

**International ELINET Symposium 2018**  
**“Literacy in the 21st Century: Participation – Inclusion – Equity”.**

July 23-24, 2018, Cologne, Germany



**Key Note II: Janice Richardson**

Tuesday, July 24, at 09.00–10.00

**Location:** Lecture Hall Building / 1<sup>st</sup> Floor / Room C

LITERACY CHANGES LIVES.

**Literacy, citizenship and digital technology - policy, perspectives and practices in Europe and beyond**

**Time:** Tuesday, July 24, at 09.00–10.00

**Location:** Lecture Hall Building / 1<sup>st</sup> Floor / Room C

**Speaker:**

**Janice Richardson**

International Advisor, literacy, rights & democracy  
Luxembourg

**Respondents:** **Fabio Nascimbeni**, Universidad Internacional de la Rioja (UNIR) and **Jeroen Clemens**, Windesheim University for Applied Sciences, Netherlands

**Abstract:**

Literacy is generally defined as the “*ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated within varying contexts*”<sup>1</sup>. However, digital technology has, over the past two decades, considerably enlarged the scope of literacy, broadening the range of competences to include social, emotional, media, cultural and more. A wider range of competences have become necessary to critically navigate and responsibly interact across the broadly diverse online tools and platforms used daily by most Europeans<sup>2</sup>. Literacy is an evolving concept, and an essential entry point for individuals to develop their full potential, achieve their goals, and participate fully in their community and wider society<sup>3</sup>. Because it brings knowledge and awareness, literacy is also a determinant of health and physical wellbeing, a key facilitator of innovation and is intricately linked to personal and societal economic development. It thus figures largely as a central

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO (2004). *The plurality of literacy and its implications for policies and programmes*, Unesco Ed sector Position paper 13, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Richardson J., Milovidov E., Schmalzried M. (2017). *Internet Literacy Handbook* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition), Council of Europe; at <https://edoc.coe.int/en/internet/7515-internet-literacy-handbook.html>

<sup>3</sup> Richardson J. (2003). *Advancing sustainable ties through information literacy*. In P. van Seters et al, *Globalization and Its New Divides*, Dutch University Press.

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pillar in achieving the Millennium Sustainable Development Goals defined by the United Nations in 2015. But are schools succeeding in their role to empower children by developing the multi-faceted literacy they need to become creative, active citizens in today’s information and communication-rich world? Assessment programmes indicate that progress is slow, despite the innovative development models being proposed by European and other institutions to bridge the growing social and digital divide. Democracy too, appears to be on the decline, with citizens inundated with information and often feeling defenceless against the media tide<sup>4</sup>. The presentation will look at the building blocks and guiding principles for developing 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy, able to meet the challenges and overcome the obstacles of today’s unpredictable environment, where technology sets the pace of change and knowledge increases exponentially<sup>5</sup>.

**Bio note:**

Coordinator, innovator, author on digital citizenship and 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy, **Janice Richardson** is creator of Safer Internet Day (celebrated worldwide). From 2004-2014 she coordinated the European Commission’s Insafe network, and founded the EC-funded ENABLE initiative to tackle bullying through social-emotional competence development. She is advisor to several EU-based organisations, sits on Facebook’s Safety Advisory Board and Twitter’s Trust and Security Council, is ethical advisor on robotics and machine learning, leads Council of Europe missions in MENA region and is a UNICEF expert. Recent publications include the Internet Literacy Handbook, Bullying – perspectives, practices, insights, and the Digital Citizenship handbook (coming soon), published by the Council of Europe, and GDPR – young Europeans have their say online scrap book (May 2018).

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<sup>4</sup> Schulz, W., Ainley, J., Fraillon, J., Losito, B., & Agrusti, G. (2016). *IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2016 Assessment Framework*. Cham: Springer.

<sup>5</sup> Richardson J. (2004). *Literacy, or the Art of Integration*. In Aviram A., Richardson J., *Upon What Does the Turtle Stand?*, Kluwer Academic Publishers.