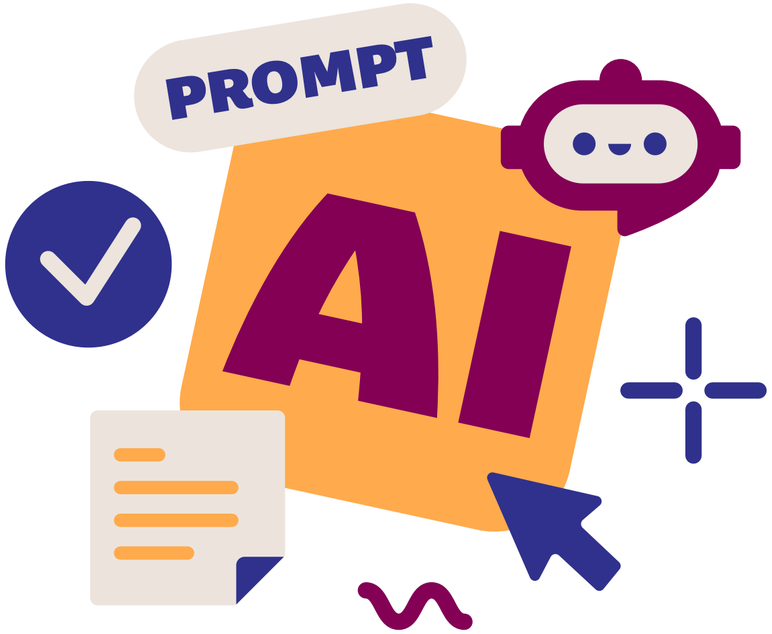
Mapping AI Literacy, Agency and Disinformation Resilience in Higher Education:

Futures of Media and Information Literacy in an AI-driven Europe

From Policy to Practice: Advancing GenAI Literacy in Higher Education
May 20th, 2026

AI-Literate

- Strengthens AI literacy in higher education across Italy, Portugal, Croatia, Poland, and Belgium by promoting **ethical AI use**, bias detection, and academic integrity.
- Investigates how **Generative AI contributes to disinformation** through empirical research, case studies, and participatory activities, while identifying strategies to counter AI-generated misinformation.
- Supports higher education institutions in **integrating GenAI responsibly into teaching and learning** by improving digital literacy, critical assessment of AI-generated content, and evidence-based educational practices.



WP2 OBJECTIVE:

- ***Conceptual and methodological framework*** *of Work Package 2 (WP2) within the European Erasmus+ project AI-LITERATE – UPSKILLING HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI AND DISINFORMATION, in two phases: 1. Literature Review and 2. Macro-meso-micro analysis.*
  - *To investigate the* ***state of GenAI integration in higher education institutions (HEIs)***
    - *To investigate how HEIs across Portugal, Italy, Croatia, Poland, and Belgium (a multinational, ongoing study) are integrating AI into their educational policies and practices.*
- *Explore how universities are* ***redefining academic integrity, ethical responsibility, and critical literacy in the context of AI adoption and implementation****. It further asks how higher education can cultivate resilience to misinformation and artificially generated disinformation—issues that are increasingly central to democratic knowledge production.*

Literature Review

- Higher education institutions should be understood not only as sites of AI adoption, but as **epistemological ecosystems** responsible for producing, legitimising, and governing knowledge in digitally mediated contexts.
- **AI should be understood as a socio-technical system** shaped by human decisions, economic interests, and political dynamics, rather than as an autonomous intelligence capable of “thinking” or “understanding.”
- **AI literacy requires deconstructing techno-deterministic narratives** around artificial intelligence by recognising that its outputs derive from pattern recognition, probabilities, and human choices embedded within these systems.

Two dimensions of disinformation

- First, disinformation related to communication practices within HEI ecosystems, particularly through social media platforms, is shaped by cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional factors.

- Second, disinformation is a feature of AI-generated knowledge, which challenges traditional academic safeguards such as sourcing, verification, and peer review.

This dual framing broadens disinformation from a media issue to a core educational and epistemological concern.

COUNTRY ANALYSIS

The rapid proliferation of artificial intelligence within the higher education landscape has precipitated a complex regulatory and pedagogical crisis, requiring a multi-tiered response that spans international, national, institutional, and classroom levels. This report provides an exhaustive analysis of AI-related policies and practices, utilising the WP2 coding matrix to evaluate six critical dimensions: Agency, Ethics, AI Literacy, Disinformation, Risk and Equity. Each dimension is examined through a multilevel governance framework encompassing Macro, Meso, and Micro levels of implementation. Through this lens, the following analysis dissects the current state of AI in higher education, drawing upon primary regulatory texts, institutional strategic plans and guidelines, and pedagogical frameworks.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

- At the **macro level**, the analysis focuses on national policy frameworks, examining how principles such as human-centred AI, transparency, accountability, and equity are articulated as normative guidelines for education systems. While we frame both EU- and national-level documents as macro-level, the former refers to the supranational macro-level and the latter to the national macro-level.
- At the **meso level**, the study investigates how higher education institutions interpret and operationalise these frameworks through internal policies, strategic documents, and curricular guidelines, highlighting processes of translation, negotiation, and, in some cases, dilution of global principles.
- At the **micro level**, the analysis addresses teaching and learning practices, focusing on how AI is integrated into pedagogy, assessment, and syllabi. Particular attention is given to how (and if) AI literacy learning outcomes are defined, and how agency, responsibility, and accountability are distributed between human actors and AI systems.

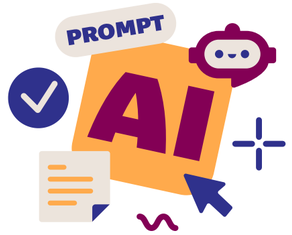
METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

- Agency: Focuses on preserving human autonomy, judgment, and responsibility by ensuring AI systems support rather than replace human decision-making in education.
- Ethics: Examines the ethical principles and dilemmas involved in AI use, including transparency, accountability, fairness, authorship, and non-discrimination.
- AI Literacy: Refers to the knowledge and skills needed to understand, critically evaluate, and responsibly use AI systems in academic contexts.
- Disinformation: Addresses the risks of AI-generated misinformation, hallucinations, and epistemic harm, while promoting critical assessment of AI-produced content.
- Risk: Encompasses concerns about privacy, security, bias, copyright, and potential harms or uncertainties associated with AI adoption.
- Equity: Focuses on ensuring fairness, inclusion, and accessibility in AI deployment, preventing the reinforcement of social and digital inequalities.

Synthesis: Comparative Analysis of National HE Governance

Country	Governance Model	Dimensions Profile	Key Structural Feature
Italy	Meso-driven governance under macro HE absence.	Strongest: Ethics, Risk Weakest: Disinfo, Equity	High institutional variability.
Portugal	Integrity-driven governance.	Agency, Ethics, Technical Literacy Weakest: Disinfo, Equity	Strong compliance, weak curricular integration.
Poland	Regulation-strong, pedagogy-advanced.	Agency, Ethics, Risk, Literacy Weakest: Equity	Strong micro-level innovation.
Croatia	Bottom-up resilience model.	Agency, Ethics, Literacy Weakest: Equity, Disinfo	Meso & micro compensate for macro gaps.

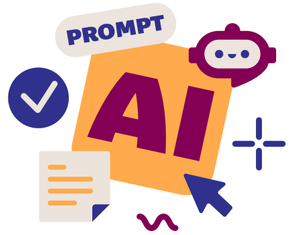
Key Findings



- Across all four countries, agency, ethics, and risk are the most consistently developed dimensions, reflecting strong alignment with EU frameworks on trustworthy and human-centred AI.
- AI literacy is increasingly integrated into higher education, but it remains unevenly conceptualised: some systems prioritise technical and operational skills, while others emphasise critical, ethical, and governance-oriented competences.
- Disinformation and equity are the weakest dimensions across macro, meso, and micro levels, showing limited integration into institutional governance and curricula despite the growing epistemic and social risks associated with generative AI.

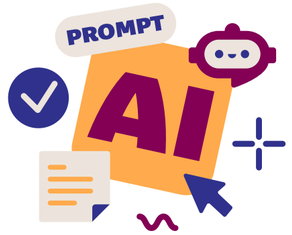
Conclusion

- The integration of AI in higher education is not only a technological issue but a multi-level governance challenge requiring stronger alignment between policy, institutional governance, and pedagogical practice.
- While European and national frameworks provide strong foundations for ethics, accountability, and risk management, higher education institutions remain the key actors translating these principles into operational and educational practices.
- Future AI governance in higher education should move beyond compliance-driven approaches and strengthen interdisciplinary AI literacy, epistemic resilience, and inclusive practices capable of addressing disinformation and social inequalities.



Limitations

- The study is exploratory and based on uneven datasets across countries, due to differences in document availability, institutional transparency, and national policy development.
- The analysis relied partly on AI-assisted qualitative coding, which may introduce risks such as hallucinations or interpretative inconsistencies, despite the use of expert-in-the-loop validation.
- Micro-level analysis was limited by the nature of syllabi and institutional documents, which do not always reflect actual classroom practices or the full dynamics of AI use in teaching and learning.



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