Combating Fake News

HANDBOOK FOR YOUTH WORKERS

Contents

Introduction

What we did? - The handbook has been carried out in the scope of the training course, KA1 Youth Mobility - Fake News vs Youth Work funded by Erasmus + program of the European Commission. The project took place in Zebrzydowice, Poland on 20-27 October 2019 and was implemented by Foundation European Institute Outsourcing - FEIO.

Why we did? - The goal of the project was to explore the power and role of youth work in addressing the fake news issue and analyzing the role and impact of mass media messages in creating a stereotypical image of particularly vulnerable social groups, e.g. migrants and various social minorities.

The project **objectives** are as follows:
• To equip youth workers with creative tools, activities and methodologies exploring media literacy, digital competences and the promotion of intercultural and diversity competences and understanding.
• To share the experience of addressing the fake news at the national level among participants
• To develop participants skills to analyze and evaluate the power and impact of media images and messages.
• To carry out and disseminate handbook for youth workers for combating fake news
• To explore further possibilities of projects and cooperations on this topic within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme.

The aim of the handbook is to serve as a tool for the youth workers to filter the news that they or their peers consume every day.

How we did? - The handbook is giving answers to what is Fake news how to fight against them. It provides relevant and effective tools for combating fake news in both the offline and online spaces. Also, the outdoor and online experiments with subsequent results and statistics are enclosed in the handbook to give more insight for the youth workers on how the problem is relevant and vivid in our days among youth based on polish example and how should we tackle the issue within the resources we have.

Who did it? – The handbook has been created by the participants of the training course and has been designed by the team of trainers.

Names and country origins are provided below:

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Umbrella – Georgia
Federation of Youth Clubs of Armenia (FYCA) – Armenia
Bulgarian Youth Forum (BYF) – Bulgaria
Association for Cultural and Educational Development YOUTH ON BOARD – North Macedonia
Association Avante – Portugal
Civic organization "Development and Initiative" – Ukraine
Be Visible Be YOU - Greece

Fundacja Europejski Instytut Outsourcingu

Funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

History of Fake News

Fake have been features of human communication since at least the Roman times when Antony met Cleopatra. In 44 BC Octavian waged a propaganda campaign against Antony that was designed to smear his reputation. This took the form of "short, sharp slogans written upon coins in the style of archaic Tweets." These slogans painted Antony as a womanizer and a drunk, implying he had become Cleopatra's puppet, having been corrupted by his affair with her. Octavian became Augustus, the first Roman Emperor and "fake news had allowed Octavian to hack the republican system once and for all."

Another historical fact stated that in the mid-1700s, during the height of the Jacobite rebellion in Great Britain, seditious printers printed fake news, even going so far as to report that King George II was ill, in an attempt to destabilize the establishment. Such fake news was picked up by more reputable printers and republished, making it difficult to tell fact from fiction.

In 1835, The Great Moon Hoax the New York Sun published six articles about the discovery of (non-existent) life on the moon, claiming to recount the findings of astronomer Sir John Herschel.

As we see fake news were very common in every century throughout the history. However, the first documented uses of the term occurred in the 1890s according to Merriam Webster.

Fake news has been used as a propaganda by the conflicted countries during the both world war times and it continues until today as a part of information war.

To get more information the about the history of the fake news follow this link to watch the video:
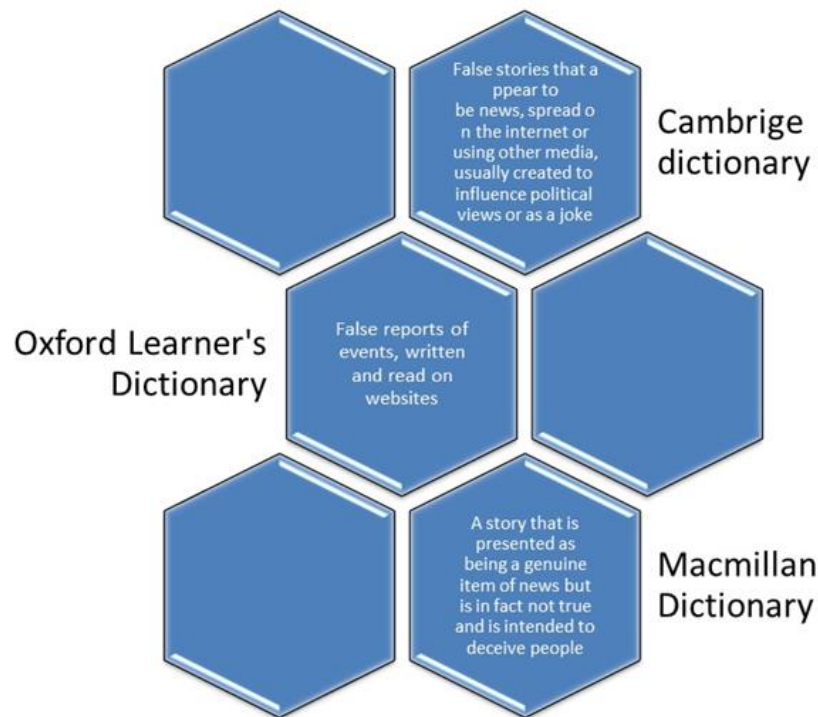https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCNkgj-FlE8&fbclid=IwAR090pyZDgQ5Lw692iCOPogN0nOXbNIn2RKfEYy10n_U7ihYtkHYwrxkZZA

WHAT IS THE

FAKE NEWS ?

There are various definitions and types has been defined by the different authors in our chapter we will bring the most relevant and known ones. [1]

False stories that appear to be news, spread on the internet or using other media, usually created to influence political views or as a joke — Cambrige dictionary

Oxford Learner's Dictionary — False reports of events, written and read on websites

A story that is presented as being a genuine item of news but is in fact not true and is intended to deceive people — Macmillan Dictionary

1. Fake news (also known as junk news, pseudo-news, or hoax news) is a type of yellow journalism or propaganda that consists of deliberate disinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional news media (print and broadcast) or online social media.
2. Fake news is a neologism often used to refer to fabricated news. This type of news, found in traditional news, social media or fake news websites, has no basis in fact, but is presented as being factually accurate.
3. Fake news is made-up stuff, masterfully manipulated to look like credible journalistic reports that are easily spread online to large audiences willing to believe the fictions and spread the word.

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[1] Cambridge Dictionary https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fake-news
Oxford Learner's Dictionary https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/fake-news
Macmillan Dictionary https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/fake-news?fbclid=IwAR0xRNNzRqtCuHkf7Sqk72HUws7cgRP4gasaAp9DlLEmag1bb-v6_bswNg

There are seven main types of fake news that is commonly used today identified by Claire Wardle of First Draft News:

Claire Wardle also, speaks of "information pollution" and distinguishes between three types of problems: 'mis-information', 'dis-information', and 'mal-information':
- Mis-information: false information disseminated without harmful intent.
- Dis-information: created and shared by people with harmful intent.
- Mal-information: the sharing of "genuine" information with the intent to cause harm.

Other forms/types of Fake News

1. **Clickbait** - These are stories that are deliberately fabricated to gain more website visitors and increase advertising revenue for websites. Clickbait stories use sensationalist headlines to grab attention and drive click-throughs to the publisher website, normally at the expense of truth or accuracy.
2. **Propaganda** - Stories that are created to deliberately mislead audiences, promote a biased point of view or particular political cause or agenda.
3. **Sloppy Journalism -** Sometimes reporters or journalists may publish a story with unreliable information or without checking all of the facts which can mislead audiences
4. **Biased/Slanted News** - Many people are drawn to news or stories that confirm their own beliefs or biases and fake news can prey on these biases. Social media news feeds tend to display news and articles that they think we will like based on our personalized searches.

Find out more in the following VIDEO https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX8-BOc7Z0c&fbclid=IwAR0xRNNzRqtCuHkf7Sqk72HUws7cgRP4gasaAp9DlLEmag1bb-v6__bswNg

PURPOSES OF FAKE NEWS

But what is the purpose of spreading the fake news? Why people spend time and efforts to make it?

There are various purposes of spreading fake news; below we provide the most relevant and important ones.

POLITICAL	ECONOMIC
To win elections To start a movement (campaign) To get the power to rule To use people for personal gain To create a better image as a candidate To manipulate the public opinion To control the level of public consciousness To spread propaganda To start off the conflict	To eliminate the competitors To use promotions to lie To increase selling To start financial crisis To get more money
SOCIAL	**ENTERTAINMENT**
To affect people's beliefs To distract people from what's important To ease the tension and avoid panic To mislead people	To use movies, music, etc. to distort information and hide the facts To discredit people by making fun of them

Content of fake news

What is exactly fake news made of? What is the content?

Fake news is consists of various content, depending on the type of news and weather it is online or offline. We provided the most common contents for both for online and offline fake news.

Title, headline - is the text indicating the nature of the article below it.

Articles - is a piece of writing that is included with others in a newspaper, magazine or other publication

Newspaper is a periodical publication containing written information about current events and is often typed in black ink with a white or gray background.

Picture IS a design or representation made by various means (such as painting, drawing, or photography)

Voice massage is a message containing audio of a person's voice.

Link (short for hyperlink) is an HTML object that allows you to jump to a new location when you click or tap it.

Text - is a book or other written or printed work, regarded in terms of its content rather than its physical form

Bias opinion (rumor) - is a currently circulating story or report of uncertain or doubtful truth.

Social media - are interactive computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks

Magazine - is a periodical publication containing articles and illustrations, often on a particular subject or aimed at a particular readership (yellow media)

Movie or video – video is used from various video platforms to make fake info more realistic

Date is a date used to make a fake new looks credible

Statistic is any quantity computed from values in a sample, often the mean.
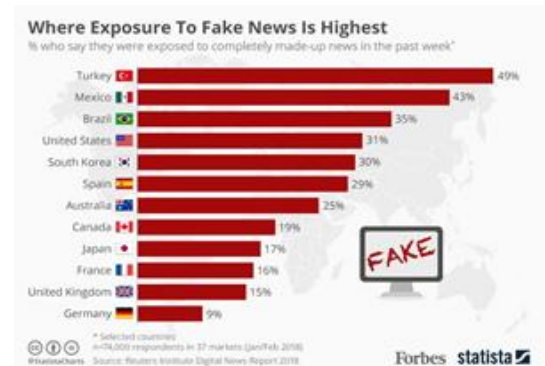
Catchy – emotions, wow news, relevant (hype) – is one of the fake news content that is used to attract audience (traffic) to a new.

Maps – it is common in nowadays online media to fake topography, geolocation or google maps, buildings or any other objects that are reflected on the google or other maps
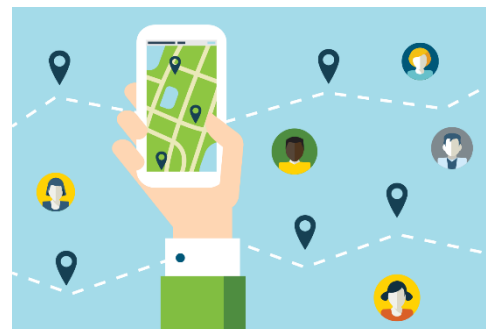
Verification tools for the fake news identification

There many verification tools has been created for the last decades, on top of that each country has made its own one based on the peculiarities and realities of its state. Below we provided the tools that are chiefly popular on international level and can be easily used by any youth worker or young people in general.

Verification Resources

Geolocation
Google Earth Pro for Desktop - https://www.google.com/earth/
Wikimapia - www.wikimapia.org
Google Maps - www.maps.google.com
Profile Analysis
Stalkscan - www.stalkscan.com
Graph Tips - www.graph.tips
Webmii - www.webmii.com
Pipl - www.pipl.com
Verification of Websites/Archive Materials
Scamadviser - www.scamadviser.com
Whois Lookup - http://whois.domaintools.com/
Wayback Machine - https://archive.org/web/
Archive - http://archive.is/
Verification of Photos
Google Images - www.images.google.com
Tineye - www.tineye.com
Yandex Photos - yandex.com/images
Baidu - https://www.baidu.com/
Jeffrey's Image Metadata Viewer - http://exif.regex.info/exif.cgi

Exif Data Viewer - www.exifdata.com
Verification of Videos
Youtube Data Viewer - https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/
InVID Verification Plugin - https://www.invid-project.eu/tools-and-services/invid-verification-plugin/
Other Resources
Weather: Wolfram Alpha - https://www.wolframalpha.com/
Calculating Sun position: SunCalc - www.suncalc.org
Flight Tracking - https://uk.flightaware.com/
Marine Traffic - www.marinetraffic.com
Tools, Tests, Bingo Game and etc - https://www.stopfake.org/en/category/tools/

Experiments

GROUP 1. Experiment 1: Offline Fake News experiment in Cieszyn, Poland

In the pre-experiment preparation period we made a draft of the project, we decided age group (Youth), location for research, we did a work division, and crated a fake story about the water pollution level in Cieszyn. Afterwards, we made the brochures, which contained more specific information about the fake story.

Our group was divided in two, and during the experiment, the first one approached the citizens and informed them about "Water Pollution", trying to be as reliable and as credible as we can be, and gave them the brochures.

After being sure that they get acquainted with the provided fake news information the second group approached them with the questions:

"Did you heard about the water pollution?"

"Do you believe that the water is really polluted?"

"Why did you believe it?"

"Have you checked it"?

"How often do you check the information you read?"

<div align="center">

Outcomes of the experiment

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How many people checked it? **- None**

How many people intended to check it afterwards? **- 5 group out of 8.**

How many people believed in it? **- 3 group out of 8.**

Findings: The experiment show that young people are more keen to believe the fake information without checking it. People pay attention to the visual part and appearance of the one who spreads the information rather than check. Another finding was that the people trusted the brochures they were given.

Please watch the video of experiment - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J659QnotAWo&t=0s

GROUP 2. Quiz: Stereotypes and fake news Poles believe in

Aim: To find out what polish people thought about stereotypes of their own nation and after the poll have a discussion with the respondents.
Tool: poll (Annex 1)
Where: Cieszyn, Poland, 24 October 2019
For whom 13-30 y.o., an average age of respondents 15-18
Responds

# in a poll	true	false	Correct answer
1	82,5%	17,5%	True
2	67,5%	32,5%	True
3	25%	75%	True
4	52,5%	47,5%	False

5	40%	60%	True

Findings: According to the poll, Poles do still believe in some stereotypes about their country, precisely the stereotypes 3, 4 and 5. The major discussion were about the stereotype 5. The majority of respondents were at the age of 15-18, who compose approximately 80% of all responds. People who were over 20 years old did not want to participate in the poll. People who were over 40 years old were suspicious to the poll and did not want to talk at all.

GROUP 3. Outdoor Experiment - Survey

The survey was conducted in the University of Silesia, Cieszyn, and included 25 respondents from 3 Faculties – Arts, Pedagogy and Music.

The aim of the survey is to collect the opinions of Polish/Czech youth on the topic of the Fake News (definition, combating), to find out their awareness about it.

The questionnaire was developed during the training in Zebrzydowice on "Fake News vs Youth Work" and the actual survey was conducted in the form of surveys in the University of Silesia.

Here is the summary of the answers to the questionnaire, which can be found in Appendix 1 of the Handbook.

The age range is not very wide, it includes young students from 19 to 27.

Link to the form:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aOdCm21E9RYn4XckSio3Hd7mShDj027oImVmo9hrKE4/edit#response=ACYDBNhEuG3YydSR1nohvnltIXi5A7VrO9XcGSq1wluVRK2GpO-xqjds90QC3DXrZtU9NOM

Table 1. The age division
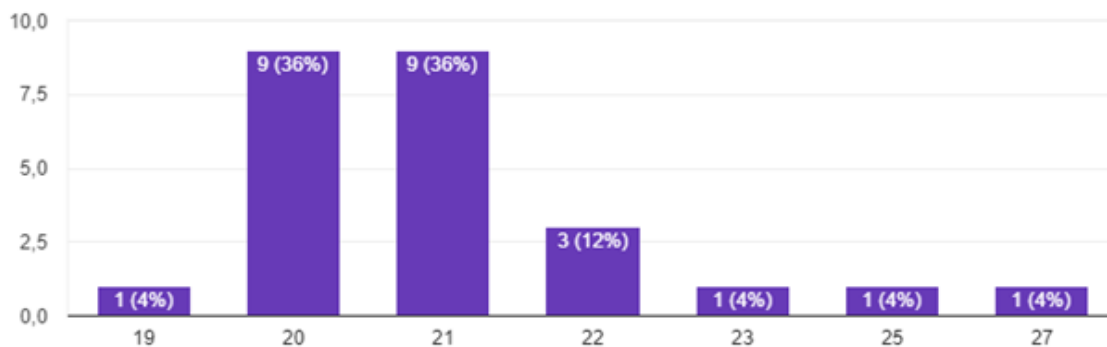
Figure 1. The gender division

Only 20% of the participants were males, so, most of the answers are done by women.

So, to the question "Have you ever heard about Fake News?" Most participants responded, that they did, while only 12% did not.
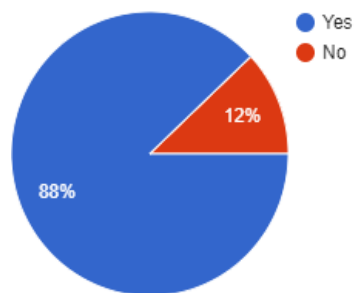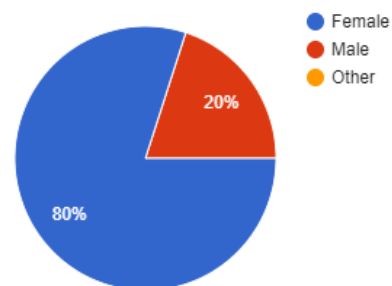
Figure 2. Awareness of respondents about fake news existing

So, to the question "Have you ever heard about Fake News?" Most participants responded, that they did, while only 12% did not.

Figure 3. The division of answers about being victims of fake news

To the question "Have you ever become a victim of Fake News?", 60% percent of respondents answered no and only 40% answered yes.
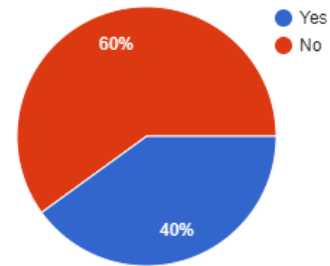
We have got a few answers to the question "What channel is the most efficient for Fake News spreading?" The most efficient channel to spread Fake News were recognized to be social media (24 responses), TV (14 responses) and web-sites (12 responses). The least efficient are radio (1 respondent) and E-mail (2 respondents) and online editions (4 respondents).

Table 2. Efficiency of channels spreading fake news
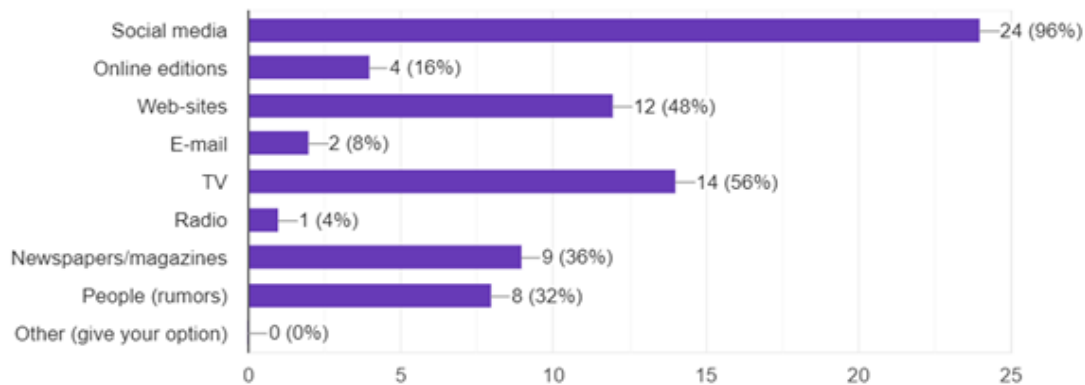
Figure 4. Taking measures by respondents to check the news they consume

To the question "Do you take any measures to check the news you consume?" most of participants (64%) gave a positive response and 36% of respondents gave a negative one.
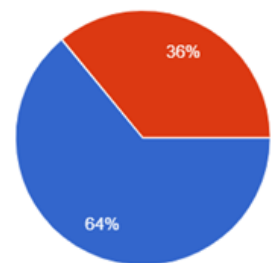
Figure 5. The awareness about existing tools to check fake news
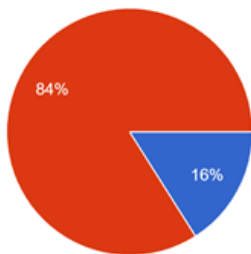
To the question "Do you know any tools to tackle Fake News?" most of respondents answered yes (84%) and 16 % answered no. That is why we can conclude that our respondents who are mostly students have a high level of awareness about the topic of fake news and they know the tools to check it.

Figure 6. If the topic of fake news is widely discussed in Poland

Our research group asked respondents a question tied to the importance of fake news topic on the national level. We got 60% of the respondents who claims that the issue of fake news is well-discussed in Poland.
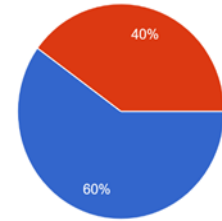
Figure 7. The importance of fighting fake news

Most people (60%) strongly agree that it is extremely important to tackle fake news and other 40% of the respondents believe it is not that important, so they simply chose the option agree.
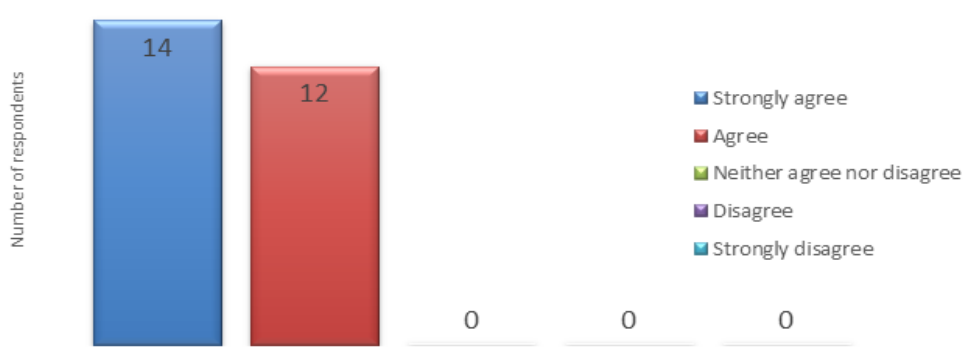
Table 3. The level of trust to the mass media after being affected by the fake news

Therefore, we can see that most of the respondents (17) were strongly affected by the fake news (they chose 4 and 5 in the ranking system). Much less people were affected but not to the great extent (8 people).

Table 4. The responsibility for identifying and tackling the fake news

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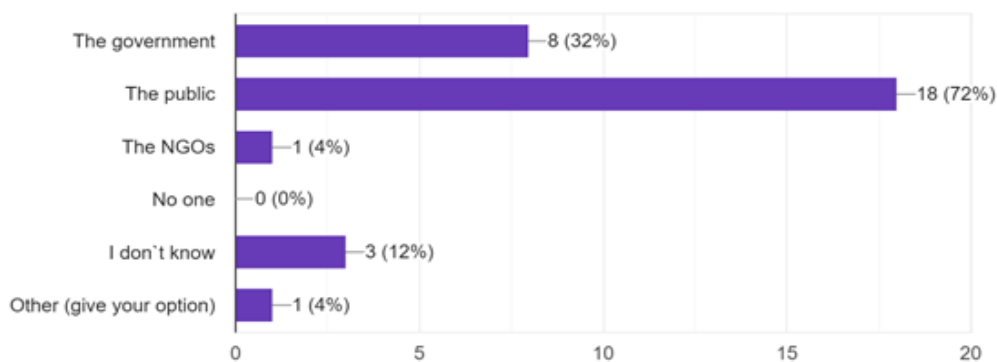
The majority of respondents (18 votes) consider the public to be the responsible one, on the second place (8 votes) stands the government. Survey participants do not believe the NGOs (1 vote only) should be responsible.

Findings: According to the findings

ONLINE EXPERIMENT

Fake news exposure

In order to make online experiment we created two Facebook pages, one for fake news with the name - **Only Todays News** and another for exposure of the fake news with the name - **Truth You Read**. The last one has a purpose to expose the fake, spread it, and measure the difference in an attention of audience on the fake news and its exposure article.

For this purpose we divide the participants into four groups each of them invented fake news and posted in on a free platform https://medium.com. As a result, we had four fake news posted on the FB page – Only Todays News and shared in various groups and platforms.

Meanwhile groups distributed among each other the fake news and by using the online verification, tools identified the fake part of the article and made another post on the same platform. Once we had the exposed fake news we posted it on the second FB page **Trout You Read** and once again spread them on the same groups and platform as the fake ones.

Below you can find the fake news that has been created by the participants and it exposure done by the groups. We will provide exposure of only one news which enough to get insight about others too.

1 "Fake news exposed "EXCLUSIVE: FB SHUT DOWN. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?" (can be found by the link https://medium.com/@robert.ahmed12345/fake-news-exposed-exclusive-fb-shut-down-who-is-responsible-ca05ef1a5e7d)"

Firstly, we checked the data of the publication and there is no news about Mark Zuckerberg's involvement in the use of personal information on the internet on the 25th of October. The only source is this article. There is no concrete proof of this.

EXCLUSIVE: FB SHUT DOWN. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

John Smith [Follow]
Oct 25 · 1 min read

On 25th of October, the owner of social media giant FaceBook Mark Zuckerberg was caught using personal information. Our source, citizen of Portugal Cosme Oliveira, provided physical proof of him being filmed in his apartment talking about political issues. Afterwards the information was used by important political figures for their personal gain in the election campaign.

It was found out that it is not the only case. Washington DC Court called Mark Zuckerberg for hearing, deciding to shut down his major project FB for 3

After we used profile verification tool (https://webmii.com/) and there was no information about the source of information. It is not clear who is Cosmo Oliveira and we did not verify the user.
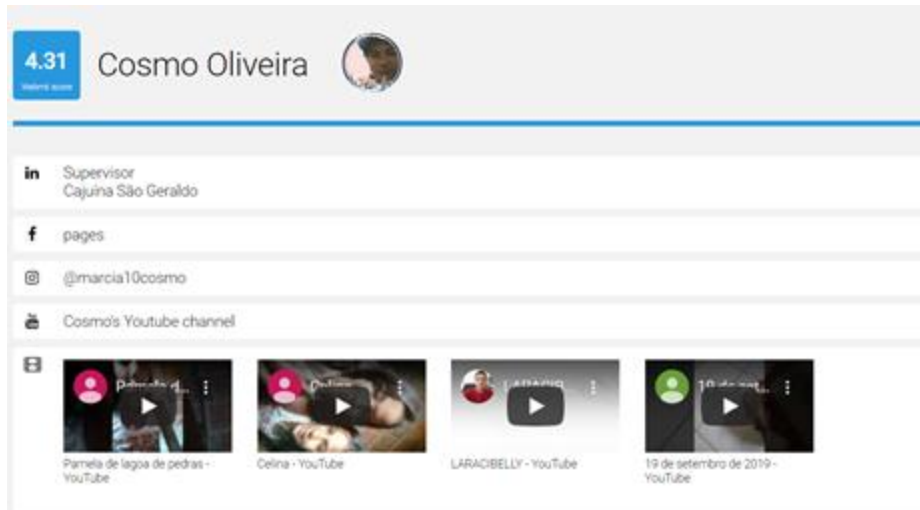
In the news was also mentioned a court hearing, so we also checked the court decision. The results of the research showed that in fact there was a court hearing (can be found by the link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ySR-GM7jNQ), but it isn't tied to the information that the article reported about Washington DC Court hearing and Mark Zuckerberg. In conclusion, there is no such court hearing or decision about Facebook being taken down for 3 months. In addition, there is no information about Facebook shut down for 3 months.

There is also a tool to check the websites and according to the Scamadviser www.scamadviser.com, the platform https://Medium.com, where the article was published, is not credible and neither is the story.

We also have checked the authenticity of the photo used in the article "EXCLUSIVE: FB SHUT DOWN. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?" we used Google Imaged verification tool. After we uploaded the image we got information about the date this photo was taken and it dates back to 11.29.2011, therefore the picture is a fake.

We also checked the domain and other information about video we used Youtube DataViewer Video. We found out that domain which looks unreliable. The video was uploaded from a personal account

ID: cGrIYBJNP9k
Upload Date (YYYY/MM/DD): 2019-10-25
Upload Time (UTC): 10:20:51 (convert to local time)

    Youtube DataViewer
https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/

To check the video we used verification plugin to help journalists verify images and videos.

VIEWS BY TRAFFIC SOURCE	8
Internal ⓘ	0%
External referrals	100%
email, IM, and direct	5
facebook.com	3

We can see that the readers read the new from the mail mostly, 5 people. Three people read the new from Facebook. In total, we have 8 views for the period 25/10- 26/10.

Date ↑	Views	Reads	Read ratio	Fans
Fake news exposed "EXCLUSIVE: FB SHUT D... 3 min read · View story · Details	8	3	38%	0

Now, we can see that from the 8 views only 3 people read the article, that is 38%.

ONLINE EXPERIMENT. FAKE NEWS ABOUT FACEBOOK SHUTTING DOWN

We have created the Fake News article about Facebook shutting down for 3 months because of illegal use of the personal information by Mark Zuckerberg, the owner.

Firstly, we choose very popular topic, important to people, so get involved and it is interesting for them to read.

Therefore, to fake it we have used a few tools:

- used fake author profile to post the news
- made up sensational and believable headline
- filmed an amateur video
- put a fake photo
- put non relevant links with information connected to the topic
- made up the dates
- made up comments of the person mentioned in the article
- designed an article in a way that made it look credible

After that, we posted it on different platforms on the Internet to see and analyze the reaction of young people to fake news. About a day after, we collected results to the analysis. We make the

Published on October 25, 2019

EXCLUSIVE: FB SHUT DOWN. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Not distributed in topics ⑦

TOTAL VIEWS   READ RATIO ⑦
44   64%

VIEWS BY TRAFFIC SOURCE	44
Internal ⑦	7%
External referrals	93%
facebook.com	34
email, IM, and direct	7

October 25, 2019
Total views: 39
Medium: 3 (8%)
External referrals: 36 (92%)

Oct 27

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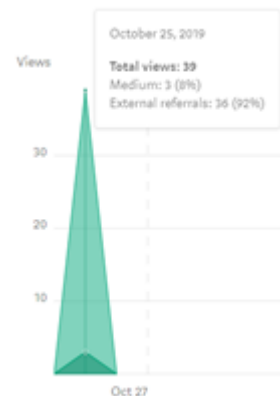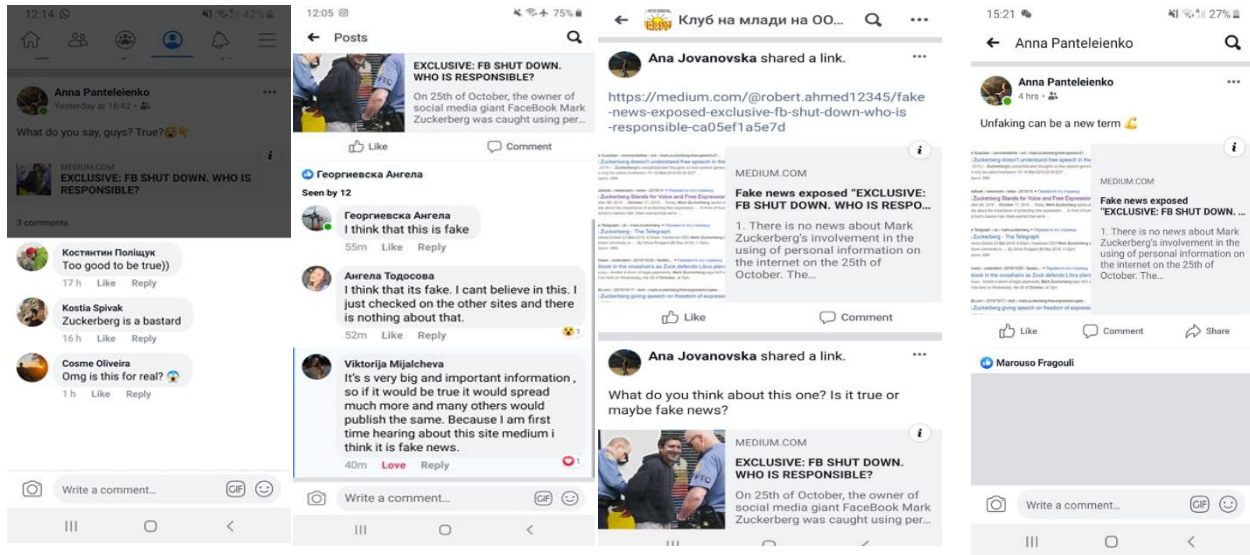
In total, we have got 44 views according to the Medium (web-site where the fake news have been posted), 3 on the Medium itself and 36 from the external referrals.

So far, it is visible that the posted fake news got some heated discussions and most of the people were claiming that the news were false, giving the proofs.

When we have posted anti fake in the same groups it didn't get any reaction. On the web site medium it was viewed by much less amount of people than actual fake news created by our team.

Therefore, the main outcome is that fake news affect the society much more than their unfaked
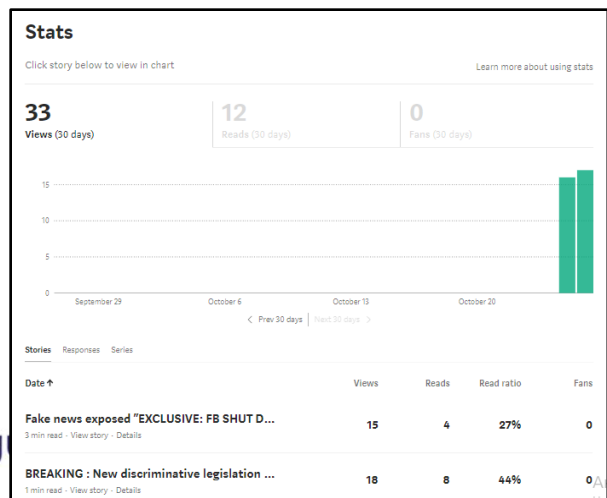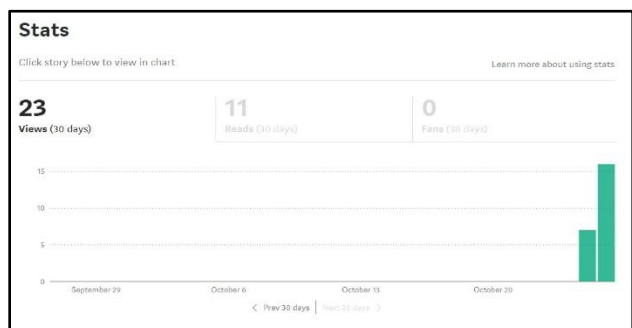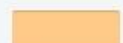
version.

Findings: Here we can compere two pages and four posts on each one, we can see that in case of faking the news it is more popular and get more reaches rather than the post that is an expose of fake news.

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach		Engagement	
10/25/2019 5:24 PM	Trump against refugees!	🔗	🌐	9	▮	3 0	▮
10/25/2019 5:23 PM	Life without Facebook?	🔗	🌐	10	▮	0 12	▬
10/25/2019 5:22 PM	Coffee is a drug!	🔗	🌐	13	▮	0 16	▬
10/25/2019 5:22 PM	Town on Mars by 2025	🔗	🌐	8	▮	1 3	▮
10/25/2019 4:59 PM	Todays News	🗗	🌐	0		0 0	

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach		Engagement	
10/26/2019 10:30 AM	This time Trump has been manipulated, fake news has been exposed!	🔗	🌐	8	▮	0 4	▬
10/26/2019 10:29 AM	We are far from settling on Mars, exposed fake news over the very same topic!	🔗	🌐	7	▮	0 3	▬
10/26/2019 10:29 AM	Facebook will survive, we exposed the fake news!	🔗	🌐	63	▬▬▬	0 10	▬▬▬
10/26/2019 10:28 AM	Coffee is not a drug! The news was fake and here is how it has been exposed.	🔗	🌐	5	▮	0 2	▬
10/26/2019 10:25 AM	Truth you read	▭	🌐	0		0 0	

Conclusion

As a result of training course Fake News vs Youth Work participants improved their competences in combating the fake news and became real fake news fighters at both online and offline spaces.

Outdoor experiments shows that young people are not keen to check the fake news and are a victim of stereotypes. Online experiment shows that people are more likely to consume fake news with catchy headlines and scandals rather just dry article with exposure of the fake news.

The Handbook is a useful tool for the youth workers to deepen their knowledge in combating fake news and get understanding on how the fake news spread around the young people and possible negative consequences of it.

ANNEX 1 / Questionnaire

Age _____

1. Poland is a religious country with over 90% citizens describing themselves as Catholics.

Polska jest krajem religijnym, w którym ponad 90% obywateli określa się jako katolicy.

TRUE/ PRAWDA   FALSE/ FAŁSZ

2. According to the latest survey 8% of Polish citizens officially admit to be able to speak foreign language.

Według najnowszego badania 8% polskich obywateli oficjalnie przyznaje się do mówienia w języku obcym.

TRUE/ PRAWDA   FALSE/ FAŁSZ

3. The negative stereotype of Muslims in Poland stems from economic insecurities

Negatywny stereotyp muzułmanów w Polsce wynika z niepewności ekonomicznej

TRUE/ PRAWDA   FALSE/ FAŁSZ

4. According to WHO Pole annually drink 12,5 liters of pure alcohol per person it is the biggest amount in EU

Według WHO Polak rocznie wypija 12,5 litra czystego alkoholu na głowę, co jest największą ilością w Europie

TRUE/ PRAWDA   FALSE/ FAŁSZ

5. 75% of Poles believe that their country needs to give refugee status to those persecuted because of believe or political activity.

75% Polaków uważa, że ich kraj musi udzielić schronienia prześladowanym z powodu przekonań lub działalności politycznej.

TRUE/ PRAWDA   FALSE/ FAŁSZ