



Erasmus + Training Course

Think Critically Act Logically

15-24 June, 2022
Kranevo, Bulgaria



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Erasmus+ Programme
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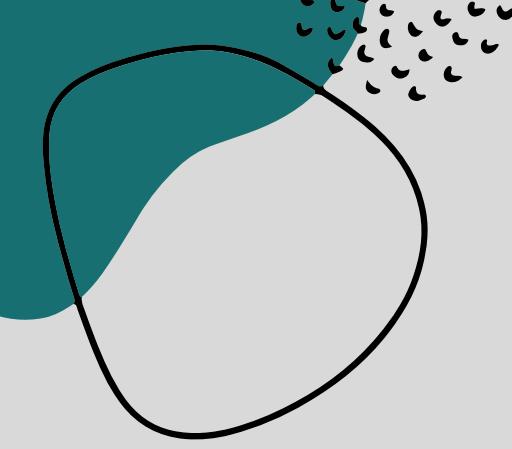
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Introduction

About the Project

This booklet has been carried out in the scope of the Training Course - ***Think Critically, Act Logically*** which is funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Commission.

The project took place in **Kranevo, Bulgaria** from the **15th to the 24th of June 2022**. It was led and hosted by the Bulgarian organization YMDRAB.

The idea of the project is to bring together 32 youth workers from 7 European countries (**Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Portugal**) and improve their critical thinking skills and promote fake news combating practices in the youth work at the local level.

The booklet provides meaningful information about **fake news** and **critical thinking**, as well as tools for combating online space. It also includes the activities that are aimed at raising awareness about those tools and fake news in general.

If you are a youth worker this booklet is a perfect choice to empower your target group and make them fake news resilience and critical thinkers.

The booklet has been created by the participants of the training course and has been designed by the team of trainers. The participants' names are provided below:

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- **Armenia** - FYCA www.fyca.net/
- **Bulgaria** - YMDRAB <http://www.ymdrab.eu/>
- **Greece** – ICON www.icongreece.gr
- **Georgia** – Umbrella www.umbrellageo.org/about
- **Portugal** – AEQUALITAS www.aequalitas.pt
- **Romania** – Agenda 21 www.agenda21.org.ro
- **Ukraine** – Development & Initiative
www.developmentngo.org.ua

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use, which may be made of the information contained therein.

What Is Fake News?

There are many types of fake news, below you can find a short description of the main 8 types.

Fake news: Is an inaccurate, sometimes sensationalistic report that is created to gain attention, mislead, deceive or damage a reputation;

Hoax: Falsehood deliberately fabricated to masquerade as truth;

Mis-information: False information disseminated without harmful intent;

Dis-information: Created and shared by people with harmful intent;

Clickbait: These are stories that are deliberately fabricated to gain more website visitors and increase advertising revenue for websites. It uses sensationalist headlines to grab attention and drive click-throughs to the publisher's website, normally at the expense of truth or accuracy;

Propaganda: Stories that are created to deliberately mislead audiences, and promote a biased point of view or particular political cause or agenda;

Sloppy Journalism: A story with unreliable information or without checking all of the facts which can mislead audiences;

Biased/Slanted News: News or stories that confirm their own beliefs and fake news can prey on these. Social media news feeds tend to display news and articles that they think we will like based on our personalized searches.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a kind of thinking in which you question, analyse, interpret, evaluate and make a judgement about what you read, hear, say, or write.

The term critical comes from the Greek word Kritikos meaning “able to judge or discern”.

Think critically means asking questions about the information you are receiving before trusting them.



What is the Source? – Credibility



Who is telling you? What is his/her background



Why is telling you? What is the motive and aim? Why now?



Where?

Where are the Situation and Circumstances?



Whom

To whom is addressed the information?



When?

When you have been told and why exactly at that time?

When we see news, we have to know how to interpret the information to verify its veracity, for this it is important to read/listen carefully to the information given, after that question/perceive why the event or person is news, what is the level of importance given to the information in the information; how the fact is presented and what emotion it intends to convey.

People tend to warp and shape information to their own narratives (at times even by accident) or specific agendas. This may be done through various practices, from disinformation to the utilization of biased news.

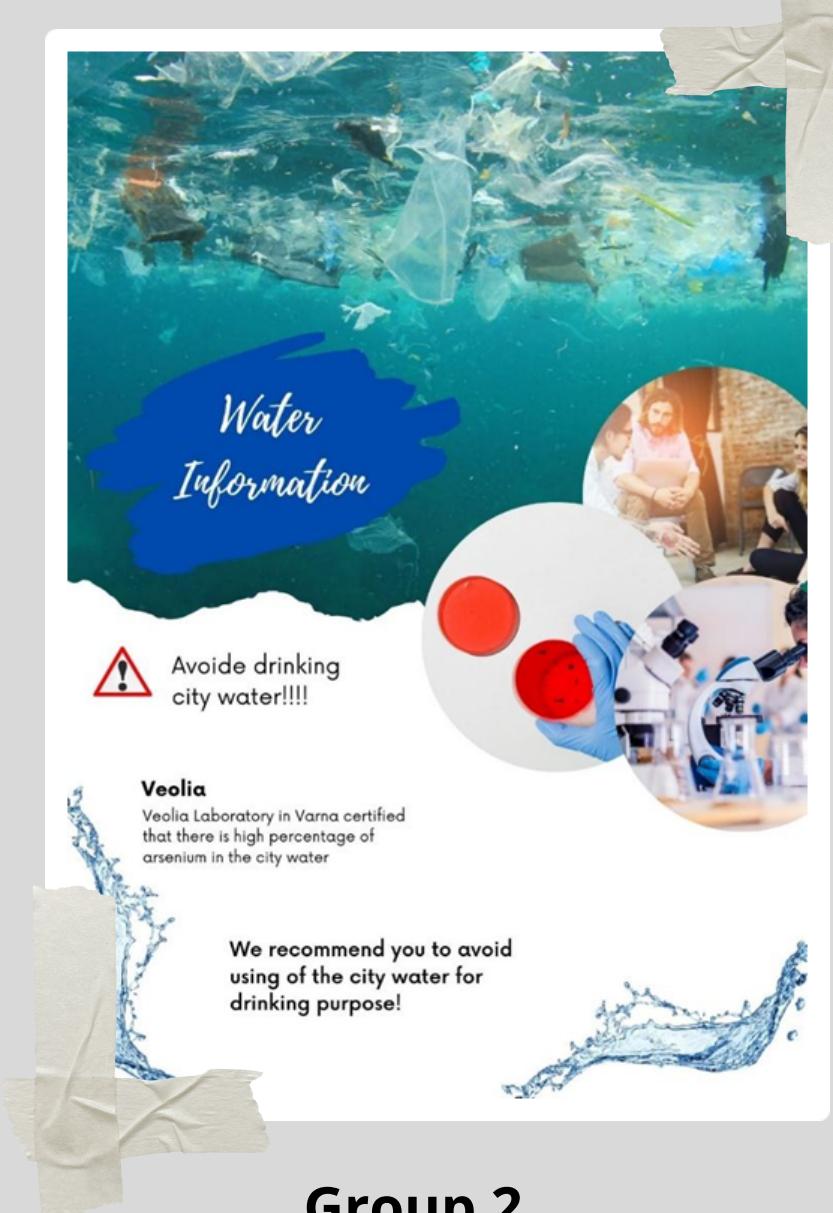
Offline Experiment

During the training, course participants experienced real cases of spreading rumours and fake news among young people via offline experiments. It allows teams to quickly iterate through different solutions for a given problem. **Our offline experiment took part in the second biggest city in Bulgaria: Varna.**

The task that had been given to us was to create fake news and spread it among the young people. We have been divided into 4 teams, each team had bad and good groups. **The bad guys group had to present and convince the people around the city about their fake news, after a couple of minutes the good guys came and told them that they took part in a social experiment and the news they believed was fake and provided to the information about fake checking.** We did this to teach people that before believing any kind of information they should verify them.

Topics: There were 4 experiment groups, each group prepared materials (posters, flyers etc) for approaching in a more legit manner and was divided into two sub-groups the first sub-group was meant to spread the fake news and the second one was meant to approach the misled people with educational goals: to raise their awareness about the importance of checking the fake news, and they tried to inspire them to always be sceptical first and ask the relevant question before believing any kind of news they come across in their daily lives.

Group 1

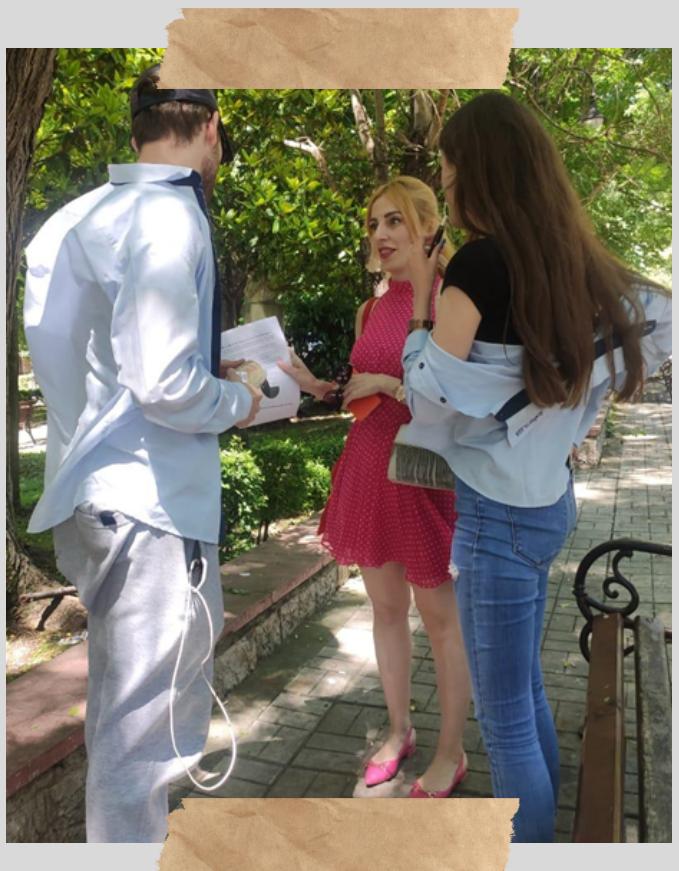


The topic of the 1st group was City water. They told people that they were activists from foreign countries and that they came to Varna to raise awareness about some issues that are presented in the city. Especially, they highlighted that tap water is polluted and people should buy the drinking water from the markets.

Group 2

The 2nd group concentrated on a medical topic. They told their target group that the Pfizer vaccine makes people more vulnerable to Monkeypox.

The aim of the topic (fake news) was to motivate people to do a new type of vaccine rather than Pfizer.



MonkeyPox

МАЙМУНСКА ШАРКА

Шарка по маймуните (на френски: variole du singe, на английски: Monkeypox) е екзотично вирусно инфекциозно заболяване, зооноза причинявано от Monkeypox virus.

Болестта е идентифицирана за първи път през 1959 г. в зоопарка на Копенхаген сред маймуни. Това е причината тя да бъде наречена и с това име, макар че при естествени условия боледуват предимно някои африкански видове гризачи. Първите случаи на шарка по маймуните при хора са наблюдавани през 1970 г. През 2003 г. възниква и отгнице в САЩ.



17 cases in Varna



Group 3

The 3rd group decided to spread the fake about Monkeypox cases in Varna who we're increasing day by day.

Their ultimate goal was to make people believe that they need to buy and wear masks.



Group 4

The topic of the 4th group was related to Gay Pride. They were trying to collect signatures for preventing local authorities from establishing the Gay Pride in Varna in the next year.

Results

- 1ST TOPIC – CITY WATER
- 2ND TOPIC – PFIZER IS ONE OF THE REASONS TO CATCH MONKEYPOX
- 3RD TOPIC – MONKEY POX – MASK
- 4TH TOPIC – LGBT PARADE

The results were very different for the groups because of the topic they had and the tools that they used.

In the **city water group**, the results were very clear. The 2 couples that we approached believed our story and they conclude that they will buy water bottles. They didn't check any facts and were very surprised when we tell them it's fake news.

On the **second topic**, the people that were approached didn't believe the story. They explained to us that they don't care about this subject, especially about Pfizer. People didn't want to hear about this subject anymore because the vaccination campaign was too much for them. They didn't check anything and they didn't want to hear about it.

For the **third group**, they approached 2 students. They believed the story and told the group that they were going to use masks. When "good guys" tried to explain to them that it was an experiment they didn't believe it. They didn't check the information.

The **last group** also approached 2 groups (a family and some high-school youngsters). They believed the story without checking any facts and they signed the petition without any doubt.

Online Experiment

During online experiments, all participants were divided into two groups which were also split into two teams: «bad guys» and «good guys». "Bad guys" must create three news: one should be fake and two should be true.

Within an hour "bad guys" created news while "good guys" were having a rest. The first group of "bad guys" choose 3 popular news: they were going to popular websites like *The Guardian, BBC, and The Times* and selected one of them to make it fake. For this, they changed some parts of the information in the article. They took a screenshot from the video in order to mislead "good guys".



DAILY NEWS > CULTURE

Village museum next to Romania's Bran Castle could be closed and replaced with Dracula Land

A photograph showing a cluster of traditional wooden houses with thatched roofs, likely part of a village museum. The houses are surrounded by green grass and trees under a clear sky.

1. Talking about real news, they changed the headlines, and paraphrase them in order not to find them on Google. Also, they cut and mirrored images from the news in order not to find them and mislead people.
2. Another group of "bad guys" even decided to create a story which doesn't excite. But they provide a fake link to the story in order to mislead "good guys". For true news they decided to choose some pieces of news related to Romania as the whole group of country's representatives were in this team.

3. After an hour, the "good guys" started to check all the information that was prepared by the "bad guys". So, firstly they checked the official sources which were mentioned in the articles.

4. They used Google search, International facts checking the network and for images, they used TinEye and Google image search, Yandex images. For videos, they used Youtube data Viewer and InVid. They used the 5W method to check the provided information. As there was a piece of information in the Romanian language they also used Google translate to understand what they have.

They also paid attention to the dates that they provided us and we saw that there was some old published news. By using that's methods and tools all good guys found out 2 fake news.

In a conclusion, all participants had a discussion and shared their ideas, and opinions about the experiments and all of them mentioned that the experiment was very useful and interesting, practical, and funny too. They understand how to manage and check real and fake news.

You can consult all the documents used in this experience by clicking [**HERE**](#).



A screenshot of a news article from the website zdg.md. The headline reads: 'După Morgenshtern, și interpretul rus Egor Kreed anunță că nu va cânta la concertul Valico, apropiat de-al lui Platon. Mesajul transmis de artist' (After Morgenshtern, the Russian singer Egor Kreed announces that he will not sing at the Valico concert, close to Platon. The message from the artist). The page includes navigation links like 'ABONEAZĂ-TE', 'Trimite o info', and categories such as 'Știri', 'Investigații', 'Video', 'Reporter Special', 'Blog', and 'Consiliu'.

Tools for Combating Fake News

To find and debunk the fakes in the online field you need to use certain online tools (extensions, websites etc) to trace text, images or videos. Let's find out them one by one.

IMAGE Tools

1. TinEye Reverse Image Search

TinEye allows the user to track an image by pasting its URL address or uploading the image to the engine. One useful function for developers is that this tool can alert them when their image has been used without authorization. Unlike other regular image search tools, it utilizes various aspects of image recognition and computer vision. It can also serve as a verification and authorization tool. <https://tineye.com/>



2. RevEye Reverse Image Search

RevEye is a useful Chrome extension that combines the functionalities of all the tools described below.
<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/reveye-reverse-image-sear/keaacljhehbbapnphnmpiklalfhelgf?hl=en>



3. Google Image Search

Google Image Search is a reverse search engine that offers access to images from millions of websites. Even if it fails to lead the user to the original source, this tool can navigate them to web pages with the same or similar matches. The only disadvantage of GIS is that the user does not have the option to paste an image's URL address or upload an image when using a mobile browser. <https://images.google.com/>

4. Bing Visual Search

This tool can reverse search an image from anywhere in the Internet and from uploaded images. In addition, Bing image search has the capability of recognizing text in these images.
<https://www.bing.com/visualsearch>



5. Yandex

Yandex is a search engine and a web portal. In addition, to reverse searching images from a URL address, this tool can recognize uploaded images as well as videos. It also offers additional services such as maps, navigator, public transport, taxi, weather, news and more.
<https://yandex.com/images/>



VIDEO Tools

YouTube Dataviewer

You can easily identify and check videos by using “YouTube DataViewer”. This online free website, which is created by Amnesty International, is a web-based video verification tool provided by the Citizen Evidence Lab.

This website helps you find the exact information of a video like:

- a small description of the content;
- when it was published (Actual Date and Time);
- who published it (Name of Author);

This very useful verification video tool which you can find at <https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/> has a very friendly interface and is extremely easy to use.

1. First of all, Enter the Youtube URL that you are interested in and press "Go":
2. After that, the information of the video will automatically appear on the screen:

The screenshot shows two side-by-side browser windows. The left window displays the Amnesty International YouTube DataViewer interface with a yellow header containing the organization's logo. The right window shows the results of a search for a video titled 'Erasmus+'. The results page includes the video thumbnail, title, and a brief description: 'Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, sport and young people.' Below this, detailed video metadata is listed: Video ID: EL4mPrWbKxM, Upload Date (YYYY/MM/DD): 2021-09-03, and Upload Time (UTC): 08:01:06 (with a link to convert to local time).

And you are ready to go. You can use how many times you like it just press "Clear" and try again.

InVid

InVid is a tool offered by the InVID European project to help people verify and fact-check content on many social platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Daily Motion, Google, Baidu and Yandex. You can find information on videos; perform reverse image searches and find useful data.

You can use InVid with many different tools, friendly to the user, by:

- ✓ InVid Verification Plugin;
- ✓ InVid Verification Application;
- ✓ InVid Analytics Dashboard;
- ✓ InVid mobile Application;



Text Tools

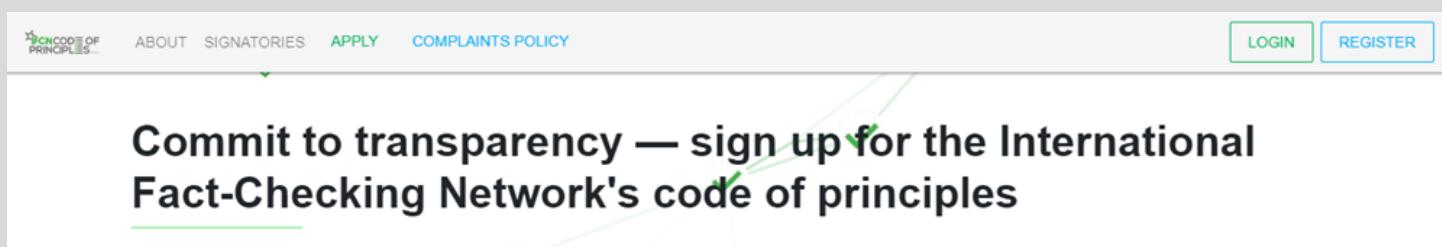
You can fact-check Texts and verify them by using a lot of websites offered for free in a worldwide network.

You can easily find if there is a verified website than can offer you trustworthy news while pointing out fake ones, in your region by using <https://www.poynter.org/ifcn/>.

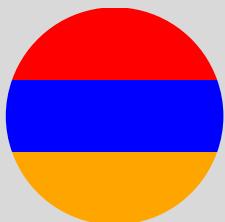


You can just visit the website, click on Code Of Principles, And then click at Signatories.

The website will provide you with a wide network of verified signatories of the IFCN code of principles. Check it!



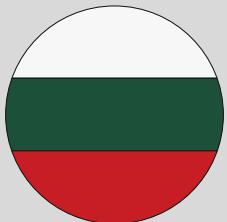
Local /Country Tools



Armenia

In Armenia "Civil Consciousness" and "Civil Solidarity" Liberal NGOs founded the AntiFake.am as an independent and impartial mass media, which objective is to inspect the facts and provide information on important issues of public significance

More information about "AntiFake" can be found on: <https://antifake.am/en>



Bulgaria

IFactcheck.bg is the only platform in Bulgaria dedicated solely to fact-checking, an initiative of the Association of European Journalists-Bulgaria (AEJ). The website focuses on helping Bulgarian journalists differentiate facts from falsehoods on social media, traditional media, public statements by officials and other information sources.

More information about "Factcheck" can be found on: <https://factcheck.bg/en/>





Georgia

"FactCheck Georgia" a Georgian website that provides you with a metric system that displays whether or not a news article is accurate.

You can find, easily and safely, information on: <https://factcheck.ge/ka?>



Greece

In Greece, "Ellinika Hoaxes", is a website that "stamps" the new sources, that distribute fake information.

The website provides you with the fake news that has been broadcasted, the sources that reproduced it and the truth behind it.





Portugal

The Polígrafo is a newspaper deeply devoted to the use of new technologies in journalistic activity. In its DNA is the creation of innovative solutions that allow us to get to the truth faster and better, and to shorten the distance between journalism and readers.

You can find more at: <https://poligrafo.sapo.pt/>



Romania

Factual.ro is a Romanian website that offers a wide variety of information and testifies if the information is reliable or not.

You can find more information at the following link: <https://www.factual.ro/>





Ukraine

"StopFake.org" is a Ukrainian website that is also a verified signatory. "StopFake" which was created by a non-profit organization Media Reforms Center provides you with trustworthy information.

More information about "Stop Fake" can be found on: <https://www.stopfake.org/>



Online Games

Did you know learning about Fake News can be fun? No? Well, it is! And what better way to learn than by playing games!

The games can introduce real-life situations in a very intriguing way. Online games can develop your critical thinking and teach you to second-guess any information that you are presented, and you won't even know you are learning. The games can show you how Fake News is created and how they work, so you will be prepared to tackle them in the real world.

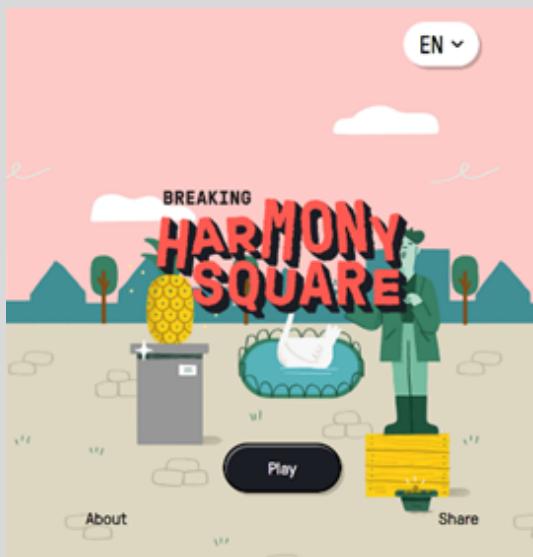
Harmony Square

Harmony Square works as a psychological game against disinformation. Scientists who worked with us on the development of this game found that playing Harmony Square improves people's ability to spot manipulation techniques in social media posts, and increases their confidence in spotting such techniques.

Goal: To understand the root of misinformation spreading by playing as a bad guy

The game is highly recommended because you, firstly, it is funny, secondly, you are a bad guy that wants to treat citizens. Don't ask. Just try it.
<https://harmonysquare.game/en>

"Harmony Square is a really funny game but also very educational. This game shows how small gossips can destroy the harmony of a small community. It makes us think how Fake News can impact how daily lives and how we get misled by them. A must play game!" - Pedro Coelho

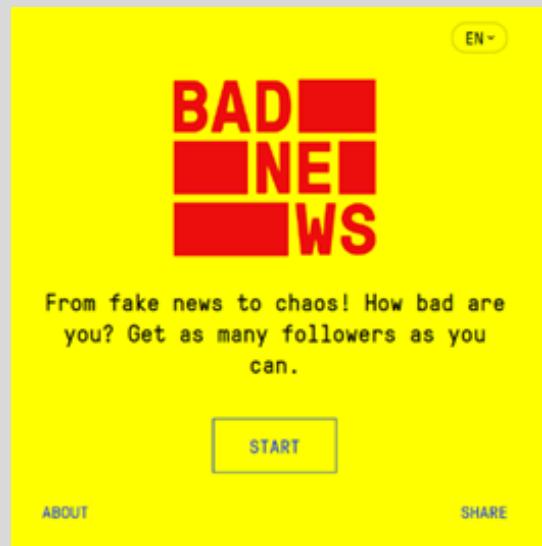


Get Bad News

In Bad News, you take on the role of fake newsmonger. playing it builds cognitive resistance against common forms of manipulation that you may encounter online.

Goal: to involve more people in the fight by spreading fake news

It is interesting to play because you have freedom of choice and a few plots that can be implemented. By the way, you can't lose. All possible outcomes are real.



<https://www.getbadnews.com/books/english/>

With Get Bad News you get the chance of creating Fake News and having a perspective of how they would impact the world and what would be the possible reactions of the people who read them. But don't think it will be easy peasy. You have to be careful with your credibility and at the same time you can't loose likes from your followers. - Pedro Coelho

Posters

How to find out that the news is FAKE?

When you come across to news
ask yourself these **5** questions:

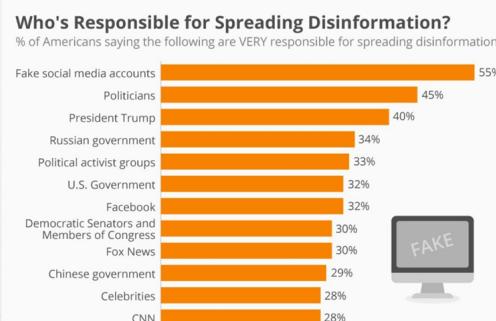


FAKE NEWS

BRAIN
DAMAGE



Do you believe in everything you read?



* Disinformation defined as "deliberately misleading or biased information".
Based on a survey of 2,200 Americans conducted in March 2019.
Source: Institute for Public Relations, Morning Consult

statista

Are you sure that you are not fooled yet?

Fact-checking is the
most important tool you
have in your hands!!!!

Ask yourself is this actually
true? Search for sources/
authors, date and related news

DON'T LET THEM FOOLISH YOU!!!

You can see and download all the posters
developed in this experience by clicking [HERE](#).

Final Conclusions

As a result of the training course, the participants improved their competencies in fake news exposure and critical thinking. As a follow-up, they implemented a fake fighters program and each of them transferred the knowledge to the youngsters, by using the activities reflected in this booklet.

Local action (experiment) shows that many young people (at least in Varna, Bulgaria) are not aware of checking the information they receive.

Thank you for reading the booklet, please spread it via your social media channels to give opportunities to as many young people as possible to improve their critical thinking and fake news combating competencies.



Благодаря!

Ευχαριστώ!

მაღლობა!

Thank You!

Obrigado!

Дякую!

Ծնորհակալ
ություն

Mulțumiri!