

(UN)SAFE IN THE NET

**A manual for the development of critical thinking
in the online environment**



2022

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Activity

Media literacy, digital citizenship, safely online, critical thinking

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Introduction

In society we are continuously exposed to terms such as media literacy, critical thinking, or hate speech. With the growing popularity of living in the online space, new terms such as *deep fake*, *conspiracy*, *misinformation*, *cyberbullying*, *trolling*, or *digital citizenship* have become an inseparable part of our vocabulary concerning the online environment. It is these new circumstances that have led us to work with the issue and motivated us to create a tool that would help us coherently transfer previously mentioned topics to work with youth.

At the time of publication planning, there was not enough quality literature in Slovakia to deal with these topics. Recently, however, it seems that specialists, journalists, and publicists have focused their attention on these topics and many publications have been published that shed light on topics related to safe operation in the online environment or critical thinking. Despite the popularisation of these topics, we did not find a publication that would offer, in addition to theory, a set of attractive experiential tools and methodically processed activities, which could be used in informal and non-formal education by youth workers or teachers.

Our aim was to prepare materials and offer them as the main tools for lecturers, leaders, and educators who are interested in developing their competencies or the competencies of their trustees or participants in educational events focused on media literacy, critical thinking, safe use of the internet and digital citizenship.

We felt the need to actively address this topic in our meetings with young people and in the workshops focused on education and training for tolerance, which we have organized over the years. A motivating experience for us was an event where we carried out a simulation

activity among high school students, in which they, as donors, had to invest 1 billion EURO in their region. Almost 2/3 of the students said that they would invest this money in state security and in the expansion of police forces. This was at a time when information about migrants had begun to spread on the internet (we note here that a minimum number of migrants came to Slovakia, and especially to the region where this activity was carried out). When asked why they would like to invest the money there, the students said that the media had reported that we were in danger, that migrants were dangerous, and how they stole etc. The debate continued in a similar xenophobic and sometimes hateful spirit without relevant arguments or confirmed information. There were several such meetings and experiences, not only with the young people but also with adults.

Our belief in the importance of this topic, supplemented by personal experience from events, as well as interviews with people on the ground, motivated us to work on this joint project with partners who have professional experience they can contribute to elevating the work with youth in these topics to another level. The work was conceived from several angles: from the point of view of IT professionals, from the point of view of psychology, from the point of view of civic activism, and from the point of view of non-formal education.

In an effort to connect the online and offline environment within the processing of the topic in order to get closer to young people and to contribute to the development of their competencies, we also created an environment for education and development of competencies in online space in form of **online web application**. This online tool can be used and combined with the activities from this publication. Along with other materials that can help you work with this topic. The app is available at:

www.myslim.eu

Structure of the publication

This publication is one of the outputs of the project *(Un)safe in net*, supported by the European Union's Erasmus+ grant program. Thanks to this support, a team of experts was able to create this publication, which is intended for young leaders, youth workers but also teachers who want to transfer informal education to schools.

The publication is divided into two parts: 1. Theoretical information and 2. Activities and methodological materials.

Theoretical part

Theoretical part consists of 4 thematic chapters and was written by multiple authors who come from various professional backgrounds. Therefore, it is possible to see different approaches and styles of writing within chapters. In addition to the author's texts, the chapters also contain information from professional literature.

Chapters:

► **Medial literacy** – The introductory chapter points at the importance of information processing and factors which influence us in the process of information processing.

► **Critical thinking** – Focuses on the explanation of the term critical thinking and the importance of its usage. This chapter pays attention to argumentation, which is an inseparable part of critical thinking.

► **Safety online** – This chapter points at dangers we encounter within the online environment, situations that can occur when using the internet and where it's important to have an opinion.

► **Digital citizenship** – This chapter uncovers a new term for many – “Digital Citizenship” and explains the term and names the areas in the online environment it covers.

The aim of the publication is not to provide a detailed description of the issue nor to include all definitions related to the topics covered. Its aim is to provide basic information, point out the most important areas and present a theoretical basis on which it is possible to start working with youth and lead the activities that are contained in the second part of the publication (Activities). At the same time, the purpose of education in each topic should not be to memorize a theory or to base it on definitions of terms. It is important for content recipients to be aware of the nature of the issue, its importance in the context of time, to be conceptually oriented and sensitive to factors influencing behaviour in the online as well as offline space, and to be able to convey this information in a comprehensible and attractive way.

Practical part – Activities

The second part of the publication contains practical information and activities to develop the competences of young people in the following topics: media literacy, critical thinking, security online and digital citizenship. In the introduction we can find basic information about non-formal education, what characterizes it and how to apply it in youth work. It is followed by a collection of activities that use non-formal learning methods and are focused on the development of competencies needed in order to work with these topics. At the beginning of each activity, its basic characteristics are presented to the reader to decide whether this activity is suitable for the type of learning they want to implement.

Structure of an activity: activity name; topics covered by the activity; recommended age category; number of attendees; duration of activity; methods used during teaching; objectives of the activity.

The publication also contains information taken from professional texts and other materials that have been published in these areas. Due to the nature of this guide and to provide the clearest possible content, references to the sources used have been omitted directly from the text. Their list is then given after each chapter.

As part of the project *(Un)safe in net* there is also a website and an interactive web application available at www.myslim.eu. On this page you can find other materials for working with the topics. Some of the activities listed in the publication can be used in combination with the online web application. This way it is possible to diversify teaching methods and broaden the perspective within the topic.

On the website you can find contacts for the authors of the publication, who you can reach out to with your suggestions.

We wish you many inspiring ideas when working with young people!

Collective of Authors

Vocabulary of terms used

Active digital footprint

All content that a user knowingly creates and / or publishes on the Internet: email sent, post posted on social media, post posted on a website, comment or *liked* content on social media, shared video, or text on a social network, written text in chat, etc.

Algorithm

A set of rules and calculations that determine when and which posts you will see. In addition to the time of publication of an article, they also consider users' behaviour on social network, the reactions of other users to an article or current trends in society.

Application

- or also a user application program in ICT (information communication technologies) is a computer program assisting the user in carrying out activities of a certain type, for example in working with texts, numbers, graphics, etc. Applications can be grouped into application packages, e.g., to office, such as Microsoft Office. Another type of application is internet applications or mobile applications.

Argument

A series of statements (we call them "premises") whose purpose it is to substantiate another statement (called a "conclusion"). We use an argument when we want to defend or confirm our opinion. We should not confuse an argument with a simple statement. A statement, as opposed to an argument, only offers objective information. The purpose of

the statement is not to persuade nor defend.

The argument can be true or false, it is a neutral expression that points to the structure of the information. It does not confirm its veracity. An argument based on a false and illogical basis is also considered to be an argument if it meets the prescribed structure.

Argumentation

A form of communication, in which attitudes, opinions, actions, etc. are clarified and justified. We most often argue when we need to prove something, when we need to convince someone, to push an opinion or an idea.

Argumentation fallacy

A practice by which someone tries to confuse or distract us. It is a matter of giving information or an argument, which contains a logical error, or uses other handling techniques.

Avatar

A term from virtual reality where an avatar represents a specific user. It is usually a two- or three-dimensional image, but it can also be expressed by a single character (very often while *signing* into online games). *An avatar* is often used in the game world, where it represents a virtual character controlled by a player / user.

Big data

The term refers to the enormous amount of data that people create. Their volume is so huge that they cannot be processed by ordinary computer software in a reasonable time.

“Big data” is made up of millions to trillions of records of the activities of billions of people around the world - whether in physical or on-line environments. They are used, for example, by retail chains, banks, or website operators to monitor people’s behaviour and tailor their services, research or even healthcare to them.

Bot

A computer program that repeatedly and automatically performs routine activity on the Internet. Some bots are harmless or even helpful. For example, a *chatbot* - which automatically answers user questions on websites to replace live operators. Another bot called a **web crawler** is used to search in web search engines. It systematically visits available websites and records which words it “sees” there and can answer questions from users who use the search engine. Other bots are developed to do harm. They can e.g., automatically generate misleading posts, flood social media with unverified information or intentional misinformation.

Clickbait

Clickbait is the *bait* for clicking on online content, which traditionally occurs in the form of a deceptive, catchy, shocking, or mysterious headline. The goal of *clickbait* is to arouse the curiosity of as many people as possible to click on the site and increase its traffic, which will improve its profitability. The content itself may not correspond to the promised lure, it is usually tabloid or misleading.

Conspiracy theory

An opinion on any topic that claims that a certain group of people knowingly and secretly (conspiratorially) work to the detriment of another group of people or all of humanity. Conspiracy theories explain historical or cur-

rent events as a result of the secret conspiracy of a group of powerful officials.

Conspiracy

Conspiracy, illegal activity, conspiracy, collusion / association. In the past, for example, with the intention of removing a monarch. The term is also used (incorrectly) today to denote conspiracy theory.

Critical thinking

Trying to understand any information in the broadest possible context. A critical person looks beneath the surface in any statement, argument, study, or article. They examine the motives and qualifications of the authors, the logical coherence of the presented statements, the credibility of the evidence used, honesty in inferring consequences or fidelity to scientific methodology. They understand that anything can be viewed from different angles, and instead of choosing one point of view and rejecting the other, they try to understand more than one. Critical thinking is also a constant effort to improve one’s sense of accuracy in expression. The result of this effort is structured, consistent, and logical expression. A critical person does not only examine the thinking of others and information from the outside world. They also systematically and carefully examine their own motives, thought processes and the emergence of their own opinions and decisions. And based on this observation, they then adjust their communication to make it clearer and more comprehensible.

Cyberbullying

The misuse of information and communication technologies to deliberately harm others, especially through mobile phones, smartphones, and the Internet. This is conduct which

is unpleasant to the victim but which, for subjective or objective reasons, cannot be prevented. A wide range of unacceptable behaviour can take place in electronic form with the aim of harming victims, such as threats, intimidation, persecution, ridicule of the environment, insults, reputation damage, social slights and exclusion, etc.

Deep web/ Dark web

The part of the Internet that is not accessible to the average user searching for information through conventional web search engines. A user account and password are required to view it. This could be, for example, scientific or medical information that should not be accessible to everyone. Deep web also includes government data and other legal documents. Some resources still exclude **Dark web** from *Deep web*. This is web content that is not accessible without special software (such as Tor). It is made up of platforms often used for illegal activities, such as the sale and purchase of drugs, weapons or even to find assassins. It could be said that these are online black markets.

Deep fake

Simply put, a video fake, i.e., a video in which a program replaces a face or even the whole body with another face or body and there is therefore a completely credible exchange of people.

Digital footprint

A label for a data file, i.e., all images, clicks on online content, documents, texts, and videos that the user actively or passively creates with their online activities. All this remains on the Internet and can be found even after deleting visible content.

Disinformation

Possibly intentionally created distorted or erroneous information that wants to mislead the addressee. Disinformation leads to incorrect conclusions or decisions.

Digital citizenship

Its essence is based on an active person who uses digital technologies consciously and safely, participates in public life, participates in society in the use of information and communication technologies (digital citizen). Some of the basic characteristics of a conscious approach to digital citizenship is the use of technology for purposes that are in line with those of a democratic society, the rule of law and respect for human rights, respectful communication online with people of different opinions and evaluation of the quality of online sources of information. Digital citizenship uses advances in modern technology, which should serve the good of humanity.

Disinhibitory effect

Changing the way individuals behave and communicate, especially in the Internet environment. *Disinhibited behaviour* differs mainly from normal behaviour in that the individual postpones his inhibitions, either subconsciously or consciously, positively, or negatively. We consider anonymity, invisibility, etc. to be factors causing this type of behaviour.

Fake news

The so-called *yellow journalism* genre (tabloid or unethical journalism) deliberately spreading misinformation or *hoaxes* in order to influence and manipulate the audience. This category does not include parodies or satire. Disinformation sites and social networks are

currently the main domain for spreading *fake news*.

Fact

Something objective, real, what is or what is happening. This contrasts with anything illusory or imaginary.

Gatekeeper

In the media world, a *gatekeeper* is someone who has the power to decide what information will be published in a specific medium and, conversely, what will not be published. The role can be entrusted to a journalist, editor, or editor-in-chief. *The gatekeeper* is responsible for filtering information before it is broadcast or published in a newspaper or on a website. The publication of certain contributions may be conditioned by their importance for the target group of readers. If they are, for instance, residents of Prague, *the gatekeeper* will prefer reports concerning e.g., the reopening of the National Museum or the mass accident on Štefánská Street ahead of reports related to an earthquake in Haiti. At a time when many private media are owned by politicians, the role of *the gatekeeper* may be (and of course may not be) influenced and controlled by the owner of the media house. For example, a politician may control the flow of news in their media output and may not include news that would pertain to any alleged corruption charges in their regard.

Handling

In general, an attempt to control the thinking of another person or group of people. In the media, this is a targeted activity, where the manipulator tries to force other people or a group of people to have opinions, attitudes or even actions that are not their own. The purpose of

this type of manipulation is to maintain the financial gains or power of a particular group. Frequently used methods appeal to human values, valued social phenomena, and emphasize social differences to the detriment of the attacked group (based on e.g., health, God, democracy, freedom, social advantage, public resources - your taxes and the like).

Hoax

In other words, a joke. A message spread mainly via the Internet, which, despite its nonsense, calls for it to be forwarded to other users of the system.

Hybrid warfare

In military strategy, this is a mixture of conventional warfare, unconventional warfare, and cyber warfare. The term is used as a metaphor to exaggerate the threat of cyber-attacks. In military circles, this war is seen as additional support to conventional operations.

Hypothesis

A claim or system of claims which, at the time of its formulation, cannot be decided whether it is true or false.

Infotainment

One of the consequences of tabloidization, which gained much more space with the popularity of social media. *Infotainment* (connection of the words *information* and *entertainment*) is media content that pretends to be news but has the primary purpose of entertaining and evoking emotions; to which they subordinate the choice of topics.

Internet memes

Internet memes - (sometimes abbreviated meme or slang's *memo*) is a term for an idea, thought, or piece of information that spreads rapidly over the Internet. In a web environment, such a meme can take the form of an image, a link, a video, an entire web page, and it can even be just a word that begins to appear and spread on the Internet (many chat shortcuts). *Meme* is a term strongly associated with viral marketing (or unconventional low-cost guerrilla marketing), where there is a visible effort to create a phenomenon that people will talk about and send links to each other (or share on social networks).

Internet troll

In Internet slang, a *troll* is a participant in on-line discussions, someone who causes disputes, provokes Internet users (especially on social networks) and publishes intentionally offensive, irritating, misleading or irrelevant posts on various topics. They try to provoke other users to react sharply, to attract attention, to deliberately disrupt a discussion and to deviate from the topic of the debate and they often deliberately spread alarming messages. *Trolls* can be hired or "troll" out of their own convictions.

IP address

The identification number of each device connected to the Internet. This helps to locate the approximate geographical location of the user and ISP through which the person is connected to the Internet at that moment. The current *IP address* has been assigned to you by the ISP to which the user is currently connected.

Like

Expressing praise, recognition, consent, positive attitude towards something (e.g., post,

comment) on social networks or websites by clicking on the icon with the word *like* (*I like*).

Mainstream

A term used to denote the prevailing social consensus and choice in culture, in the arts, and in social events.

Media literacy

A set of skills that enables people to use the media effectively and safely. In particular, it is the ability to seek out, receive, analyse, critically evaluate and produce a variety of media contributions. A media literate person can navigate the flood of media outputs with ease, and their basic equipment includes the ability to think critically.

Media contribution

The moment information is published by a medium it becomes a media contribution at that very instant. Some media outlets pay close attention to what they publish and make great efforts to have verified information and credible sources. Other media focus less on the veracity of information and the credibility of sources and mainly pursue their interests (economic, political, personal). For media such as social networks, control over the creation and dissemination of contributions is minimal.

Netiquette

The term was created by combining two words - network and etiquette - a summary of the principles of social behaviour. Netiquette is therefore a set of general rules of good behaviour for users on the Internet.

Passive digital footprint

Information unknowingly left by users in the online space. Information is not directly visible, but anyone can search for it specifically. An example of this is information in the history of pages visited, which is collected by the browser, or even the IP address stored by the website or online service visited by the user.

Presumption

Unconfirmed opinion, conjecture, assumption.

Propaganda

This is characterized by long-term activity, is conceptual and aims to influence thinking, attitudes, and actions, often with a society-wide impact (in the context of countries, nations, communities). Propagandists systematically combine several modified ideas, theories and even ideologies. It is most often institutionalized, i.e., the targeted action of a political party or an influential community. It uses misinformation, manipulation of public opinion through elements to which society reacts sensitively (nationality, freedom, independence, security, etc.). Through propaganda we often encounter the denigration of other states, nationalities, or communities.

Resilience

A certain resilience of a person means they can cope with obstacles and unfavourable living conditions. Resilience can be described as the ability of a system (or in our case, an individual) to work reliably, regardless of the influences that affect them from the system environment; ability to cope with stressful situations and changes.

Robotic journalism

Computer programs can use artificial intelligence to write texts that resemble or are indistinguishable from those written by humans. It is mainly used for writing short texts based on numbers and statistics, such as financial analysis, recapitulations of sporting events or weather.

Self-disclosure or sharing of information about yourself with the public

Any information that a person reveals about himself in communication with others.

Self-reflection

Thinking about yourself. Self-reflection can also be described as a kind of personal analysis. It is sometimes referred to as auto-reflection.

Social bubble

A social circle in which a person is surrounded by people with the same or similar views as themselves. Every internet user lives in their social bubble, where Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or Google show posts from our circle of acquaintances, from the pages we follow or on the topic with which we most often come into contact and associate it with type-like media that we like. It is our own world of unique information created just for us based on our online behaviour.

Spam

An unsolicited and bulk message of virtually the same content. This is an abuse of electronic

communication, especially e-mail and is mostly used as advertising. We distinguish between two types of *spam* - the first is to send a message to several discussion groups (so-called *forums*). These are mostly focused on the distribution of pornographic material or to promote certain products, e.g., from the field of pharmacy. The second type is *email spam* sent to a specific person directly to their email address. These addresses are often obtained by browsing newsgroups or websites.

Statement

Every communication sentence (statement) that makes sense to consider. It can be true or false.

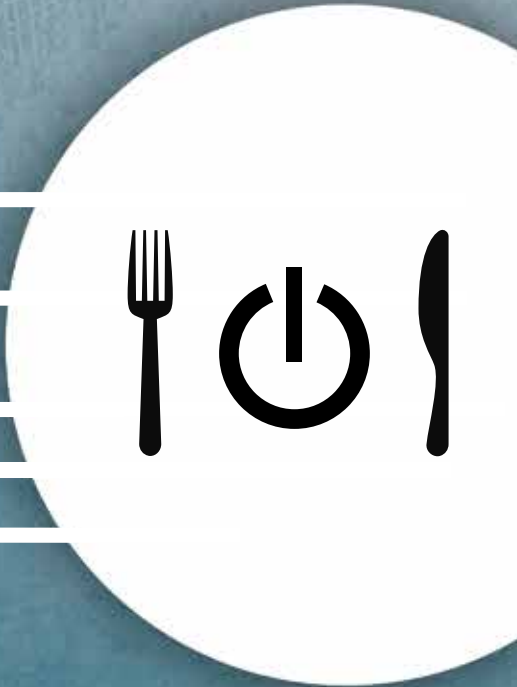
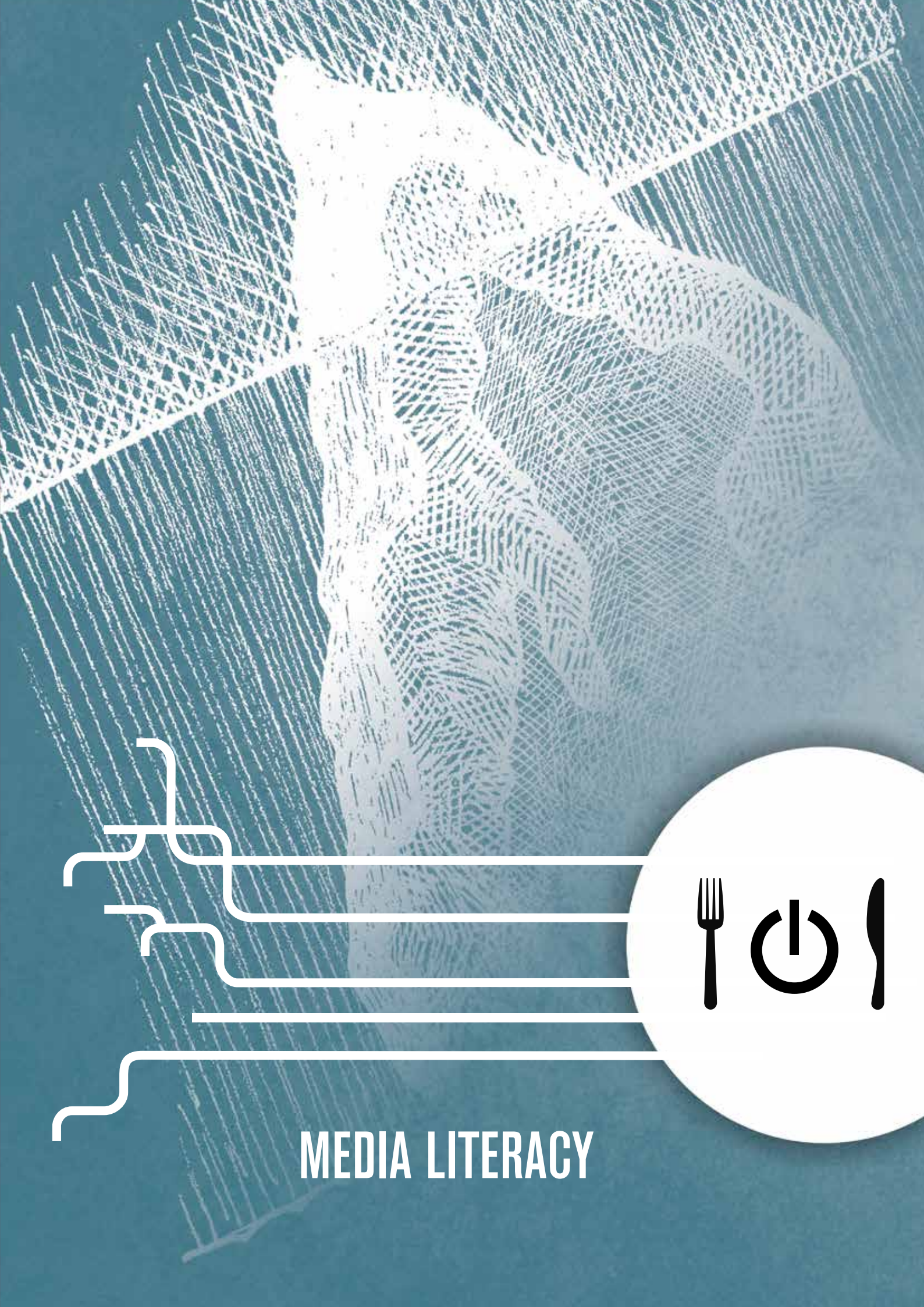
Tabloidization

Colours, photos, big headlines, exclamation marks, sensations, emotions, celebrity lives. These are the main elements of the tabloid media. Despite its unimportant and frequent superficiality, it finds more a greater audience

than serious media. With its simplicity and how it plays with emotions, tabloid news catches on more easily than simple facts. Therefore, some serious media also tend to “go tabloid” i.e., take over the practices of the boulevard to attract the attention of a larger number of readers or viewers, and thus achieve higher profits, readability, listening or viewing.

Virtual currency

- (or also called *cryptocurrency*, virtual money). This is a digital currency that is intended for online trading. It is based on cryptography, which aims to increase the security of the virtual currency. The main definition of a *cryptocurrency* is that it uses and implements the principles of cryptography to create a distributed and secure digital currency. Virtual money is a new branch of the virtual economy, which brings many benefits and pitfalls. The first *cryptocurrency* to be traded was *Bitcoin*. In the next wave, the second generation of *coins*, such as *Peercoin*, *Litecoin* and others, was created.



MEDIA LITERACY

1.1 Introduction to the issue

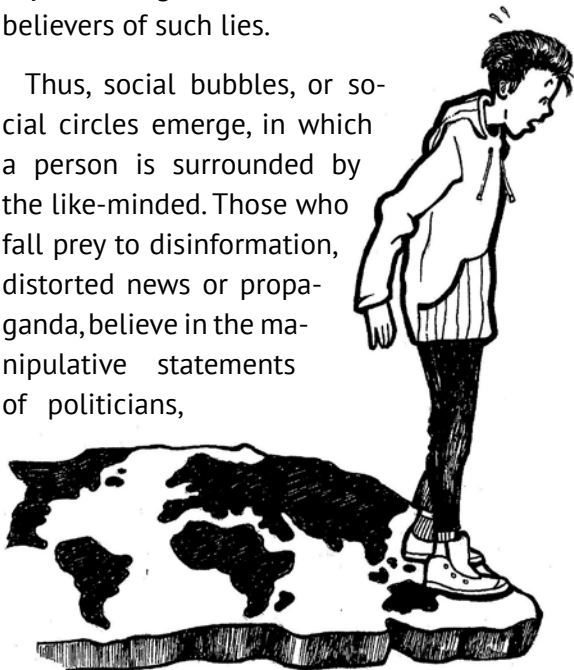
The planet Earth is round. We all know that, as we have access to pictures from space. Even if these pictures were the only proof for us, we have no reason to disprove this fact.

But can we verify and justify the truth of these claims ourselves? Maybe we have all come across one big piece of propaganda. Maybe the photos of our planet were falsified. Maybe we all live on a flat and motionless Earth without gravity.

This theory may seem ridiculous to us, but it has confused the minds of many. It even created a global movement, which believes, that the earth is flat, and its supporters argue that there is no practical scientific experiment that would clearly demonstrate the motion, rotation, and curvature of the Earth. “Flat Earthers” actively disseminate their ideas through many videos, websites, articles, and public debates, and substantiate their beliefs with a lot of “*quasi-evidence*”. Each piece of this evidence, however, can be refuted by physics.

How does a person become the victim of such a such a lie? The main reason is the absence of, or inadequate critical thinking, low media literacy and being locked in a social environment of believers of such lies.

Thus, social bubbles, or social circles emerge, in which a person is surrounded by the like-minded. Those who fall prey to disinformation, distorted news or propaganda, believe in the manipulative statements of politicians,



conspirators or pseudoscience and often gather information from questionable quality media sources. They create a bubble of like-minded people, who confirm their *own ideas and truths* and deny evidence which acts against their beliefs. This problem becomes more serious when it revolves around issues which influence their own life and their surroundings.

Misleading and fabricated information acting as serious news or as science reaches an unquantifiable number of followers. No wonder – the creators of such posts know very well how to spread such news. They play with human emotions which are very easily influenced and play a crucial role in the intake of information. They create fear, which is in itself a perfect influence factor. They use the speed of sharing negative information amongst people. They simplify and adapt the information in a digestible way for everyone. They take information out of context or conceal the context. They don't mention sources, names of authors, ruin the reputation of some and glorify others. When we take simplicity, great speed of creation and sharing of such information – not only by humans, but also by bots – into account, we can clearly see the necessity to discuss the topic of media literacy.

1.2 Human perception

How do we process information?

Our perception of the world around us is the result of receiving and processing of information – and everybody receives and processes information differently. On top of that the path information must take, until it reaches us (so that we can receive and process it), is not straightforward. Posts directed at us do not come to us directly, but often they come in a roundabout way and are labelled by many the events which they have encountered by the time they reach us. In the case of media and news, it boils down to the correctness of the original source, perspective of the author, influence by the media

owner or religious context, etc. We ourselves are also affected by our own predispositions and experience which influence our absorption and processing of the information. Is the content important for me? Do I believe it? What meaning does it have for me? How does it influence me? Do I know something about it or is it new? Do I even have time to read through the pile of news? We usually do not answer these questions consciously, but we leave our mind to tackle them itself.

Yet another huge factor is our **emotions**. It is totally natural, that their potency outweighs conscious decisions and behaviour, even though we are not aware of it (or we do not want to admit it). Imagine that we are sitting at home in our living room, and we are watching a horror movie. We are tense, our heartbeat rises, we become numb in expectation of what will happen next. Sometimes we make a quick movement. Sometimes we let fear take over us. Then we feel the relief that nothing bad has really happened to us. Even though we have known the whole time, that we were only watching a movie and that it doesn't matter. Nevertheless, we relate to the characters in movie, empathize with unreal situations and we repeatedly get anxious about what will happen next. Our emotions triumph against our rationality.

Hence, emotions can really make our thinking confused. And that is what media want to achieve when it comes to videos, speech, or text. Content that targets emotions is much more attractive and desirable than plain fact.

Thinking fast and slow

Let's quickly investigate a basic principle which, as described by psychologist Daniel Kahneman, has immense influence on the process of human thinking and decision making. Kahneman describes two basic typologies of the decision-making process, which constantly counter each other – System 1 and System

2. Simply said: thinking fast and slow (Daniel Kahneman, 2012). The terminology is not that important though. What is important is basic knowledge of the principles of how the brain behaves in specific situations and what can help strengthen (after making some effort) resilience against manipulation, disinformation, propaganda, or advertisements.

Thinking fast (System 1) is automatic, intuitive, emotional, often unconscious. It does not require effort to think rationally. We have this thinking in common with animals. We use it when we do not need to think consciously: when walking, when solving simple examples ($2 + 2 = ?$). In an automatic reaction, such as disgust or joy, in understanding simple sentences, in creating a first impression, in waking dreams. In short, in any actions or thought processes that we perform unintentionally. Thinking fast is also called **autopilot**.

Thinking slow (System 2) is conscious, rational, based on logic, its involvement requires self-control and concentration. It is attributed mainly to people. We use it, for example, to maintain a higher pace of walking than we are used to, to solve more complex examples ($32 \times 18 = ?$), To suppress our emotions, to try to understand complex and long sentences, to remember, to fully concentrate on the work task, i.e., in any actions or thought processes that **require some effort**. System 2 can be also understood as "*controlled, conscious, thinking self*".

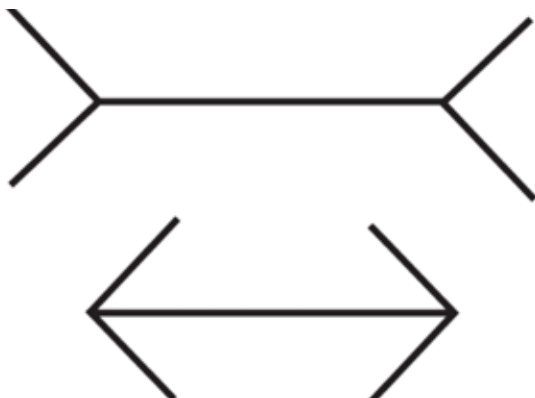
The fast and slow thinking system is highly efficient because it minimizes effort and optimizes performance. For example, thinking quickly triggers an alarm if we are in danger and we want to escape it: there is no time to think rationally, because it is necessary to run now, not after a few minutes - when we can assess the seriousness of the problem in all aspects.

Sometimes it happens that System 1 (thinking fast) is confused: so, we act recklessly, illogically, we decide too quickly and incorrectly. At

that moment, System 2 is activated (slow thinking), it recognizes the error and corrects it: for example, it finds that the danger was just an illusion, we are safe, and we can stop running.

Slow System 2 however, is unable to control fast System 1 constantly. Unless it is necessary to start a consciously controlled decision-making process, the slow System 2 relies to some extent on the fast System 1 (for example, when answering a question, we do not have to think about $(2 + 2 = ?)$). However, if the automatic answer does not come, System 2 is activated and responds consciously (a five-year-old child who has not yet experienced counting must think and only then comes to the result $2 + 2 = 4$).

Before we get to the practical examples of why it makes sense to be interested in the functioning of the human mind, it is necessary to mention two more important characteristics of fast and slow thinking. There are situations where a slow System 2 simply does not have the rules or knowledge to evaluate the answer (for example, some five-year-olds would not be able to cope with the $2 + 2$ example at all). In these situations, when thinking quickly suggests an answer, thinking slowly trusts it and accepts it. But what if System 1 is wrong and the answer is therefore wrong?



Optical illusions can be used to illustrate this more clearly. We see something different from what is in the picture, even though someone will tell us what we should be able to see. Slow System 2 already knows the correct answer, but

the intuition represented by Fast System 1 constantly pushes *its own* agenda. In other words, thinking fast *will not allow us to change* our first impression.

A classic example is the *Müller-Lyer illusion* in the figure below. At first glance, the upper horizontal line appears to be longer than the lower. However, if we measured the lines, we would find that they are both the same length. Even though we now know and have verified for ourselves that it is only an optical illusion, we still perceive the upper line as longer. Our intuition may not always be right.



sensitive genius athletic

From left side: Thomas, Simona, Peter

The principle of our distorted perception, which is very simply illustrated here, can cause an irrational understanding of certain situations in real life. We will illustrate this phenomenon in the picture below.

Imagine that these people are real and indeed have those qualities above. At first glance, we probably wouldn't assign them such characteristics. Although we may think that we are individuals without prejudice, our first impression is automatic and cannot be suppressed. After learning the qualities of Thomas, Simona, and Peter (either from our own experience or from the experience of others), each of us will then act a little differently: some are ashamed of their first impression and correct it immediately, others may take longer, because stereo-

types may be ingrained deeper. However, some believe in their intuition so much that they are not able to change their minds under any circumstances. Their automatic System 1 has won at full speed and has not even let rational System 2 go into battle.

People are usually subject to first impression without even realizing that it has happened. We often unconsciously classify people into boxes by age, gender, skin colour, appearance, hair-style, nationality, occupation, or clothing - this is a completely natural human trait. If we want to change our view of someone, we will make a certain effort. How big that effort is, depends not only on ourselves, but also on the specific situation. However, we mostly make this effort consciously. If we believe in our judgment so much that we don't even want to change it, then it's simple: we won't make any effort.

Of course, it is not possible to decide that we will think only rationally. Intuitive and emotional decision-making is automatic- we can't turn off thinking fast. But it is not even necessary, because it plays an important role in our thought processes, moreover, it is often right. Therefore, it is necessary to learn to recognize situations where we should not believe our first impression, so as not to make unnecessary mistakes in our thinking.

How does this all relate to media?

If we simply accept media contributions and automatically listen to our emotions and intuitive thinking, we quickly form our own opinion of everything and come to a conclusion without rational consideration, so we are very easily prone to manipulation. However, if we know that it is not always good to believe in our quick thinking, we can think about why we come to certain conclusions, what leads us to do so, how else it is possible to view the situation and so on.

However, just knowing this principle will not

spare us from mistakes of thought but will help us better understand ourselves and others, and to more easily analyse the media content that our autopilot uses inadvertently.

Understanding fast and slow thinking is the basis for understanding other **distortions and contractions** that occur in our heads. Again, it is worth remembering that if we are aware of how our brains behave in different situations and how easy it is to deceive them, we can strive to minimize our shortcomings in thinking. What distortions are we talking about? They are called cognitive distortions (the term cognitive refers to mental processes, thinking and perception).

Cognitive biases

Or 9 imperfections of human mind worth knowing

Cognitive blind spot

The ability to recognize the errors of human thinking (cognitive distortion) in others, but not in oneself. Man naturally perceives himself as impartial or less biased than others. (Pronin, Lin, Ross, 2002)

"Therefore, my views are correct and objective. Unlike the others, I am not biased."

Third party effect

The belief that the media or advertising does not affect me and my loved ones, as smart as I am, to the same extent as other people. The impact on the mass of "third parties" is certainly much greater. (Schweisberger, Billinson, Chock, 2014)

"Me and my friends will not run into these political lies, but others will!"

Obedience to authority

The tendency to automatically believe in the views of the authorities and to be influenced by them no matter what they say. One perceives authority as superior and believes that it has deeper knowledge, wisdom, and strength. (Ellis, 2015)

“I don’t need to learn maths. My favourite you-tuber said he never used it, so why should I learn it.”

Confirmation bias

The tendency to seek or prioritize information that supports my own opinion and, conversely, to disregard or disbelieve those that are contrary to my beliefs. This further strengthens my view. (McLeod, Wise, Perryman, 2017). Confirmation bias is stronger if the message affects my emotions or is a deep-rooted opinion.

That is why it is easy to believe what I already believe, and at the same time to reject opinions that do not agree with mine. Conspirators (those who believe in conspiracy theories or fake news) find themselves in such a vicious circle.

Cascade availability

The more often certain information is repeated to the public (especially if it is interpreted simply), the greater the impression of credibility it obtains. A herd effect takes place. The ever-increasing number of repetitions (e.g., in the media) will make this information easily accessible to those who would not otherwise look for the topic. A portion of the public begins to attach great importance to it, which puts pressure on politicians, who can then push through legislative changes; whether in the right or wrong direction (Kahneman, 2012).

In the beginning, only a handful of media reported on the climate crisis. However, the issue has gained more and more attention and reached



other media. The topic has permeated the public and become politically important. New laws are emerging. The availability of the cascade has re-set social priorities.

The herd effect

The tendency to do the same or believe in what most other people believe. The effect is also called herd behaviour.

“Aren’t you going to the party either? Neither is Thomas, so neither is Lenka. Then I won’t go either “

Selective perception

Subconsciously collecting information and remembering mostly what is important to me or that concerns me. Everyone thus gives a

different weight to information obtained according to how important it is to them; some is also completely ignored. The same contribution therefore has a different effect on each beneficiary. (McLeod et al., 2017)

Lenka: "Yellow is probably modern this year. Everyone has a yellow coat. I also want one. "

Thomas: "Really? I didn't notice that at all. "

Illusory correlation

The tendency to put things into context that may or may not have a connection. This is done by the recipients of a post, but also by their authors, who present only seemingly convincing arguments. (Rodríguez-Ferreiro, Barberia, 2017). Such correlations are a popular subject of pseudo-scientific findings or a tool of politicians, and at the same time they are easily spread by the media. Illusory correlation is also used as one of the offenses in argumentation.

This year, sales of cheese in the Czech Republic increased by 20% compared to the previous year.

This year, the number of people diagnosed with cancer in the Czech Republic decreased by 20% compared to the previous year.

Illusory correlation: Cheese cures cancer.

The effect of enemy media

The tendency to consider media content disseminated by certain (especially mass) media as biased and misleading because they do not agree with my established opinion and attitude.

There are dozens of similar biases. To a large extent, they explain why we believe what we believe, why we behave the way we do, and why we hold the views we hold. Our imperfections, of course, are used by the media, advertising, marketing, politicians or business people. How? We'll talk about that in one of the following chapters.

1.3 Media

What are media?

The media, as a mediator of certain information, has become a part of everyone's daily life. Nowadays, a person is surrounded by a variety of different types of media that can serve many purposes: a source of information, a form of education, setting an agenda of public thought, following society's "transgressions", interpreting various events, socializing people, a source of entertainment or distraction. And many others. The media as a means of communication can also serve as a bridge between different social groups, which may or may not have a direct connection. (The Media and its Function, 2018).

The media undoubtedly move the minds of the individual and society. They are often also used as a means of realizing various interests, such as economic or political ones. In the most common case, it is about making profit, gaining power, or strengthening one's own influence. An extremist method for achieving these goals is, for example, propaganda or the effective dissemination of misinformation. (Gregor, Vejvodová, 2018).

With the growing number of information sources, it is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate the amount of media content.

Let's show this with a specific example. Let's say we want to play some music from our selected online music database. We can easily choose what to play if we have only two artists to choose from (say, the music library has not yet been licensed by several authors) as opposed to a database that will read thousands of artists, albums, playlists, or podcasts. If we focus on a more tangible thing, let's take ice cream as an example. It will be much easier for us to choose between chocolate and vanilla ice cream than between the 50 types on offer, from pistachio to smurf.

We can then apply this example to a media post. The more there are, the more problematic

the selection of trustworthy, relevant ones will be. In addition, we must not forget to increase the cognitive load on the brain.

We will therefore clarify some basic information that will help us to better understand and grasp the nature of the media. Under the term medium, one can imagine **everything that is used to transmit some information**. So, for example: a book, a movie, cell phone or even speech.

Although we can also perceive the post office as a medium, **we most often understand the media as: mass media for information and entertainment. These include the internet, newspapers, magazines, television and radio. Uniformly, these media are called mass media.**

Types of (mass)media

We can divide mass media in different ways, for example:

- **Type of technology:** traditional media (do not require the internet - radio, print, television, books), new media (also digital media - include everything that is transmitted over the internet);
- **Form of processing:** paper, digital, audio, audio-visual;
- **Way of informing:** serious, tabloid, serious-popular, semi-serious;
- **Objective of media:** to inform, entertain, educate, spread opinions, propagate, manipulate, increase visibility, etc.

One of the most important divisions of the media is based on **who owns them, what their goals and sources of income are:**

State owned media

These are under the direct control of the state and are typical of totalitarian regimes (North Korea, Cuba). Through them, the state can spread propaganda, fulfil its political and

power interests, and consolidate the power of the ruling forces. State media existed, for example, in communist Czechoslovakia.

Public service media

Public service media do not fall under the direct control of the state and have legally imposed obligations. Among other things, they must meet these criteria:

- Maximal objectivity (news to reflect reality);
- Balance (the broadcasting space is intended for both majority and minority opinions and groups);
- impartiality (impartiality towards anyone; creation must not be influenced by e.g., politicians who could use the medium to their advantage);
- follow the ethics code (adhere to the rules of working with sources, resist conflicts of interest, seriousness, protection of privacy, etc.).

In order to meet these requirements, in several countries, including the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic, public service media are not financed directly from the state budget or from advertising, but from so-called licencing fees. These are paid by households that have a television or radio.

As it is not in the power of these media to cover all events, there are press agencies (in the Czech Republic (ČTK), in Slovakia (TASR) that provide news to other media. For example, in the Czech Republic, ČTK is not only a public medium solely financed by licence fees, but also directly by individual media, which pay them for news content.

Commercial media (private media)

Their main goal is the profit they make through advertising or from subscribers. They are owned and controlled by private

owners, i.e., a person or a company. They can influence not only what the media will publish and broadcast, but also what they will not publish. Therefore, they cannot write or broadcast negatively about the owner. They are also easily influenced by the opinions of owners and influential people.

Media before and now

Let's say we lived in the Middle Ages and our education did not even reach a basic level. We could not read or write, and information reached us in the form of "whoever tells us". So how could we verify the credibility of the information that our country was prospering and that our ruler was not an absolutist despot who distributed all the tax money to the richest class in order to maintain influence? The answer is: very difficult. In the past, it was much easier for the government and the ruling elite to control someone if they were not educated enough to read and write. A major turning point, however, was the invention of book printing by Johann Gutenberg in 1452. The media e.g., printed reports, became easier and faster to create and distribute. They have become cheaper and therefore more accessible to people from poorer classes. Print media thus contributed to the development of education. Higher accessibility has also been noted at a religious level, enabling the Bible and other religious texts to reach a wider audience (Briggs, Burke 2009).

Another important milestone was the advent of a new print medium - newspapers. Newspapers are often referred to as the very first mass medium. At first, newspapers were owned by governments, but later people began to fight for a free press. On the one hand, they educated the masses, on the other hand, they made huge sums of money. At the beginning of the 18th century, they began to be an insurance component of democracy (this function is now performed by the public media). Television be-

came popular in the 1950s and 1960s. The internet came in the 1990s. After the year 2000, a new platform for communication and information transfer appeared - social media. Each time a new medium has entered the scene, a specific way of transmitting information has come hand in hand with it. For example, since the inception of Facebook, a new way of sharing information with friends and family has emerged - Facebook has not only influenced what people write and share, but also when, how and to whom.

1.4 Internet changes media environment

Whether we like it or not, the period in which we live is constantly accelerating. The world has become interconnected through a process of globalization, innovation and increasingly rapid progress. A beautiful example of this, is advance in the field of technological progress. The Apollo 11 crew touched the surface of the moon only 66 years after the Wright Brothers' first plane took off. Although it only got into the air for 11 seconds (Humpálová, 2019).

In the last three decades, the Internet has made a significant contribution to connecting the world, significantly affecting the course of life for individuals and society. Internet usage and access have increased rapidly since the late 1990s. Today, almost everyone in the world can be connected.

The time when we simply absorbed the media and the only thing we were capable of was forming an opinion is gone. At present, we interact with the media to a much greater extent, we express ourselves however we want (e.g., through internet debates or social networks), we disseminate media contributions and participate in their creation. Gone are the days when a person working in the media (especially the editor-in-chief of a newspaper, television, or radio) had the exclusive right to assess and decide what information to release into the

media world. Sure, editors still play their role (responsible for the work of a particular medium), but the power they had over information is greatly weakened today. In the online era, anyone can publish anything and anytime. We can assume that we have all become *gatekeepers*: those who influence what information will be published and what will not.

Nevertheless, the existence of Internet algorithms contributes to the confinement of individuals or groups of people to social bubbles. Algorithms decide what information a particular user will see. This is especially true for social networks. Based on what sites we visit, which products we browse or what things we like, it evaluates our preferences and where we spend the most time. During the next search, it then serves us pages with similar or the same topics and products.

We will now focus on a platform for recording and watching videos, which we all probably know well. It's YouTube. Based on our individual clicks and "*thumbs*" and on how long we will stay with a particular video, YouTube creates an **avatar** - or **an online version of our "self"**. This avatar is further edited and updated following the steps we take on their platform. YouTube then compiles information on which videos we like and provides us with exactly the videos we are most likely to watch.

Data and digital connectivity allow information to be shared or communicated by people from places in different parts of the world. At the same time, it offers an enormous number of activities. With the richness of society, the growing share of free time and the increasing emphasis on convenience associated with "comfort of home", activities are moving to the virtual field. This can be, for example, buying groceries, ordering products, choosing a new car, or searching for information.

A significant part of an individual's social life, especially for young people, is also being transferred to the Internet. We can comment on

messages, share posts not only with our friends but also with strangers on social networks, *chat* or contact another person or group of people via video call. It allows us to connect with others, both familiar and unfamiliar people, and even from the other side of the Earth.

How social networks, amongst others, take advantage of the mind's weaknesses

Nowadays, social networks in particular play a communicative role. In addition to communicating "remotely" with each other, they provide a range of information. Their content is adapted to many factors: gender, age, education, nationality, interests, friends, opinions, religion etc. Based on all the information we provide to the social network (either by including it on our profile or by what sites we visit and what posts we share), we are shown tailor-made content. In other words, they collect all data (so-called big data) from us, that we provide them ourselves or are obtained based on our behaviour on the Internet. Accordingly, they then submit tailor-made content to us. Like YouTube, Facebook and other social networks can form our online *avatar*.

But the algorithms are even wiser. In addition to these "hard data", they also exploit the weaknesses of our minds. In the chapter on human perception, we came across the concept of **cognitive distortion**. The point is that **we believe more in what is like our opinion and worldview**. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram are built on these cognitive processes. The algorithms of these social networks have the task of showing us the contributions that we will most probably like. Based on what we liked or hearted or where we spent a lot of time in the past.

So, as we already know, it is in human nature to tend to promote and share views that confirm our own worldview. With the advent of new information technologies, especially social networks, this need to assert one's opinion, to support and strengthen similar ideas becomes

simpler and more accessible. All we require is a computer or smartphone with an internet connection, an account on one of the social networks and a few friends. Let's show one illustrative example.

Let's say a specific event takes place. Based on articles and news from the media, our friends on social networks will start discussing it, or supporting the views of this or that group. Which side will we join? If a certain comment or opinion evokes a positive emotion in us, it is likely that we will agree with it. On the contrary, we will reject the one which does not share our view of the world, regardless of its rational defence.

Social networks are a space where sharing similar views is very easy. By expressing support for a given post, opinion, or comment with "that" thumb (*like*), the conditional formation of our future posts "*on the bulletin board*" begins. That is, specifically those that will be displayed to us. Social networks use algorithms that "serve" us posts and comments based on our previous activity. As a result, we'll see posts that we "like" (and give them a blue thumb or heart), not ones we don't agree with. This conditionally confirms our opinion and view of the world. Hand in hand with this, the space for discussion, consensus, acceptance or at least admission of part of the opposite opinion is reduced.

Another example is membership in different groups with the same opinion, which strengthen our personal identity. Influence can take a more common form on the one hand, as well as an inclination towards extremism and radicalism on the other.

Social content is therefore highly personalized and tailor-made for each of us. But why? So that the content interests, pleases and entertains us. So that we ideally spend as much time on the net as possible and that we feel the need to go back there to click, *like*, comment, share and mainly buy. After all, every social network is a place for advertisements, thanks to which their operators earn money. The better and longer they manage

to keep our attention, the more ads we consume (whether we want to, or not).

1.5 Risks of using internet

Or why is it necessary to be media literate

Risks at the individual level

or - how skim reading can influence democratic elections

Let's start with the most banal risks. Lack of time forces us to read superficially. Sometimes when we are busy and do not have time to look for the "right answer", we accept whatever lies ahead. Almost everyone loves stories. If a contribution is simple, easy to understand and fits within our ideas and "limits", we are willing to believe it. At the same time, if something is very complex or difficult to understand and the media presents it to us in a familiar story - we will accept it with open arms - even if it is not true. In the least extreme case, there may be a misunderstanding, in the worst case, for example, there may be a preference for extremist views, or parties offering a simple and clear solution to the "created" problem. This can, among other things, be reflected in democratic elections by electing one of the extremist parties. And in an extreme case, it can lead to the further polarization of society and to general or specific extremism.

Another problem is anonymity. Anonymity within different social networks gives room for behaviour on the Internet that is different from real life. Aggressive behaviour, attacks in the comments of various discussions, blackmailing or cyberbullying can be hidden by an individual behind a computer monitor. The risk can be a gradual self-closure within the virtual world, which can lead to depression from loneliness, addictions, or an overall reduction in quality of life.

Risks of social media posts

Freedom on the Internet

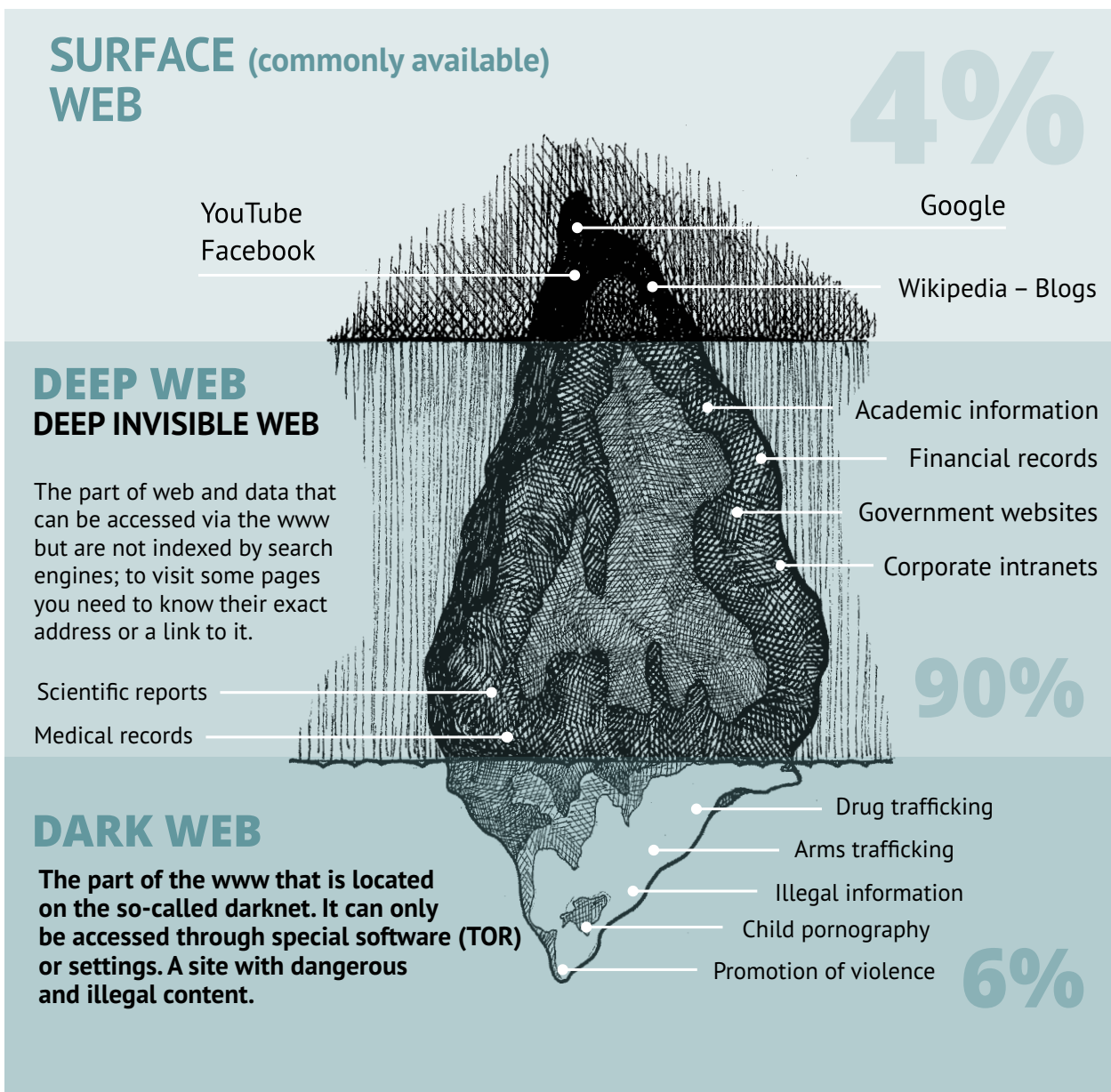
The way people behave and communicate on the Internet is different from real-world interaction – and this is done, consciously and/or subconsciously. The individual lets down their barriers because they act as an anonymous and invisible person. This phenomenon is called the **disinhibitory effect**.

It is therefore important to realise that a high degree of online freedom is accompanied by a high degree of responsibility for the use of the Internet. Whether it is the consumption of

information, the sharing of messages or active participation in the Internet world in the form of the previously mentioned comments, blogs or publications, the degree of freedom of publishing and further sharing is huge, regardless of whether the information is true or not.

Dark side of the Internet – Darknet

Have you ever heard of Deep net or Dark web? To understand these concepts, let's look at a picture of an iceberg. Many web and communication platforms are stored on the Internet (www - World Wide Web). But how many of



them are open to the public? Only 4% of total web content is accessible and searchable through web search engines such as Google, Seznam or Wikipedia, i.e., the so-called Surface Web (Villalva et al., 2018).

Moreover, most Internet content is hidden from the public. Deepweb is a part of the Internet that is not accessible to the average user searching for information through conventional web search engines (Hardy, Norgaard, 2016). You need a user account and a password to view it. This could be, for example, scientific or medical information that should not be accessible to everyone. Deep web also includes government data and other legal documents. Some resources also exclude Dark web from Deep web (e.g., Weimann, 2016). Dark web represents all web content that is not accessible without special software (such as Tor). It consists of platforms often used for illegal activities, such as the sale and purchase of drugs, weapons or even to find assassins. It could be said that these are online black markets. One well-known example is the Silk Road.

Dark web is accessible through special software Tor (The Onion Router) or I2P (Invisible Internet Project), which use “masked” IP addresses to maintain the anonymity of users and site owners. In this way, it is not possible to trace people who use Dark web for illegal purposes (Syverson et al., 1997).

1.6 Technological trends in the creation of media contributions

On the Internet, we cannot be sure who creates what. Who is hiding behind the question: *who*? Not only living individuals, but also those who are not alive. The following paragraphs describe some examples of how technological advances are affecting the creation of digital content.

Internet bot

Often abbreviated to *bot*, this is generally a computer program that repeatedly and automatically performs routine activity on the Internet. In connection with the media environment, discussion is usually about a *social bot* that behaves like a human being in an online environment.

Some *bots* are harmless and even helpful. For example, a *chatbot* is a *bot* which automatically answers user questions on websites, replacing live operators. Another bot called a *web crawler* is used to search in web search engines (e.g., Google, List, etc.). It systematically visits available websites and records which words it “sees” where it can answer questions from users who use the search engine (simply put, this bot helps Google, for example, to evaluate which websites appear when we search for something) (Yang, Varol, Davis, Ferrara, Flammini, Menczer, 2019). Other *bots* are developed to do harm. For example, they can automatically generate misleading posts, flooding social media with unverified information or intentional misinformation. In doing so, they may influence public opinion to some extent (Yang et al., 2019).

Deep fake

Not even a video is sufficient evidence. *Deep fake* is simply a video fake, i.e., a video in which the program replaces the face or the whole body with another face or body and there is a completely credible confusion of people. Current existing programs can also manipulate facial expressions and gestures. All we need to do is publish our photos on the Internet, and anyone with the app can make us an actor in a movie or a political speaker.

Robotic journalism

With the help of artificial intelligence, computer programs can write texts that resemble or are indistinguishable from those written by

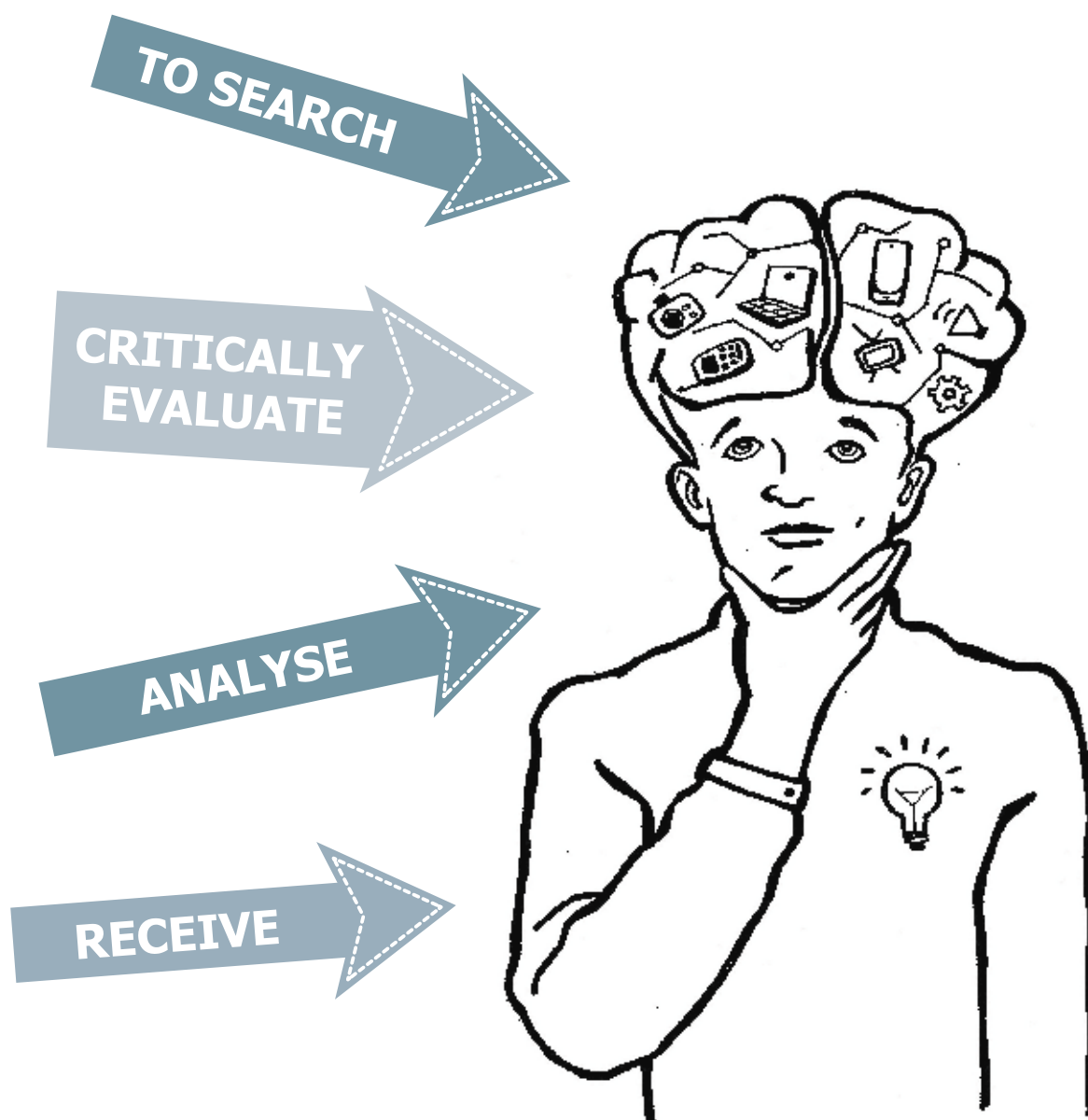
humans. So far, robotic journalism, also known as automated or algorithmic journalism, has been used mainly to write short texts based on numbers and statistics such as financial analysis, recapitulation of sporting events or weather. On the one hand, automation is an opportunity to save journalists slow routine reporting, which is often inaccurate, and allows them to engage in more complex and creative work. On the other hand, this trend is perceived with certain concerns about lower quality of news or the replacement of some journalists with computer programs.

1.7 Media literacy

Media literacy is a set of skills that enables people to use the media effectively and safely. It is mainly the ability **to search, receive, analyse, critically evaluate, but also create** various media contributions. ("Media literacy defined", n.d.) Simply put, a media literate person is well-versed in the flood of media output.

The basic skillset of a media literate person includes the ability to think critically. Part of the development of the ability to critically look at any media content and assess its credibility

Media literacy is the ability to:



Methodological concept of five key questions

Key term	5 basic concepts	5 key questions of media literacy
Author	All media posts are created by someone.	Who is the author of the media post?
Content	Content of the posts correlates to stances and points of view of the media.	What is the content of the media post?
Audience	Every post is directed to some target group.	Who is the media post addressed to?
Format	Media posts use communication tools, which attract the attention of its audience.	How does the post want to attract your attention?
Purpose	There is a reason behind the creation and dissemination of every media content.	Why was the post created and published?

Source: *Five Key Questions Form Foundation for Media Inquiry*, 2019

is the **methodological concept of five key questions** (Macek, Motyčková, Pacovská, Strachota, Šafářová, Valůch, 2019), each of which is based on a basic concept (or assumption). This methodology was developed by *One World of Schools*, an educational program of *Human in Need*.

The above table illustrates the relationship between concepts and questions and identifies key concepts that summarize the topic of each concept-question pair.

The main purpose of this methodological concept is not to learn by heart the concepts and questions as such but to *create the habit* of routinely asking questions and looking for answers when receiving media messages. The questions are interlinked but can also be examined individually.

This methodology provides an approach to looking at media content with an overview. Other authors and other sources may cite other approaches that, like this one, are based on analysing media content by asking key questions.

5 key questions of media literacy



Who is the author of the post?

Any post (written, spoken, video post) had to be created by someone.

- Do we know the author's name? Or does the author act under a pseudonym or just as an *author* or are they *anonymous*?
- Is it possible to identify the author? Is it possible to find more information about them or their other work?
- What medium does the author work for?
- Is the medium trustworthy
- Who controls the creation and dissemination of contributions?

Serious media rely on credibility and authors must rely on proven sources, while less serious or tabloid media or authors do not insist on the veracity of information and the credibility of sources. Posts on social networks, articles on blogs or content on questionable websites

need to be approached critically - more carefully and taken with caution; especially since no one is responsible for their truthfulness and accuracy, not even their creators many times.

It is important to realize that each author of any media article has their own agenda, vision, motivation, education, experience, attitudes, opinions ... And these factors affect the final article. In addition, even the author is not omniscient, has limited resources and can commit e.g., a factual error. In this case, the author of the article or medium should correct the error and apologize for it. If this does not happen and it is not an isolated case, this is a reason to lose the credibility of the medium.

Knowing as much information as possible about the author or medium allows you to understand the context.

2. WHAT?

It is not always easy to decipher what content the post carries. Especially when each of us may perceive the same media post differently.

- What is the subject and goal of the article? Does it inform, educate, entertain, express an opinion, promote a product, service, or value, or does it try to cause a turmoil?
- Where did the author draw the information from? Are the sources listed? If so, are they trustworthy?
- Is it possible to verify the author's claim?
- Does the author try to show the whole issue from many points of view, or do they only promote their own position?
- Does the author give an overall picture of the issue or are their statements taken out of context?
- Does the author endorse details that are not relevant in the overall context?

The content of the article corresponds to the values and point of view of the given medium and author, at the same time it focuses on certain recipients. It is crucial to be able to recognize whether the author is **presenting facts or expressing their opinions** (i.e., to be able to distinguish news from journalism), to distinguish commercial **paid content from unpaid**, serious from tabloid or trustworthy from less trustworthy.

Opinion vs fact

- *The Sweater is expensive*, is an opinion.
- *The Sweater costs 40 euros* is a fact.

Paid vs unpaid content

Paid content is commonly referred to as *Sponsored, Ad, Advertising*, etc., but this may not always be the case. As a rule, search engines display sites that have paid for their promotion as the first results.

Trustworthiness

Credibility is relative and cannot be measured - it is difficult to assign a specific value to it on a scale. However, it is possible to determine whether the media contribution is credible through critical thinking and analysis using media literacy questions.

Furthermore, we must consider that the author does not provide certain information in the article, for example because:

- They don't want to – they hide information.
- They can't, because they have limited options (financial, time limits, limited count of characters, they source from limited sources, etc.)
- They don't know the information, or they did not find it out.

We should also consider how our own experiences, knowledge, values, and opinions affect how we interpret the contribution and what

we take from it. It may not be an exaggeration to say that there are often as many interpretations of the same contribution as there are recipients. In order to evaluate the main goal of the paper more easily and to find out what the author focused on and what he omitted; it is essential to look for information from other credible sources. This will give us a more holistic view of the matter.

3. TO WHOM?

The author does not create content for themselves but aims to attract as many people as possible or at least a certain target group. And based on that, they also choose the method of processing the post (how).

- Who is the post for?
- How does the post reach the recipient or recipients?
- Is the author trying to influence the target group in certain way?

The article may want to reach the general public or only a part of it (e.g., senior citizens, children, lower class, upper class, potential voters of a particular political party or politician, mothers with children in kindergarten, the sick, people with higher education, with lower education, dog owners, music enthusiasts...). An experienced person or team of people will create such a contribution that it attracts the target group for which the contribution is intended. It will then publish it in on an appropriate medium and / or use various means (e.g., financial) to reach its target group. In addition, the publication is often timed so that it reaches the right recipients at the right time. Today, it is common to target online posts at specific people based on how they behave online.

Realizing to which target group we belong and why a particular contribution comes to us,

allows us to get out of its bubble and actively try to find contributions intended for other recipients and thus broaden our horizons and open up to different attitudes and opinions.

4. HOW?

One and the same can be expressed in many ways.

- By what means is the author trying to attract attention?
- In what language or style is the post formulated?
- What graphics accompany the post?
- Are photos, videos, or other graphics real and relevant?
- Is the author trying to evoke emotions (which fundamentally affect our thinking)?

Whether it's a video on Youtube or a TV show, some news on a news server or on the radio, advertising, or *memes* - each form of media contribution has its own unique way of capturing and retaining our attention.

The key in text is the language used. It can be neutral, but also evaluative, offensive, subjective, emotionally coloured, it can use "catchy" words, strong headings, attract the so-called *click baits* (in the case of Internet articles). Regarding photographs, it is good to keep in mind that they may be adjusted, which may distort or completely change their meaning. They may also be merely illustrative, outdated or intentionally misleading. The way in which the item was created also plays an important role in audio-visual production: editing, sound, camera angle, effects used, etc. If we can recognize the ways in which the author or medium is trying to attract us and thus catch our attention, we are less prone to propaganda and manipulation.

5. WHY?

No post is created just for nothing.

- For what purpose was the post created?
- Does anyone benefit from the post? How?
- Is the specific post of an informative nature, should it be entertaining or is there promotion behind it (ideas, people, companies, political parties, ideologies)? Or is it a combination?

The purpose of the article, i.e., the reason why it was created and published, can be anything. The goal can be, for example, to sell a product or service and generate profit, raise the profile of an organization, person, or group of people, inform, educate, entertain, cause a stir, but also deliberately misinform, slander, spread lies, etc. This question also includes consideration of the organisation itself that initiated and / or funded the post - what or whom it represents and what its values are.

The ability to answer the question “why?” makes it easier to identify the objectives of the contributions and the intentions of their creators and disseminators.

On paper, the issues of media competence sound like a clear thing. Decipher the author and the content, evaluate the quality of the text, justify why the report was created... Anyone can do that. Sorry you're mistaken!

Even the choice of the contribution and what attention we pay to it is reflected in what interests us. So, we naturally choose something that is close to us or that we already know something about. We then evaluate the article emotionally rather than rationally: is it “attractively” written, does it contain nice photos or videos?

Does it contain any information that shocks us? Do we understand it? Do we enjoy it? Do we empathise with the situation? Do we agree with it? And so on. Subconsciously, we either accept the report as credible because we liked it and it impressed us, or less credible because we disagree with it. It is also possible that we will almost immediately forget that we have seen such a report because it did not interest us in any way.

We often subconsciously perceive information as true because it is shared by an authority (cognitive bias, obedience to authority), whether it is a teacher, parent, journalist, or politician. Even if we do not know the authority personally, we automatically trust it and form an opinion even though we do not have our own experience with the issue.

Throughout the process, it is “not necessary” to address whether its author is objectively credible, whether they exist at all, whether the claims are true, from how many sources the author drew, whether the background music (in the case of video) distorts the overall expression of why the article appeared on our social network at a specific moment, why this report was preferred to another on television ... - and many other questions which, however, are key to assessing credibility, as opposed to our feelings and impressions.

Media literacy is not an ability that one learns from a textbook. Along with critical thinking, it needs to be trained. When consuming any media content, it is important to focus on the above questions and ask others. Be aware of the mistakes in your thinking and try to eliminate them. Open yourself to different opinions and don't just stick to your own. And be interested in areas which do not correspond to your beliefs.

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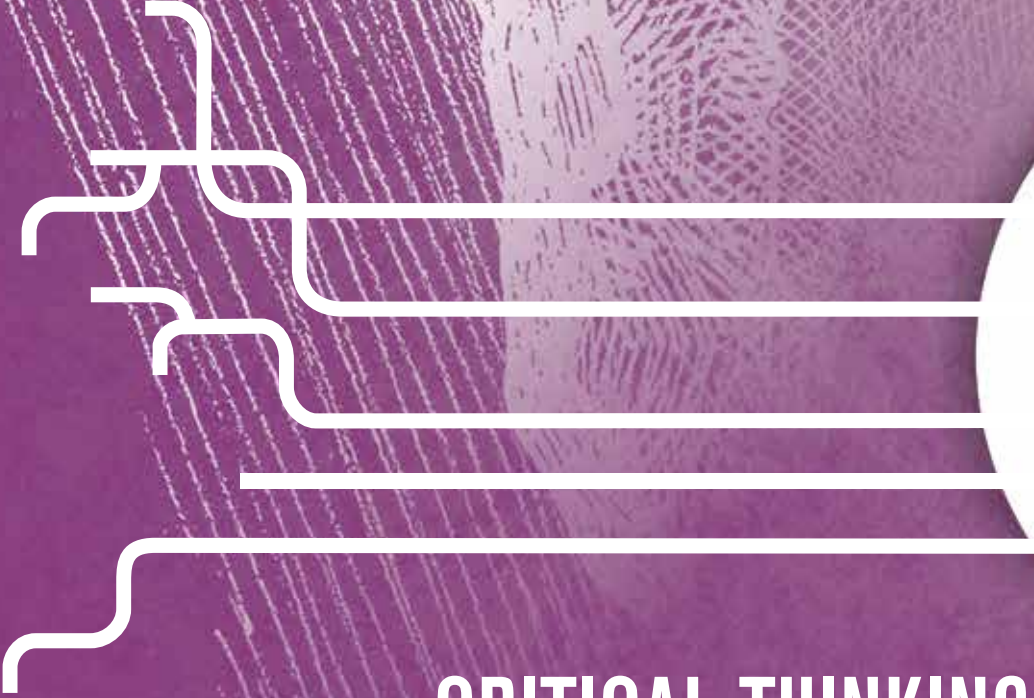
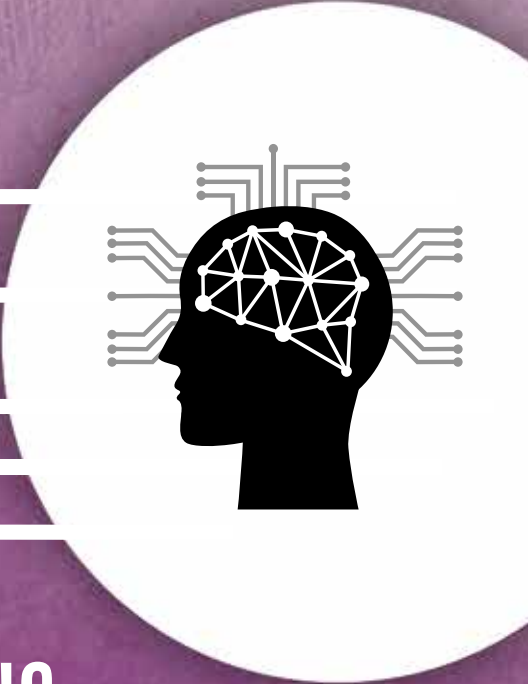
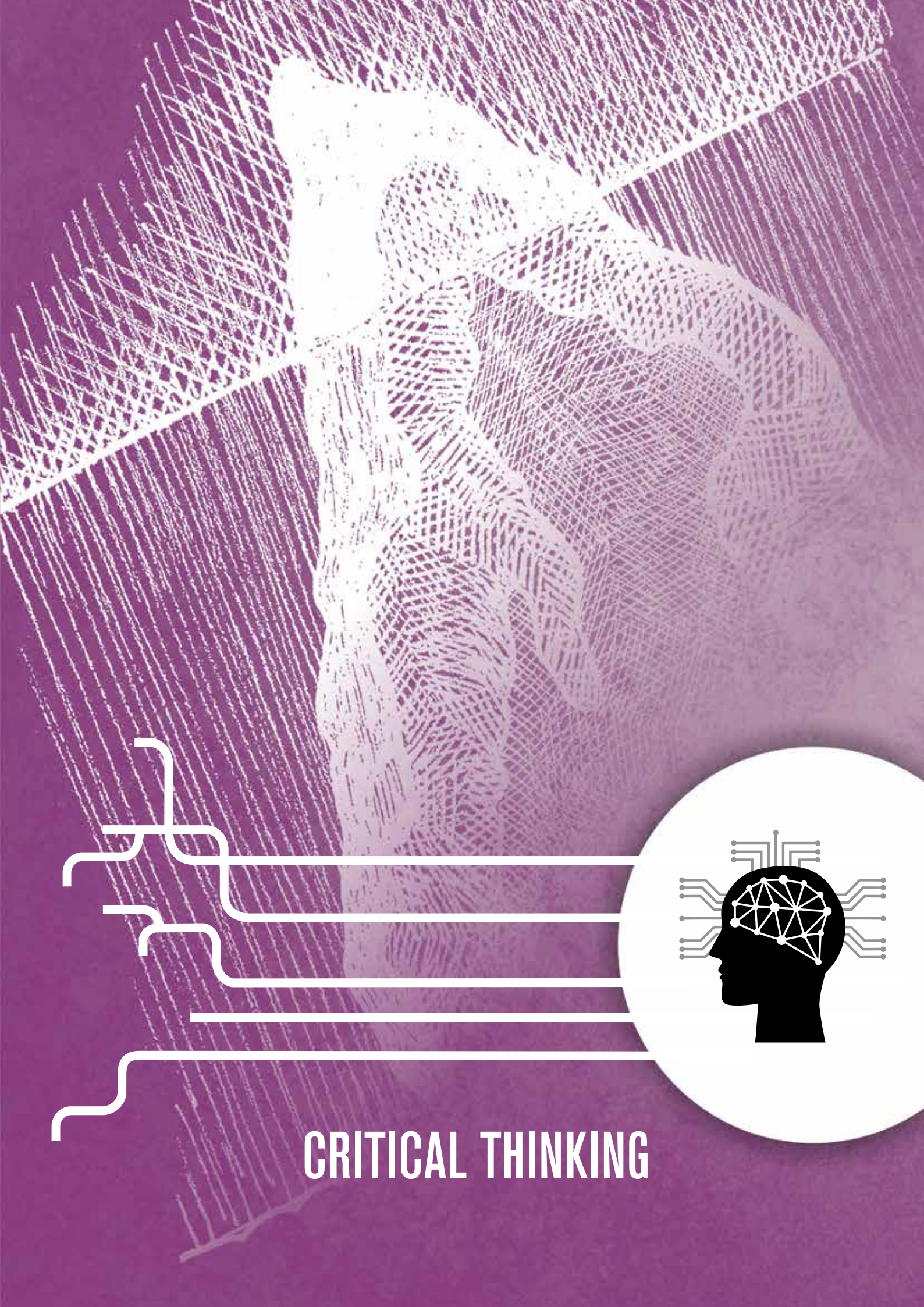
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CRITICAL THINKING

2.1 Introduction to critical thinking

We were unable to influence much of the information we received during our younger years. As children were raised by our parents, the curriculum was set by others, so our views on some common things, such as putting our fingers in a drawer or important national figures, were clear. We simply accepted the “truthfulness” of this information because there was no possibility to question it and we could only verify a small part of it on our own. In this context, this type of receiving information is natural. Even these seemingly banal facts have cultivated in us the habit of fully trusting submitted information. But then came the Internet and thousands of often conflicting pieces of information that began to pour in on us daily. Does vaccination protect us from disease or is it completely useless? Is heating food in a microwave harmless or does it cause cancer? Are the lines behind the planes in the sky a natural physical phenomenon or are we dusted with the secret rulers of the world ...? We had to understand that not every piece of information represents the truth. So how do you choose what to trust? And wouldn't it be better if someone “wise” picked all the right information and deleted the others? Unfortunately, it would not be better, because if someone had such power, we would lose something very valuable. The possibility of free choice. The opportunity to discover and explore.

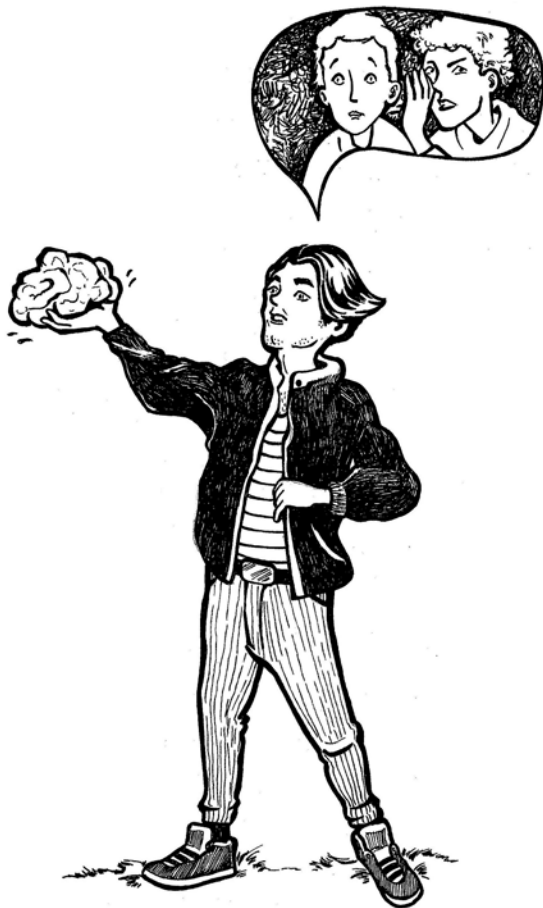
Why is freedom of choice important?

Each of us longs for happiness, even though each of us imagines it as something different. What makes someone happy can make absolutely no sense for others. Freedom is essential for personal happiness. However, we are increasingly confronted with arguments in defence of illiberal countries, which restrict citizens' freedom “in the interest of the highest interests”. They are portrayed as places where it is a pleasure to live - islands of order and tradi-

tional values amid an environment of general decline. However, no facts confirm this. On the contrary, all countries' rankings according to quality of life almost completely overlap with the rankings according to the degree of freedom. And this is completely logical because a person knows their own individual needs best, and if they are free and independent, no one can fulfil these better than themselves. The proof is e.g., also seen in migration flows. Millions of people who want to start a new life choose free and democratic states as their target countries, despite all their problems and ills. On the contrary, undemocratic countries somehow do not seem to attract anyone. Democracy is intended to ensure that a country's government cares for the good of its citizens (otherwise it will not be re-elected), that power is not concentrated in one hand (so that one person's mistakes do not cause tragedy throughout the country), that a country's government can be publicly debated (where it is possible to criticize the rulers as well) and that power will be handed over peacefully at the start of a new rule. All these (and some other) features serve to prevent the “big bang” of civil war and bring a higher quality of life to the inhabitants of democracies in all respects. For this reason, it is better to live in a free and democratic country. Not because of abstract ideals, but in order to protect our own personal interests. However, building such an establishment is not easy at all. Laws, institutions, and elections alone are not enough. Citizens are key - through their ability to think critically, to look for answers and solutions.

It is not possible without critical thinking

Yes, a lot of often completely contradictory information comes at us from all sides. And that's good! This means that we live in a society of freely available and disseminated information. The problem arises when we are not able to select, evaluate and process it - that is, think critically. Then we believe anything, and we become manipulable, or we believe nothing and this can lead to a mental disorder. So, we



must not believe all information, but at least we must trust some. *So, who / what to trust?* - is one of the basic issues of critical thinking.

Who to trust?

Is it possible to believe only what we can verify ourselves? Unfortunately, even this approach is not an ideal solution. If we want to understand the world around us, our own experience will not suffice. How do we verify that there was indeed an earthquake in Nepal yesterday, as reported in the news? How do we verify that a helium atom has exactly two protons or that atoms exist at all? Even the greatest experts can verify only part of the information, and even then, only in the field in which they specialize. The whole story of humanity is based on the ability to receive information "second-hand": from a tribe listening in fear to the sound of predators in the night forest to man of the 21st century. For example, aircraft can fly and thus validate daily the equations based

on which they are constructed. These equations have been perfected by generations of physicists. Even today, no individual can construct an airplane on their own. This is only possible through cooperation and exchange of information between thousands of people.

Science

It's the same with highway bridges, computers, or vaccinations. We owe all these conveniences to science, and we are convinced of their legitimacy daily. Bridges do not fall, e-mails are sent and received, many diseases have been almost completely eradicated. Unlike religion or ideology, scientific practices are the same all over the world. Chinese aircraft are constructed based on the same equations as American aircraft. Science shows us that truth exists. It gives us verified and factually based answers to questions raised. And even to the questions from the introduction. However, although vaccination programmes have been shown to work (except in specific cases), you will find dozens of articles and conspiracies on the Internet explaining that vaccination's only goal is to make profit for pharmaceutical companies. We simply cannot do without critical thinking. It is necessary to learn to distinguish between truly scientific information and that of others, although they may begin with misleading phrases such as: "*Scientists claim ...*" or: "*9 out of 10 experts claim that ...*", "*It has been proven that...*". Because the internet is flooded with various lies. But why is that actually?

The power of information

We may be reluctant to believe this, but every single piece of information we receive affects and changes us. Each of us is unique in our inner experience, has our own desires, needs, memories, values and based on them we make our own free decisions. But all of this is a direct consequence of the processing of the information we have received in our lifetime. So,

the “I” and the “information” are not separate, because the “I” is largely shaped by the information received. Take, for example, advertising and marketing. Worldwide, \$ 560 billion was spent on it in 2019 (www.statista.com), and we can be sure that the money was not wasted. As embarrassing as an advertisement shot for a particular washing powder seems to us, we will still buy it in the end. We act like programmed zombies. Everyone thinks advertising doesn’t affect them, but the numbers of marketing agencies speak for themselves. And that’s even though use of false information is prohibited and controlled in official paid advertising. But what about other content on the internet? The people who disseminate the information can influence the recipients without them realizing it. And this has always been the dream of many. Power-hungry politicians and a variety of fanatics, including with dukes and managers. It is necessary to keep in mind that by targeting selected information (and blocking other) it is possible to create anything from anyone - a killer exterminating inferior races, a religious fanatic, a liberal, a conservative or a volunteer dedicated to charity. Moreover, every single piece of information leaves its stamp on us. Once accepted by the brain, it becomes part of our “I” and can influence our decisions in various areas (yes, even in elections) long after it is “forgotten”. The power of information in human history has always belonged to the ruling minority, which thus controlled the masses. And in the name of (sometimes very noble) ideals, millions of people have repeatedly suffered and died. The solution was the freedom to spread information.

With the advent of the Internet, it seemed that nothing really stood in the way, because anyone could let the whole world know about their ideas, and no censor or editor-in-chief would stop them from doing so. However, it turned out that it is not enough just to know the truth cannot be silenced. **It is necessary for people to be able to realise it as well.**

How they lie to us

You may have already come across the term “hybrid war”. The word “war” is not used here in the transmitted but in the original sense. “Hybrid” means that it uses (also) other means than the military. This is nothing new, because the aim of war is to impose its will on the other side, and various means have always been used for this. If this was easiest to achieve with the army and tanks, then those were used, but more often they used boycotts, sanctions, media games, tricks, international isolation, threats, or ultimatums. Nowadays, when military success with brute force is essentially unthinkable in the developed world, operations in cyberspace are being employed.

Imagine two fictional countries. The land of mice - Mouseland and the land of frogs - Frogland. Each of them controls one bank of a forest stream. This has been the case for as long as anyone can remember. However, the Great Frog - the ruler of the Frogland - would now like to control a strip of land on the other bank, where, in addition to mice, frogs also live. As an experienced strategist, he knows that he has two options for achieving his goal. He could send tank divisions and a regular army to the neighbouring territory, but he is aware that they would face a difficult fight. The aggression against their homeland would probably be condemned by the frogs living in Mouseland,



which have been enjoying life peacefully for generations, not only with mice, but also with snails and birds. However, if the brave army of Frogland managed to overcome the resistance, the profit of the rich region would be many times higher than other damage that the aggressor would suffer.

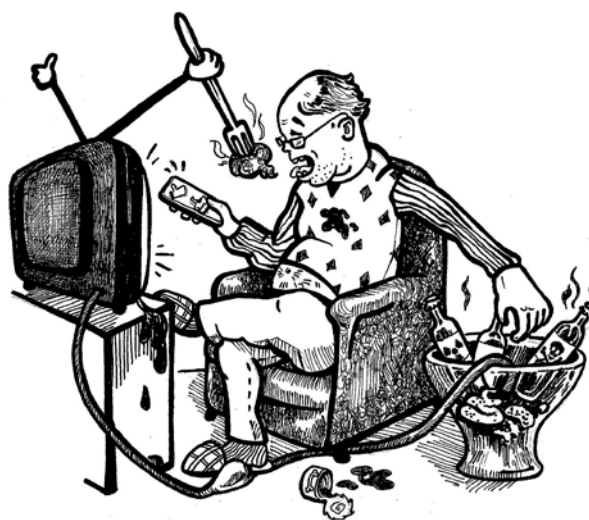
The Great Frog would still have to reckon with military counteraction from the mice and perhaps the entire forest community (and there are really no jokes with storks). In any case, at the very least he would need to deal with economic sanctions and a boycott of frog products throughout the forest. However, the Great Frog could also achieve his goal through hybrid operations. He could weaken the loyalty of frogs living in Mouseland by spreading disinformation that tarnished their homeland and made them feel oppressed or abused. In Mouseland, he could establish and support frog associations or radical animal political parties. He could spread *hoaxes* about how frogs are harmed in Mouseland and how great they could be in the land of frogs. If, with the help of paid *trolls*, he managed to convince and outrage at least a small portion of the citizens of Mouseland, the topic would enter public debate and thus affect the whole country. By further adding additional problems and influencing public opinion with false information, it could lead, for example, to a referendum in the Coastal Province. Then, during the campaign, only a small provocation would suffice, a news campaign or personal discredit of an opponent, as a result of which the mouse police would hurt the frog patriots, and the mood in society could change radically. And if the Mice truly respected democracy, the Coastal Belt would become part of Frogland without a single shot, with minimal costs and collateral damage.

Even though we are not afraid of frogs, it is necessary to keep in mind that if wars are being waged in our region, they probably look like this. We should not defend against the aggressors with weapons, but with the keyboards of our computers. Critical thinking is thus a kind of military training.

Anyone can lie

As we mentioned, the Internet is democratic, and manipulation is therefore available to all. Falsehoods and *hoaxes* can be created and disseminated intentionally and purposefully, but it often happens that people continue to spread them without malicious intent. Either because they sincerely trust them, or they just want to be interesting and collect as many *likes* (clicking on an icon expressing praise, recognition, agreement or a positive attitude towards something, such as a post, comment on social networks or websites) from friends.

For example, if my patisserie has lost customers because a new one has opened, it would be very easy to publish the status under a false profile that our whole family has diarrhoea today. Of course, from the ice cream of the competing company. From another account I would add a comment that it happened to me and for the second time, I just did not realize that it was always after visiting that patisserie. Then I share this post. For such an operation to be successful, I must have enough “followers” on that profile. We can get them in advance, for example, by spreading interesting content. We share sensational revelations, guaranteed advice and instructions, incredible events ... And once we have such a community of followers, it would be a shame not to offer a service to others who need to spread “their” truth.

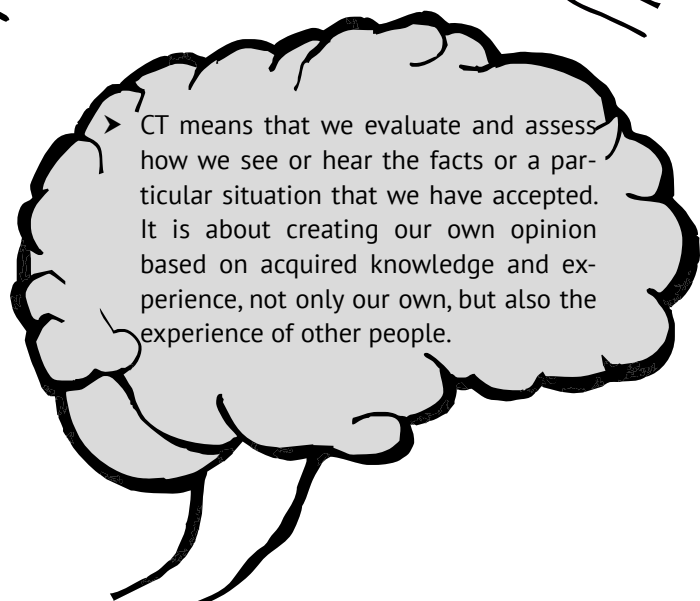
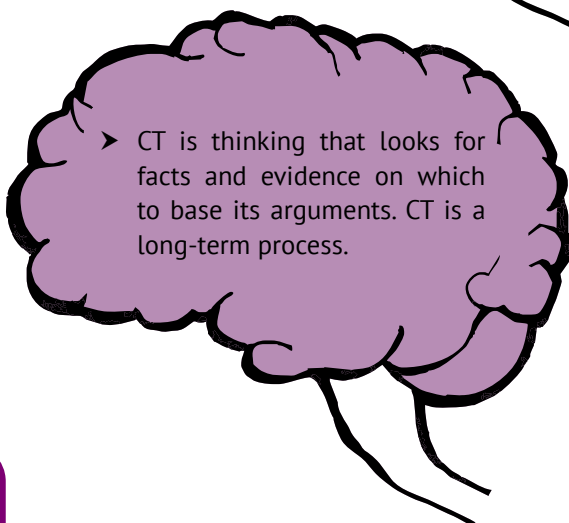
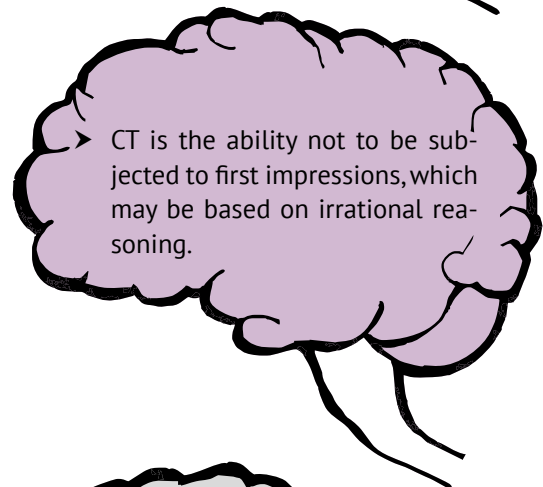
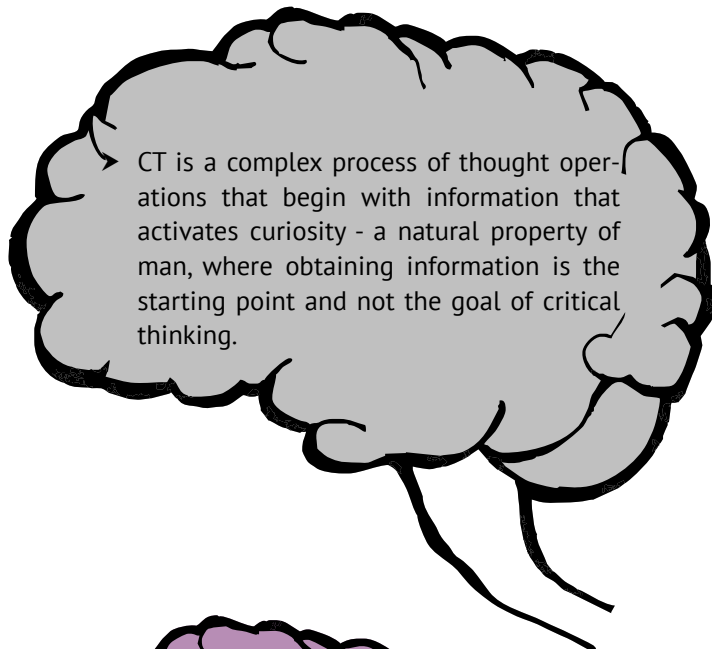
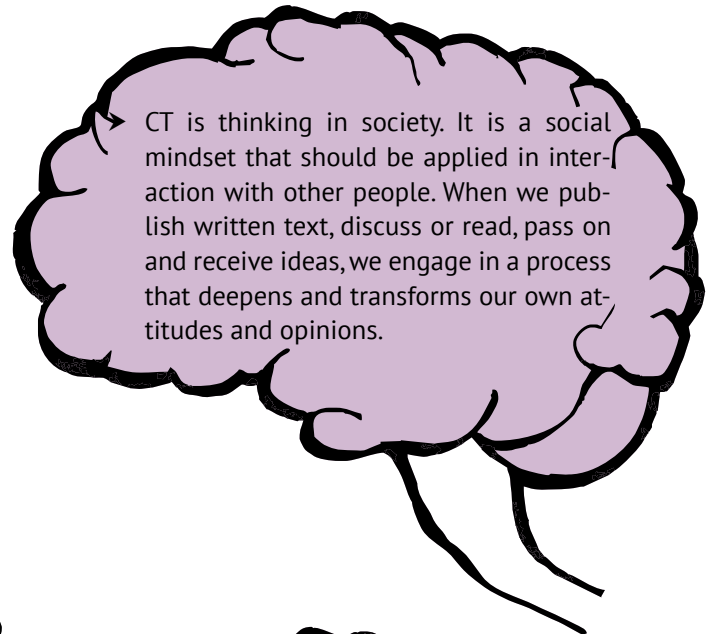


Beware of what you „eat”!

The importance of a healthy diet and exercise for the healthy functioning of the body is scientifically proven. When choosing information, that choice is even more important. Toxic information cannot be avoided or ruled out! Therefore, it is necessary to pay great attention to the information we “feed” ourselves. The internet is like an *all-you-can-eat* restaurant with an endless menu. Here we should approach information as we do food: we should understand its composition, content, check where the ingredients came from, and at the same time serve it responsibly. **Critical thinking is therefore the ability to choose the appropriate “food” - information - and be able to process it.**

2.2 Critical thinking

Critical thinking (CT) can be characterized from several perspectives. Here we list the most commonly used characteristics defining critical thinking.



Critical versus “non-critical” thinking

To better understand the nature of critical thinking, we can compare its most distinctive features with the features of “non-critical” thinking.

Non-critical Thinking	Critical Thinking
guesses the truth	uncovers the truth
works with assumptions	works with hypotheses
groups information	classifies information
prefers sensations	evaluates the quality of information
opinions without justification	justified opinions
judges without criteria	judges based on the criterion
black and white, superficial vision of the world	colourful vision of the world, going to the essence, to the depths
irrational, inconsistent thinking	rational, consistent thinking
imitates, takes over the thoughts of others	original thinking
passive access to information	active access to information
non-disciplinary, one-sided approach towards information	interdisciplinary, multifaceted multi-disciplinary approach
uses a dogmatic approach	exploring, searching, researching, reasoning
uses vague expressions	uses precise expression
selfish, emotional information processing	unbiased information processing, without prejudice and emotion
trying to learn what others have come up with without looking for context (“foundry”)	trying to learn to think

Why is critical thinking needed?

According to a 2010 survey by the American Management Association, four competencies (**4C - key competencies**) are key to a company's success.

1. Critical Thinking
2. Communication
3. Cooperation and building of a team
4. Creativity and innovation

The success of a company depends on the skills of its employees. This is the reason why employers, schools, but also everyone should focus individually on the development of these competencies. Critical thinking can help you overcome obstacles, work effectively with information and cope with stressful situations, solve work tasks with an overview.

We cannot think critically after one lesson or course, nor after studying recommended guidelines or procedures. It is therefore necessary to support and develop critical thinking from an early age, whether from the position of a parent, teacher or youth worker. We need to develop skills and knowledge, as well as charisma to be a model of a critical thinking authority – in other words, to become a responsible person.

2.3 A critically thinking person

- ▶ distinguishes between opinions and facts;
- ▶ thinks carefully about information and tries to find as much context as possible in it;
- ▶ (by asking additional questions) can estimate whether the information is true;
- ▶ verifies the accuracy of the information they handle by checking several independent sources, which should meet conditions of credibility;
- ▶ assesses the competence and credibility of sources of information, realizes that people may have different motivations to tell us what they tell us, i.e., to do what they do;



- ▶ is interested in who says what and why they say it (whom it serves);
- ▶ not only receives information passively, but also takes a personal stance on it and forms their own opinions and attitudes on the basis of it;
- ▶ does not mechanically adopt the opinion of the *mainstream* or the opinion of the authorities;
- ▶ develops solutions and formulates arguments based on convincing or verifiable evidence;
- ▶ is able to conceive complex considerations and create their own opinions, for which they acquire a sufficient amount of data;
- ▶ knows that there is more than one solution, and therefore seeks to demonstrate the logic and practicality of their solution;

- ▶ emphasizes the clarity of concepts - if they do not know what exactly is being said, they cannot take a stand;
- ▶ realizes that the world is not quite what it seems to us - is not subject to first impression;
- ▶ is able to see things from different angles;
- ▶ has a developed ability of self-reflection - they subject their own thought processes to their own “objective” control;
- ▶ is creative, sees opportunities where others see obstacles.

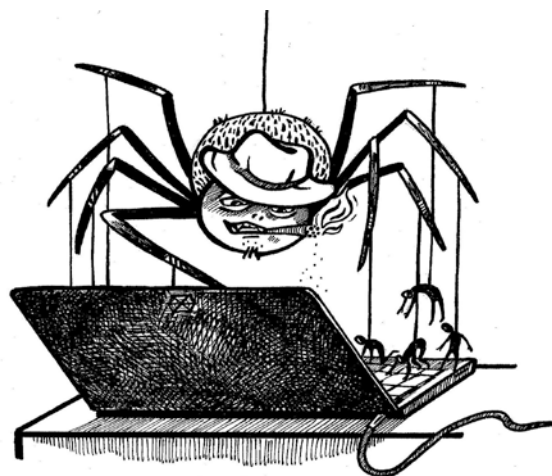
Key abilities of a critical thinker

- ▶ **The ability to observe** - That means to perceive intently, to follow information with the aim of understanding it, to gain knowledge about its content, source, informative value;
- ▶ **The ability to interpret** - we talk about the interpretation of information received and the explanation of its meaning, the reasons why it was created and the goals it pursues;
- ▶ **The ability to analyse** - analyse information as a whole and also as individual parts, break down the content of information;
- ▶ **The ability to derive and deduce** - deduce from text information, ideas and connections that are not clearly formulated in that text and deduce the meaning or connection between ideas and determine the main idea by a series of partial arguments;
- ▶ **Ability to evaluate** - assess the likelihood that the information obtained is truthful and true; also determine the completeness and comprehensibility of the information.

On the basis of all the above they should form their own conclusions and arguments.

Basic concepts related to critical thinking

Disinformation, *hoaxes*, propaganda, or conspiracy theories ... These constantly lurk in the shadows and around every corner. The growing influence of misinformation and conspiracy theories has many negative aspects that go beyond the normal framework of how we think about this problem. They lead to mistakes, failure, damage, threats, and tragedies, mainly because it is in human nature to bow to i.e., to give more weight to evidence that supports what we already believe and to ignore evidence that is contrary to our faith. Misinformation, *hoaxes*, *propaganda*, *spam* and conspiracies are among the main techniques that manipulators try to use.



A person who wants to develop their critical thinking should therefore perceive and know the basic concepts associated with this issue, but also know how to “fight” them. These basic terms include, for example:

- **manipulation,**
- **spam,**
- **hoax,**
- **disinformation,**
- **demagogue,**
- **propaganda,**
- **conspiracy or conspiracy theory.**

(Definitions are given in the Glossary).

Barriers to the development of critical thinking

Subjective causes

“Intellectual laziness” – This is a social barrier in which a person is comfortable living in conditions where important decisions are made for them. The media explains to them clearly and easily what is good and what is bad. At work, others determine how they are required to perform standard tasks in a single sequence.

Stereotype – This is a mental short-cut that the brain creates automatically in connection with the feeling of fear or anxiety. It works on the principle of “boxing”. If the information received falls into the template / box I have created, everything is fine. If not, a stereotype of the information is automatically created.

Habit – This is a way of behaving in a person, based on repeated and regular actions of some activities.

Trying not to be different from others – One prefers to fit into the crowd for various reasons, lives in a “social bubble” in which they do not draw too much attention to themselves.

Striving for a good image – Out of fear that they might lose their “good name” in society, one will not express themselves fully, i.e., only to such an extent that their status is not endangered – even though they might have the right opinion, perception and think well critically, but it might not be accepted by others.

Prejudices and biases – A special combination of essentially unjustified attitudes and opinions that people acquire quite inconspicuously through the influence of their society and environment, or they assume from an “authority”. These are cheap tricks, with the help of which it is quite easy to overcome the difficulties that accompany the formation of one’s own opinion on something that somehow goes beyond our established vision of the world around us.

Emotions – fear and insecurity – These are manifestations and adequate responses to

specific experiences; unlike rational behaviour, they are stronger and more difficult to influence. Often these emotions are an obstacle to thinking critically.

Objective factors

Insufficient awareness of critical thinking – as well as the importance of this skill in the life of the individual and society;

Confirmation bias – from the received information we deliberately choose in them those parts, that support our already existing opinion

Attributional bias – the view that good things happen because of internal factors and bad things because of external ones;

Trusting gossip – trusting information without evidence;

Memory outages – filling “information holes” with your own information and ideas, which may or may not be accurate, e.g., when we do not remember the experience or problem accurately or lack complete information;

Acceptance of authorities without objections – blind acceptance of authorities in professional, influential or authoritarian positions;

White lies – feigned knowledge, “white lies” that we use to look more educated than we really are. We do not admit that we do not know all the facts.

10 steps towards critical thinking

1. **Questioning Assumptions** – A critical person is curious and looks for opportunities to find all available answers to “WHAT” questions and “WHY?”. They are not satisfied with an automatic answer, but they ask “why?” until they satisfy their curiosity and understand the answers they were looking for.
2. **Accepting other worldviews** – When making decisions, it is appropriate to take ac-

count of the opinions, attitudes, and information from other people. Empathy with others plays an important role.

3. **Using data to make decisions** – A critical person without the presence of facts and data does not make serious decisions. They complement their conjectures and gaps in information with substantiated data.
4. **Managing ambiguities** – Learning to feel comfortable even when working in an environment where something is constantly changing and where quick decisions are made. To be able to work in a team that has clearly defined sub-tasks, engage technology and work with a constant supply of new information.
5. **Be creative and innovative in our work** – To continuously search for new ways of solving problems, find opportunities in places, where they are seemingly absent. Even in failure a critically thinking person sees opportunity for the creation of new and often better solutions.
6. **Find time for reflection / self-reflection** – Critical analysis, observing, contemplating and thinking about a subject from different points of view. Immersion in ideas will support the decision-making and opinion-forming process.
7. **Not to be satisfied with “inner hunch” or first impression** – It is necessary to think about what is hidden under the surface and not to immediately believe everything we hear, see or read in the headlines. It is necessary to search for the essence of information, sources, statements or other additional facts within the given issue.
8. **To have a general overview** – Use curiosity to seek out new facts, information through literature, articles, debates, and discussions. Have your opinion and perspective on things.

9. **Do not automatically judge other people or information** we come across without verifying their credibility. Without searching for true facts and arguments, we risk starting to believe our hasty opinion while making decisions.

10. **Communicate clearly** – Clearly, directly and without pretending to know what we don't know. Before making an important speech, decision or holding a meeting, it is important to prepare honestly and substantiate information, opinions and decisions with verified facts and data from credible sources.

2.4 Power of argument

Critical thinking is largely about receiving and re-evaluating information that comes to us from different angles and from different media. Some media present information objectively, some embellish it, exaggerate it or distract it from the topic. In addition, it is worth noting that critical thinking is also about the ability to judge and create arguments, to be able to question and argue correctly.

We encounter many reports every day that can also affect our lives and the decisions we make. That is why it is good to know the rules of argumentation and argumentation offenses that many of us use consciously or unconsciously in conversations.

The following example shows how to present information and argumentation:

Son: *Mom, those are some beautiful paints!*

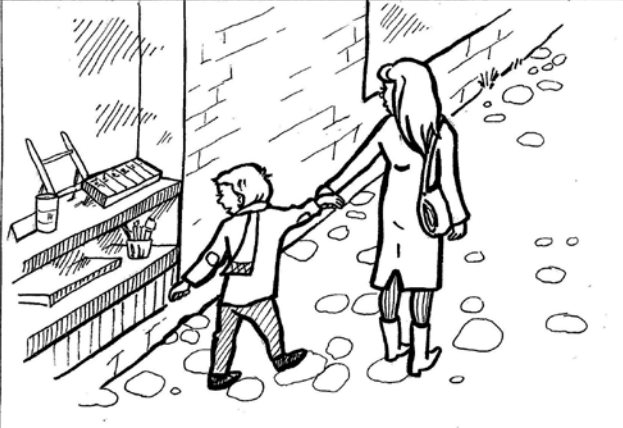
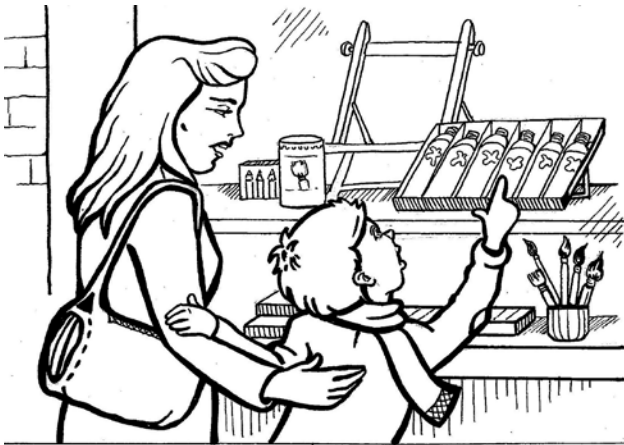
Mom: *You have some at home too.*

Son: *I don't.*

Mom: *You do. You got them from your grandmother when you enrolled in school.*

Son: *No, no. There was only one red and one green paint pot, and here there are more.*

Mom: *That's plenty. You don't need more.*



Son: No, but I want these paints!

Mom: You don't need that many paints. **(No justification)**

Son: I need them. Everyone in the class has these colours. **(Generalization)**

Mom: Certainly not everyone has them.

Son: Yes, yes, they do. And the teacher said that we must bring in a lot of different paint for art and I have only a few. **(Appeal to authority)**

Mom: You have enough. Come on! Dad is waiting for us outside. **(Appeal to time)**

Son: No, I want those paints.

Mom: Don't make me angry anymore and come on!

Son: Why don't you want to buy them for me?

Mom: Come on. Do you want to keep your dad waiting outside? **(“Selective hearing” and emotional blackmail)**

Son: I don't want to, but I want those paints.

Mom: If you're good, Santa will bring them to you. **(Cause and effect)**

Son: But Christmas is a month away and I have nothing to paint with.

Mom: Don't push me! Santa can see you and notes everything down. **(Appeal to authority)**

Son: But that's unfair. Tomas from our class already has these paints, and he is not as good a boy as I am. **(Swapping topics.)**

Mom: Look, I don't have time to hang out with you here. And I also don't care at all whether Tomas is a good boy or not. We must go. Dad is already waiting for us and will be angry that we are late. You have some paint already, that will have to do. And if you want those, write to Santa about it. But I don't know if he will bring them for you if he can see what you are doing to your mother and that you are not being a good boy. **(Information overload, emotional blackmail, appeal to time pressure)**

Both attendees of the discussion used **pseudo-argumentation** (“fake” arguments and statements). Children make extensive use of *pseudo-argumentation*. This is acceptable because they are not yet able to discern fact and don't realize the weight of arguments, but adults should not use and abuse such pseudo-argu-

mentation. When arguing, it is good to remember, that a correct argument should not contain manipulation, ambiguity, or error. At the same time, we should express ourselves coherently and clearly in the arguments, without concealing the facts. A good argument should be logical.

What is an argument

An argument is a series of statements (“premises”) designed to substantiate some other claim (called a “conclusion”). We use arguments when we want to defend or confirm our opinion. We should not confuse an argument with a simple statement. A statement, as opposed to an argument, only offers objective information. The purpose of the statement is not to persuade or defend.

An argument can be true or false, it is a neutral expression that points to the structure of the information. It does not confirm its veracity. An argument based on a false and illogical basis is also considered to be an argument if it meets the prescribed structure.

What is argumentation?

Argumentation is a form of communication in which attitudes, opinions, actions, etc. are clarified, justified. We most often argue when we need to prove something, when we need to convince someone, to push an opinion or an idea.

There are two methods of argumentation: the **inductive reasoning** and **deductive reasoning process**. When using inductive reasoning, the premises allow you to draw a conclusion (premise 1, premise 2, ..., and therefore a conclusion), while when using deductive reasoning, we look for premises from which the reasoning can be derived (conclusion, because premise 1, premise 2, ...)

Example of inductive reasoning: The student missed many lessons and did not get enough credits, they did not meet the criteria for continuing their studies, and therefore they will be expelled from school.

Example of deductive reasoning: The student will be expelled from school because they have not obtained enough credits and have missed many lessons.

Structure of argument (focused on inductive reasoning):

To properly understand an argument, we should know its formula. An argument is a set of statements in which one statement is called a conclusion. The statements that lead to the conclusion of the argument are called premises. An argument can contain an infinite number of premises.

(1) premise + (2) premise + ... = (3) conclusion

The conclusion is a statement based on premise, which logically justifies it. If we want to get the right conclusion, we must work with the right and proven premises.

Examples of illogical arguments

a. 1. *Freshmen are usually timid.*
2. *Introverts are usually timid.*
1 + 2 = Freshmen are introverts.

b. 1. *Ronaldo is a wonderful football player.*
2. *Messi is a wonderful football player.*
1 + 2 = Ronaldo is Messi

These arguments look logical, but they are certainly not properly substantiated. In this case, these premises have not been put in the right context. The logical conclusions should be: *Freshmen and introverts are mostly timid / Ronaldo and Messi are great footballers*. The result of such a conclusion without logic and correct context can be misleading, deceptive or harmful.

In the argument, it often happens that some of the premises or even the conclusion remains unspoken. They remain hidden between rows, making them more difficult to identify.

Example of hidden conclusion:

Argument: *“I don’t understand why you smoke. After all, smoking is harmful to health.”* This is what it would look like in a formula:

1. *You smoke.*
2. *Smoking is harmful.*
3. *Smoking is harming you.*

The sentence *„Smoking is harming you.“* is a hidden conclusion in this argument. It was not pronounced directly but is hidden between the lines.

Example of hidden premise:

Argument: *“Of course, he knows Pythagoras’ theorem, because he is a mathematician.”* Folded into our formula, it looks like this:

1. *All mathematicians need Pythagoras’ theorem.*
2. *He is a mathematician.*
3. *He knows Pythagoras Theorem.*

„All mathematicians know Pythagoras theorem.“ is the hidden premise in this argument. It was not said out loud, but it can be understood.

True argument:

1. *All humans are mammals.*
2. *Ján is a human.*
3. *Ján is a mammal.*

False argument:

1. *All lions are mammals.*
2. *Ján is a mammal.*
3. *Ján is a lion.*

Although in both cases the premises are correct, the conclusion in the second case is incorrect. The fact that all lions are mammals and John is mammal does not mean that he is also a lion. As with the examples of footballers and timid people, without logic, the right formula is useless.

How can we find out if our arguments are defined correctly?

It is good to answer the following questions:

- Are the reasons on which we base our conclusions appropriately chosen?
- Are there any hidden assumptions, opinions in the argument?
- Are any of the key words in the argument ambiguous or influenced by our prejudices?
- Are there any logical untruths or elements of manipulation in the argument?
- Has any information been omitted, concealed, or distorted in the argument?

It is worth noting that there are also instances in which an argument has limited possibilities. This is when discovering new facts through observation and experiment is necessary and when personal opinions or preferences are expressed. For example, in the case of an opinion, which we express with the statement *“I like this image.”* In this case, a preference is expressed that is based on personal opinions or reasons: one opinion is explained by another, but the context is not a justification and argumentation.

Argumentation is justified especially when we want to uphold several possible solutions (ideas, decisions, attitudes, etc.) the one which is the best / most suitable in comparison with others.

Factors influencing argumentation

It is necessary to realize that argumentation and presentation of information is influenced by several factors and abilities, but also the predispositions of the recipient of information and the giver of information.

It is therefore important to focus on various factors that can positively or negatively affect

the communication of information and argumentation (Zelina 2011).

- **Personality of the information provider:** to behave in such a way as to be acceptable to the addressee; create a strategic information plan, obtain, and retain the attention of the recipient, use appropriate methods of explaining information.
- **Personality of the recipient of the information:** degree of influence, self-confidence and strength of self-image; know what affects the recipient (what convinces, does not convince);
- **Intermediate factors:**
 - a. Extra indicators: age, education, gender;
 - b. Intra indicators: intelligence, sociability, domination, aggression, etc.

Argumentation fouls

Many “bad” arguments contain various kinds of manipulation - *argumentative foul*. In judging the arguments and information we receive; we may be misled or deceived by errors of reasoning that arise from our minds. These are cognitive distortions, which are described in more detail in the chapter *Media Literacy*. In addition to the internal mechanisms of the mind, which are part of us, it is necessary to be careful in critical thinking and to perceive manipulation practices that can be used (or tested) by someone else.

In different literature it is possible to meet with different naming of elements of communication manipulation. Sometimes they are called: an argumentative delusion, a logical delusion, an intentional error in judgment and logic, a rhetorical trick, and so on. In this publication, we will use the term *argumentative foul*.

Argumentation fouls are practices by which someone tries to confuse us or distract us. It is the presentation of information or argumentation that contains a logical error or uses other manipulation techniques. When thinking critically, it is therefore important to know the “pitfalls” that can affect us in the content disseminated, for example, social media lurk. These are practices that someone may want to deceive or manipulate us with.

Before we move on to the examples of argumentation fouls, it is good to realize the relationship between the concept of influencing and manipulation: “*We influence through any information communication action. If we influence morally, it is motivation. If we influence immorally, it is manipulation.*” (David Gruber, 2018). Influence in this sense is therefore a superior category of manipulation.

There are many practices that someone may use to influence us. In this section, we will list the most well-known argumentation fouls.

As with other topics, there are several definitions and divisions in manipulative techniques. We will provide a breakdown based on the strategy that information providers use.

We recognize three basic strategies for manipulative techniques.

- **Playing with language** – When playing with language, manipulators resort to the use of vague words, misleading euphemisms or biased language.
- **Appealing to emotions** – This is an example of a manipulative technique that tries to influence our emotions. Appealing to emotions from either a positive or negative perspective (e.g., **pride, hope, fear, regret, hatred, prejudice**) can affect us to such an extent that we do not even notice the lack of meaningful argumentation.

- **Trying to distract attention from the essential** – All these techniques have one thing in common - their purpose is to distract attention from an argument or topic.

Types of argument fouls:

Personal attack

This is an unfair personal attack on someone else, while saying nothing about the other party's arguments.

„You have nothing to say about what we're going to do in physical education. You've always been fat.”

Explanation: The fact that someone was overweight or had any health problems has nothing to do with their ability to plan physical education activities.

Vague, uncertain, or hollow words and sentences

Expressions and sentences providing several possible interpretations, which can distract attention from the essence. They are often used by politicians and are also widely used in advertising.

Vague, hollow words: *„People are worthy of security.”*

Explanation: This sentence says nothing about whether the author of the statement will provide the said certainty. It only states what people want to hear, without any promise.

Vague words: *“One morning I shot an elephant in my pyjamas. I'll never know how he got in my pyjamas.” (Groucho Marx). In the first sentence, it was not clear whether the elephant or the human was in his pyjamas.*

Appeal to emotions (Emotionally coloured language)

A technique that tries to influence our emotions. Appealing to emotions from positive to negative can affect us so that we do not even notice the lack of meaningful argumentation. By using strong emotions, it creates an unfair situation that disadvantages those who disagree with it.

“Ladies and gentlemen, just look at this gentleman, a handicapped wheelchair user. Do you really think he would be capable of such embezzlement? Such an act? That he could do that?”

Explanation: The argument seeks to arouse regret over the plight of a handicapped person. His health problem has nothing to do with his morals, values, and ability to do something inappropriate and immoral (such as embezzlement).

Appeal to tradition

Referring to customary habits, which do not necessarily say anything about the current situation.

“The celebration will be held at the Shot Duck Restaurant. Your father and grandfather before him used to celebrate there, and you should too...”

Explanation: This is an appeal to family traditions, but it does not say anything about the current situation or the reason for the necessity and need to hold a celebration in the same restaurant.

Generalizing

This is a generalization based on one or random experience. Alternatively, based on a few samples.

“Young people are getting worse.”

Explanation: Someone had a negative experience, for example, when a young vandal was drawing graffiti on the street, and now he cites it as a general fact about all young people.

Appeal to false or inappropriate authorities

We want to increase or confirm the strength of the argument by supporting it using a figure of authority, which usually has nothing to do with the situation.

“Madonna wears great glasses, that’s what everyone should wear.”

Explanation: This is a reference to a public figure (*argumentum ad populum*). And after all, it can’t be wrong. The speaker can also invoke his own authority - he refers to his rich experience or, on the contrary, he deliberately belittles himself, even though he may be convinced otherwise.

“I’ve done it many times before and it always worked.”

“I’m just an ordinary guy.”

Replacement of correlation with causality

Correlation is a condition in which two variables or events are related in the same circumstances. For example, *“Because of winter and snow, birds fly south, and drivers change tires on cars.”* The flying of birds to the south and the change of tires on cars are unrelated and their cause is the third phenomenon (approaching winter and snow). **Causality** is a state where one phenomenon directly causes another phenomenon. *“If it freezes in winter, the pond will freeze.”* The ice formed is a direct result of winter.

“An amateur will say that the PH of food, which is directly reflected in the PH of urine, causes all health problems from flu to cancer.” They see causality where there is none.

Explanation: Vegetables cause a higher pH of urine (more alkaline) due to the content of some minerals. At the same time, however, vegetables also contain a lot of vitamins, fibre and are significantly less calorific than, for example, white flour products. The benefit of vitamins, fibre and calorie restriction have been proven to have a positive effect on overall health.

Statistics manipulation

Several manipulative techniques fall into this category. Numbers or graphs often seem very convincing. However, they can be based on a non-representative sample. Leading questions, which can incline the respondent to answer in a certain way can be used as manipulation. Statistics manipulation also includes the use of inappropriate statistical calculations, the use of distorting graphs, etc.

“The average salary in this company is € 2,000. Therefore, I expect a starting salary of € 2,000 for the position of assistant.”

Explanation: The fact that the average salary in the company is 2000,- €, does not say anything about the salary for the open position. In a company where the management has a salary of 5000,- €, the head of the department 3000,- € and other technical and administrative employees 1000,- €, the average value is not very informative.

Circle argumentation

This is a nonsensical persuasion when the assumptions and the conclusion of the argument say the same without added informational value. Talking about the same thing, just in other words.

“Waste separation helps nature. And that’s why if we want to have beautiful nature, we have to sort waste.”

Explanation: The aim is to support the conclusion of the argument that separation helps nature. The second part does not say anything new; it just modifies the first part without any justification. Although the statement may be true, it is not substantiated in this case.

Catch-22

This is the use of rules that are mutually exclusive and thus do not provide another acceptable choice.

“According to Colonel Korn’s rule, only soldiers who had never asked a question previously were allowed to do so in Catch-22. In a short time, only those who went to meetings with the management were the ones who never asked questions, and so the meetings were completely cancelled. Corporal Clevinger and Colonel Korn agreed that it is not possible or necessary to educate people who never ask questions.”

Explanation: The soldiers were put in an unreasonable situation. They could only ask a question once, and as they did not ask questions, the meeting was considered useless.

Appeal to ignorance

This is when evidence required is transferred to an opponent, therefore putting the opposition in the unfavourable situation. This usually happens when an argument cannot be sufficiently backed up. Instead of supporting their claim with evidence, they transfer the search of evidence to the opponent.

“People who play football are happier, have more love and money. If you don’t refute this, then I’m right.”

Explanation: There is no information in this statement to confirm its veracity. The speaker has passed the search for a solution to the other side, which, if they do not refute it, should confirm the truth of his statement.

Red Herring

This is about moving away from the topic at hand to an unrelated matter, about distracting with arguments and subjects that are not relevant to the issue.

“Helping less developed countries is not effective at all. The politicians there are totally corrupt, and even if we give them some money, it still won’t get to the people.”

Explanation: The argument seeks to confirm the conclusion that rich countries do not need to help the poorer ones. Instead of offering facts, however, it draws attention to the corruption of local officials. At the same time, it does not provide the information that development aid can be provided in various ways, e.g., also by supporting the activities of non-governmental organizations. The result of such an argument may be that the debate will end somewhere over corruption in developing countries and will not return to the discussion about the effectiveness of development cooperation.

Two wrongs make a right

Here the aim is to divert attention from the negative by pointing out something similarly wrong, which has previously gone unpunished.

“Why are you fining me when you let the car in front of me pass?”

Explanation: The author of the statement tries to defend his actions (a traffic violation) by showing others violating them. However, this does not uphold his misdeed and does not relieve him of responsibility for the offense.

The strawman

The manipulator first creates a fake replica of the opponent’s argument - the so-called “Straw dummy” - and then tries to reconcile this “argument”. The essence is, that they want to replace the opponent’s argument with one they did not say, or to explain that argument differently, or to choose some banality in it and try to show, that it is essential.

“Did you see that? The Secretary of Defence wants to stop funding our tank division. I absolutely disagree, I can’t understand why they want to leave us so defenceless.”

Explanation: The Minister of Défense said

that they no longer wanted to finance the tank division. However, their opponent replaced the statement, saying they wanted to weaken the state's defence. But the minister did not actually say that. Tanks are not the only possible means of defence in the country. The minister may want to transfer the resources, for example, to buy other new weapons that can defend the country more effectively.

Slippery Slope

This is a situation where we escalate the opponent's argument through a series of likely or unlikely consequences to an absurd form, and thus try to discredit them and eliminate them from the game.

"Of course, today you want to go on a trip to the Tatras, then it will be a week to Italy and a month to Florida. And next year you will want to go on a trip around the world."

Explanation: The topic of the discussion was a trip to the Tatras. The actor in the discussion escalated the statement into a form that was not mentioned or expected anywhere. They are trying to discredit the other party.

How to react to some types of argumentation faults?

Awareness of media literacy and critical thinking, but also their application in practice should be part of our daily lives. As mentioned

in the previous sections, some characteristics are given to us and influence our perceptions and decisions (cognitive distortions). On the other hand, there are tricks and techniques that someone can use on us with the intention of influencing our opinion or actions. Some of these tricks have just been mentioned in the topic of critical thinking and in part of section argumentative faults.

Even with these argumentation faults, there are a few recommendations on how to respond to them:

After all, we all want to... - I don't know about that, for example, I don't want to.

Basically, we will save most of the money. - Can you prove it?

Only the ignorant will be against it. - Please list your arguments.

You can read this in reputable magazines ... - Please can you name these specifically.

Professor Hlaváč has already proposed... - And what is your evidence for the conclusion you are proposing?

Insufficient knowledge of these topics and a lack of awareness of what influences us and how we can eliminate these influences, is responsible for the emergence of stereotypes and prejudices and thus creates space for the spread of hate speech towards individuals or groups of people. The following chapter also deals with these topics.

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Recommended study resources:

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<<https://www.lovcisarlatanov.sk/>>

<<https://dennikn.sk/prirucky/>>

<<https://kritickemyslenie.sk>>

<<https://www.nenalet.im/kriticke-myslenie/>>

<<https://kritickemyslenie.sk/co-je-kriticke-myslenie/>>



**SAFE USE OF INTERNET
AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**

3.1 Opportunities and risks of internet usage

We are not passive recipients in relation to the Internet, we also act as creators and communicators, which encourages thinking, creativity, and social interactions. Therefore, the Internet is a medium that expands the natural space for the development of the individual through several opportunities; and many online activities are also tools for offline activities. The Internet also provides another forum for gaining social support and help in a crisis. All benefits can be detrimental in certain circumstances, so the scope, age, motives and needs of the Internet user must always be considered, as well as the unique context in which the use of the Internet and social media is set (Tomková et al., 2015).

Many internet opportunities contain benefits and moderate risks at the same time. Therefore, while restricting the use of the internet will temporarily protect children and young people, it will deprive them of the benefits and the opportunity to learn to use the Internet responsibly. Early education and prevention, and the sharing of children's online tools with adults is recommended before they start using online opportunities on their own.

The Internet is being used at an ever younger age, leading to risks related to neuropsychological stress, learning and memory processes, lifestyle, health and the risks of irresponsible and unsafe use. Even smaller children may have technical skills and may be skilled *multitaskers* (people who know how to do more things at the same time), but they lack emotional and social maturity, resilience, critical thinking and life experiences; therefore, facing risks such as:



- ▶ unsecured and non-critical publication of content on the internet;
- ▶ disclosure of personal data and its possible misuse;
- ▶ abuse of geolocation and camera;
- ▶ security and password cracking;
- ▶ hacking and misusing email accounts and social media profiles;
- ▶ *cyberstalking* - systematic harassment of victims with unwanted attention (as a possible part of cyberbullying);
- ▶ *cyber grooming* - deliberately reaching out with the aim of sexual intercourse, especially with children and adolescents. (Offenders use false names, ages, and other personal information to inspire trust in children and then try to make contact.);
- ▶ cyberbullying - bullying through electronic communication tools;
- ▶ hate speech in communication;
- ▶ information overload, misinformation and pressure from information explosion;
- ▶ overuse of online activities and online addiction.

It is important that the child, but also the young person, together with adults and more advanced peers learns how to reduce the risk of harm to themselves or other people on the Internet.

By the age of 10, a child needs clear rules, boundary setting in behaviour, and joint activities with adults. From the second stage of primary school / early secondary school, children have more mature abstract thinking, and therefore we approach them constantly with rules and boundaries, although with a greater degree of respect for their own opinions. Then let us invest in education for more independent critical thinking through the experience, discussion, and involvement of children in activities useful for peers, family, and society; both online and offline.

Online generation - developmental aspect

Even young people who were born into the digital age and have not lived through another era are still young people and adolescents with needs typical of this developmental period. Over time, only the ways and forms of young people and families meeting these needs have changed. Identity is constantly evolving in adolescence, children, and young people, especially girls, know who they are and who they would like to be. In this process, they are internally insecure, have lower and unstable self-esteem. Therefore, they consciously and subconsciously look for self-affirmation, models, and patterns. They compare themselves with their peers. From whom they long for recognition and acceptance, for popularity and good status. Previously they were able to gain confirmation of their “I” through peer-to-peer activities, now this is possible by presenting themselves on social media, where the content they publish receives the reactions of the environment. Logically, they reach for these possibilities because they seem safer and more advantageous. After all, photos can be touched up and staged,

showing only the interesting things in themselves, avoiding spontaneous embarrassment. As is the case in puberty, adolescents are sensitive and critical of themselves and of *feedback*, including electronic feedback.

From puberty to adolescence, young people actively define their own living space and independence, so they “test” the rules that they respected in childhood at home and at school, which manifests itself as defiance and crossing borders, trying risky things, etc. The consequences of taking risks are often not as important as the desire for adrenaline and popularity, and this is also naturally related to age.

After all, digital technologies and the internet are not detached from reality and interpersonal aspects. On the contrary, they enhance, accelerate, and make our humanity visible to all and that is why it is necessary to educate and raise people to use the Internet safely. Young people, including children, need respectful dialogue and well-chosen guidance from adults or more advanced peers.

3.2 Cyberbullying

Bullying and cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is an undesirable socio-psychological phenomenon, as is face-to-face bullying. It is one of the forms of bullying, and therefore these phenomena cannot be looked at separately. Research also shows that face-to-face bullying and its electronic form often occur at the same time, and that aggressors who harm another person simply have other options for harming through digital tools and on the Internet. Recent research also shows that if cyberbullying occurs, there is a high probability that the victim is both bullied online and offline, and thus his or her peer relationships are affected (EUKO, 2019).

Bullying

This is the behaviour of an individual or a group, which intentionally harms another person / group physically and / or mentally, and this is usually done repeatedly. The attacker's activities are intentional, repeated, and long-lasting, and it is obvious that the victim does not consider the incidents to be fun and is upset by them, and yet the attacker continues to do harm.

With the expansion of high-speed Internet, social media and smartphones, electronic bullying has been added to the list of forms of bullying, however, it has its own specific characteristics, course, and impact for its uniqueness in online communication, as well as ways to prevent and resolve incidents. Therefore, it is important to be able to recognize it in time and to proceed systematically in its prevention and solution.

Cyberbullying

This is defined as the misuse of information and communication technologies, in particular mobile phones, smartphones, and the Internet, for the purpose of deliberately harming others. It is therefore conduct which is unpleasant to the victim but the victim, for subjective or objective reasons, cannot or is unable to protect themselves. A wide range of unacceptable behaviour can take place in electronic form to harm victims, such as threats, intimidation, persecution, public ridicule, insults, reputation damaging, rejection, social exclusion, etc.

Elements which are present in both bullying and cyberbullying:

- **imbalance of power** (attacker has power over victim)
- **audience or spectators**, who are a source of feedback for the attacker (rejection, scorn, admiration, encouragement,). It is the audience's attitudes and actions that can alleviate harm and stop bullying. But also,

through passivity towards bullying they can co-create, maintain, and legitimize its course.

Cyberbullying, like other physical or mental abuse, is a violation of the rights of the child. Its effective solution is protection of the victim and at the same time a lesson for the aggressor and the onlookers. It is important to clearly state that "*This behaviour is not and will not be accepted.*"



Types of cyberbullying

There are many types of misconduct which the victim can endure in the case of cyberbullying and these often happen consecutively.

- **Abuse in the public online space.** Humiliation is always most cruel when it happens in front of others. Aggressors therefore often humiliate the victim, for example on social networks and in chat groups. Whether with derogatory content that ridicules the victim or damages their reputation and relationships.
- **Online provocation.** The attackers provoke the victims with messages and posts with offensive, false, vulgar, or otherwise unacceptable content, which attracts the

victim's attention and thus, the attacker draws the victim into an unfair dialogue and proves his power.

- **Misuse of online identity.** The aggressor manages to break a password, therefore getting to the victim's social network profile and abusing it. Attackers can then edit original messages, communicate with contacts in place of the victim and publish contributions that harm the victim and their acquaintances. The "stolen profile" serves the aggressor as a tool for manipulation and blackmailing.
- **Outing.** The aggressor will publish information on the Internet of the victim in private and intimate situations without their consent. This can be intimate and publicly compromising photos, pictures or videos.
- **Online exclusion.** This can be targeted and significant exclusion of the victim from the online community, e.g., from the social network, the chat room, the gaming community, from the discussions forum.
- **Cyberstalking.** The aggressor significantly harasses and persecutes the victim, thus disturbing their sense of security. The victim's aggressor makes life uncomfortable with flooding interactions, e.g., spamming, re-sending photos, chat messages, likes, comments, ringing. This attention is annoying to the victim due to its intensity and frequency, even when its content is positive.
- **Happy slapping.** This is a combination of face-to-face bullying with cyberbullying. The aggressor physically attacks the victim and records the entire incident on a mobile phone and then publishes the recording on the Internet or otherwise distributes it electronically. The aggressor in happy slapping is often a group. The effect of this type of harm is devastating for the psyche of the victim.

What makes cyberbullying unique and dangerous

Disinhibitory effect and cruelty

The internet environment gives the attacker a sense of anonymity and elusiveness, and therefore individuals who would not have the predominance of physical strength in face-to-face contact can easily become attackers. On the Internet, people more often say, write, do what they would not do in a personal meeting; barriers are reduced when they sit in relative comfort, and especially in anonymity behind a computer or smartphone.

They will find the victim anywhere

Face-to-face harm is annoying, but tied to a specific place, and thus can be at least partially predicted. With cyberbullying, electronic harm can occur anywhere. Several electronic forms are often used, as well as face-to-face harm.

Variety of aggressors

Cyberbullying can be characterised by a much larger number of those involved in the active or passive harm. On the internet, people who are unknown can also join active harm, for example by creating a fake profile on a social network with the intention of making fun of someone.

The number and nature of the audience - "witnesses of bullying"

Witnesses to face to face bullying are usually visible, and the victim knows who specifically sees the individual attacks, or how far the gossip may have gone. However, it is impossible to estimate the size of the cyberbullying audience. For a victim whose social status has been compromised online and publicly, for example via social media, it is often not possible to find out who has seen the content and who will see it, as the content can be stored on a user's hard drive and retransmitted. This uncertainty can be psychologically devastating.

It is difficult to solve it and establish justice

Cyberbullying often remains unresolved due to the difficulty in revealing the identity of ag-

gressors. That is why aggressors are less aware of the consequences and their share of guilt. This applies to both attackers and witnesses, whether they are the victim's peers or authorities, e.g., teaching staff. Cyberbullying often takes place outside of school, even though it involves classmates. Therefore, teachers and school psychologists feel less pressure of responsibility to deal with such incidents. However, when they find out such a thing, they have an obligation to report this to legal representatives and to the school.

Failure to address electronic attacks leaves harmful traces in the identity of the protagonists. The roles of "victim" and "aggressor", the experience of power and helplessness in relationships, as well as injustice and violence will often remain strongly engraved in their identity until they undergo an experience that "corrects" these meanings. Therefore, the victim of bullying is often bullied at another school, often later in adulthood in the work team. It is up to adults to ensure that young people have this remedial experience.

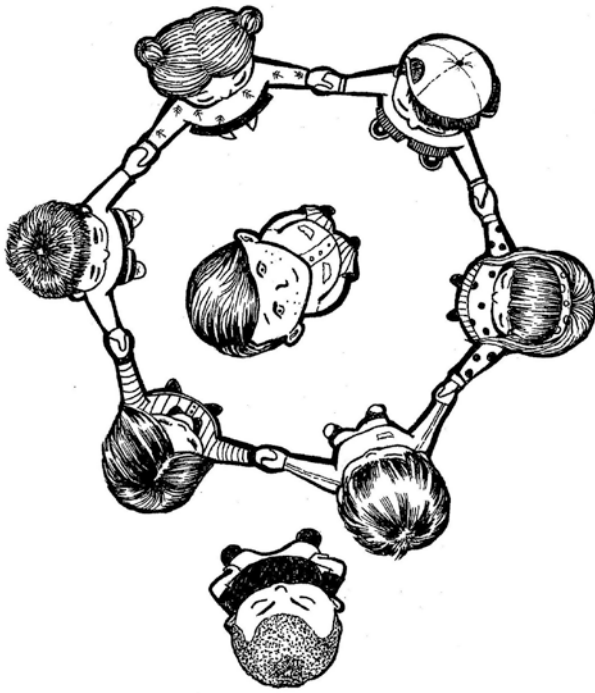
How can the environment recognize that a child is being bullied?

It is important to be able to recognize bullying and cyberbullying in time to minimize psychological harm. Therefore, in education about the safe and ethical use of the internet, it is necessary to include activities that will teach children how to notice that someone around them is suffering from bullying.

Outwardly, it is possible to notice a change in the child's behaviour and that the child is bothered by something. Cyberbullying poses a significant burden, stress and even trauma for a child. It can cause anxiety, depressed emotional attunement, fear and feelings of helplessness. When a child suffers in this way, the following may manifest themselves externally:

- **Psychosomatic symptoms:** abdominal pain, headache, change in appetite, sleep disorders and subsequent insomnia.
- **Change, deterioration in behaviour:** withdrawal from friends, interests, activities, the child becomes apathetic, introverted, closes in on themselves, stops meeting peers, loses interest in school, loses ability to concentrate, academic success declines.
- **As a result of the damage to social relations and status in the group,** the self-confidence and self-esteem of a young person can change significantly. The whole situation can considerably prevent them from making contacts, can lead to manifestations of social phobia and avoidance of peer society. It is important to realize that the reason is not that the child does not care about their contacts, but that someone has hurt them, and therefore it is difficult for them to trust again.
- **Change, addition, in behaviour:** partakes in risky activities; deviates from standard conduct and knowingly or involuntarily violates norms (substance abuse, self-harm, delinquency, truancy).
- **You may notice a stressed reaction** when using a computer and the internet or talking about it. However, this is not a prerequisite, as cyberbullying is more about relationships than about technological tools.

Everyone responds to suffering and stress uniquely; they have their own ways of managing and responding to stress. Therefore, it is important for young people that both adults and their peers are sensitive and perceptive enough to notice some of the symptoms above. For example, at school, children and teachers are in contact regularly and for long periods and, so with enough attention, there is a chance of noticing changes in behaviour and that some-



one is acting in an uncharacteristically worried manner.

It is important to create a consistent atmosphere of trust, security, and mutual support in your community (for example in the classroom), so that the child can experience a good relationship with someone that they are willing to trust. Creating an atmosphere of trust, security and mutual support is also one of the basic parts of preventive action.

How to react when a child tells you about bullying?

The victim, especially if it is a child, but also a young person, needs the help of someone who can be their social support and who is competent to deal with the incident.

Peer as a counsellor

Ideally, it would be an adult who should provide support in both directions. However, children and teenagers rarely reach out to adults when they are bullied. Most often, they confide in a peer. Therefore, priority should be given to working with peer groups. It is important that the victim is not left alone with his suffering.

It is therefore essential to train young people and youth leaders well in the steps necessary to help others in this area. One of these steps should be for these potential peer counsellors to subsequently engage adults who are legally responsible for the minor.

Steps to support an adult (e.g., youth worker, teacher) to help cyberbullying victim:

1. Adult promotes the child's safety through understanding dialogue that will provide them with psychological support, reassurance that they are safe and that trusting an adult was a good step. But it doesn't end there. They proceed with resolving the incident and in communicating with the relevant areas of the assistance system.

2. Reporting obligation. When it comes to the school environment, a teacher who knows about bullying in the school grounds, has a legal obligation to deal with the bullying. However, cyberbullying often takes place outside the school grounds or is problematic to locate, but the teacher and the youth worker still have a civic reporting obligation to act, to contact the parent and legal guardians quickly.

3. Immediate strategic help to the child. Young people may tend to delete all derogatory content and matter in the online space to prevent the spread of humiliation, which is both a logical desire and step. However, the adult should rather advise the victim:

- Not to immediately delete the contents at the time, in order to preserve any evidence of cyberbullying.
- To save the bullying communication from SMS messages, chats, degrading photos, comments, and the like. If relevant, to take a screenshot of the online application where the negative acts took place and if it is a telephone communication, to make a recording of the phone call.
- Only once the evidence has been stored is

it recommended to no longer develop any further communication, to advise about the possibilities of “blocking the user, removing them from contacts”.

- At this point, the bullying may not cease, so the child needs to be helped to be able to resolve peer conflicts and lead functional peer relationships.

4. The parent is informed. Another step in the resolution of the incident is to engage the **parent** and / or legal guardian. They will help the child further. If the harm still has not stopped, the parent should block or report the user to the relevant administrator and use the evidence to cooperate with law enforcement or a non-profit sector that can assist in the process.

5. Activate the community help system. The adult activates the group help system right from the start.

As far as the school environment is concerned, the procedure for doing so should be written in the school rules and, in more detail, in the classroom procedures.

It should include:

- **sanctions**, as it is necessary to set boundaries for harmful acts and to hold children accountable for their actions;
- **restoring safety and healthy relationships** in the classroom using mainly group activities
- **a specific procedure** for creating a sense of security for the victim and correcting relationships in the classroom, treating relationships between children and overall dynamics.

In cyberbullying, the perpetrators do not have to be members of the community, that is, classmates. However, they too can help to make a young person who is suffering feel more accepted, supported and assured.

Sometimes calling on other children (classmates) to make sure that the victim feels good and safe in the team again can serve as a “curatorial condition” for aggressors. Therefore, preventing punishment by creating something that is the exact opposite of harm. If they take responsibility for rectifying relationships in a group, it is a positive form of bearing the consequences for their actions and the aggressive act can be forgiven. However, this needs to be anchored in procedures and rules (e.g., schools, classes) so that the protagonists do not perceive it as an avoidance of responsibility (Tomková, 2015, 2016, Williams, 2010, Winslade, 2013);

- **the youth worker or teacher recommends individual psychological counselling** to young people or their families.

Occurrence of cyberbullying

At present, more than a third of children have experienced bullying, and a similarly large percentage of pupils have already experienced cyberbullying.

Boys are more “involved” in bullying. Girls are greatly affected by cyberbullying.

- ▶ Boys are more often the aggressors and victims of bullying (generally online and offline) than girls in early years, but girls’ as both victims and aggressors will increase significantly at the age when children start using social media, especially from the age of 13.
- ▶ Girls and young women abuse others more often in electronic form than face to face, and they are more often abused electronically too.

Prevention of cyberbullying

Cyberbullying prevention should be based on:

- raising awareness of incidents;
- increasing knowledge and skills in safe use of the internet;
- improving relationships, strengthening the values of friendship, acceptance, belonging and helping someone who is excluded;
- strengthening / creating the capacity to respond to injustice, whether in the role of victim or witness;
- learning how to work with your emotions and experiences, how to better manage stressful and conflict situations, how to be more receptive to others;
- development of social skills and self-knowledge.

As a result of training and prevention of cyberbullying, trainees should:

- understand what cyberbullying is and can recognize how it's manifested;
- understand the consequences of cyberbullying on people's lives;
- know how to behave responsibly on the internet in order to protect themselves and avoid harming others;
- know how to prevent unwanted situations on the internet;
- understand the links between unresolved conflicts in offline relationships and negative online behaviour; cyberbullying;
- know how to proceed, where to turn for help if they encounter cyberbullying



3.3 Responsible content sharing on the Internet

The concept of **self-disclosure** or **sharing information about oneself** with the public was already described by Lewin in 1936 and was later defined as any information that a person reveals about themselves in communication to others (in Robinson, 2013).

In the context of the use of the internet, especially social media, which provides opportunities for self-disclosure, the **breadth of the audience** to which the expressed information reaches and the extent to which the user has this **breadth of audience under control** becomes an important factor. Related to this are new types of opportunities and risks that self-disclosure poses to the user. When using social media, it is necessary to distinguish between these two dimensions, which are two independent factors (Christofides et al., 2009):

- self-disclosure on social networks (what a person shares);
- ensuring privacy (with whom the person shares).

How much adolescents publish about themselves on social media (Tomková, 2014):

- their overall tendency to share and reveal themselves in relationships with others;

- their desire for popularity;
- their need to attract the attention of their contacts;
- their need to foster peer relationships;
- their personality traits (extraversion).

Self-disclosure through social media brings many benefits to young people: fun, establishing and developing relationships, a sense of acceptance / inclusion in the group, gaining a sense of closeness and trust with peers, forming an identity, self-affirmation.

Of all the developmental periods, adolescence is the period when the confirmation and appreciation of one's own "self" has the greatest influence on one's self-esteem (Harter, 1999). Adolescents **try to impress** "important others" in their environment, but also the imaginary audience of social networks. Self-affirmation through feedback on their profile **helps them create an identity**, strengthen it, and improve their self-esteem, albeit only temporarily (Valkenburg et al., 2006).

Being visible through shared content on social networks is perceived by young people as an important **prerequisite for popularity**, which is typical of the developmental period of puberty and adolescence (11-18 years).

Although this may seem superficial and risky to adults, it is important for trainers and adults to understand why young learners need to be so involved in profiling.

Thus, self-disclosure in the social media environment has certain benefits for young people, but also **many risks** that need to be recognized to be prevented.

What are the risks of sharing online?

What is the risk of self-disclosure and insecure content sharing (Peluchette and Karl, 2008):

- digital footprint – you can read more about this in the chapter digital footprint;
- can lead to conflict with peers, parents, teachers;
- published photos and videos can be associated with psychological risks, such as feelings of anxiety, discomfort, insecurity, regret over published content;
- those who often disclose information about themselves are at greater risk of cyberbullying;
- disclosure of personal information increases the risk of online criminal activity: searching for and tracking future victims, collecting sensitive data;
- dissemination of advertising and hoaxes.

What social media do children use and what are the risks?

For young Internet users, **YouTube** is the most interesting social media platform, used by up to 80% of children aged 5-15 (Ofcom, 2019). Followed by WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, TikTok and more, depending on the child's age and country of residence. However, they all have one thing in common - it is important to learn to use them responsibly and securely through their unique privacy and other more specific settings.



There is a significant difference between what young people say they do for the safety of their own use of social media and what they actually do. Although teenagers state that they know how to ensure the privacy of profiles and that this is important, very often they end up sharing not only photos and interesting content, but also a lot of personal information, due to the "public" privacy setting. Maybe it's because they feel the peer pressure to be as pop-

ular on social networks as possible. More than three-quarters of young social network users have spoken of this “pressure to be visible and popular” (Ofcom, 2018).

At the same time, children and adolescents with public profiles are more likely to enter sensitive information into their profile than children who manage the privacy of their profiles, and they are also more likely not to know if certain content is on their profile and how secure it is. It is possible that they simply never had someone to teach them.

It has been proven that over time and with some degree of involvement in online activities, children have not become more experienced and responsible users on their own despite repeated use. They use certain applications regularly and for a long time, even without being able to manage them responsibly.


Most social networks have a minimum age limit of 13 years for establishing a profile. The YouTube social network requires that only users of at least 18 years of age can register, but 13-year-olds can sign up with parental permission. Regardless of the age restrictions of individual private companies, countries differ in determining the age limit at which children need to enter their parents’ consent in the registration form when setting up their own account. In Slovakia, since 2018 this age limit is 16 years, in the Czech Republic 15 years, other countries have different age limits in the range of 13-16 years. Unfortunately, in fact, many children and / or even parents somehow “bypass” this consent or it’s done as a formality. As many parents are not interested in their children’s use of social networks, registration often happens without the knowledge or consent of the parents. More than half of 11-year-olds and more than a quarter of 10-year-olds have a social network profile, but more alarmingly, as many as 8 in 10 parents do not even know what the age recommendations are for their use by children (Ofcom, 2018).

At the age of 13-16, it is problematic for children to share their privacy with their parents, and therefore at this age, young people should already be able to use social networks responsibly and safely. Therefore, it is important that education about the safe use of social media and the safe sharing of content on the Internet reach children as soon as possible.

Basic rules for secure sharing on the Internet

1. Remember this basic thing: **whatever you share on the Internet will stay there forever, whether you delete it or not.**
2. It is good to use social networks designed for a given age and those that are known for their higher security.
3. **Make your social profile “private”** to specify exactly which group of friends you will be visible to. The smaller this group is, the safer your profile will be. We recommend that you set the option to “show only to friends”. With the “show to friends of friends” setting, people we don’t know directly can see our content.

In this area, it is appropriate to direct young people to imagine at least 5 representatives of the given circle of contacts with whom they share content in each contribution. The first contact that comes in mind is the one they want to impress the most. Then, however, let them deliberately open their imagination to those who would certainly not come to their mind, to those who have already forgotten that they have them in their list of friends at all. Then they might realize that they are used to reducing the whole audience in their minds to a few people, who they perceive as “sharing points”, but they also see all other published content. Is that all right with them? Internet users should acquire vigilance and responsibility in setting audience breadth.



4. What to share (?) This aspect is related to critical thinking and anticipation of the consequences of one's actions. This has consequences for one's own current and future reputation, security, but also consequences for the good and rights of others. Therefore, when sharing content on the internet, younger children, who naturally have not yet developed critical judgment and have little life experience, are most at risk. In adolescents, the desire for popularity often outweighs rational thinking.

Simplified recommendations:

– **Don't share many details, don't include personal information in your profile**, such as exact address, school address, family information, date of birth, phone number. On Facebook, you can download all the information that the social network has stored about you via the "user settings" section.

– **"Don't share anything you wouldn't show to your grandmother."** *Not everything you've had fun with, and seems super-cool at the time, should be put online. Don't share anything that is too sensitive or controversial.*

– **Create an online identity that you can be proud of**, but one that is not too far removed from who you really are, what you do, what you really look like. You don't need to pretend to someone else, and certainly not to such a degree that no one will recognize you. You are good as you are.

5. How much to share (?) This is partly related to personality factors - extroverts share significantly more on social networks and it's not because they don't have anyone to talk to in person. In short, they have a great need to share impressions. Let's ask children the question, **"Who will they enrich when the world sees this?"**

6. Check regularly which groups you are a member of. Many sites may have changed their content and focus in the meantime. Likewise, you might have changed your

views and interests with age and why stay in a group that you are either not interested in or where you no longer agree with its content? Many groups are formed with the intention of gaining a fan base and then selling it on to someone who will then change its focus. Fan trading is a common fraudulent activity on social networks.

7. Measure twice, click once. Viruses and other harmful content are also sent through social networks. Do not click on suspicious messages and links. While you click, hover over the link and it will appear without a click. This will give you time to think about it.

What data and content not to share

Private and otherwise sensitive content does not belong to social networks, blogs and other public online sites.

DON'T SHARE:

- **the number or photograph of your driving license, passport, identity card or other document;**
- **telephone number;**
- **address or address of other users;**
- **car license plate;**
- **contracts and official documents (certificates, etc.).**

TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE, DON'T EVEN SHARE:

- **tickets for public events and travel tickets which often contain a QR code that can be misused;**
- **data or other sensitive material about close people, this could be a violation of the Personal Data Protection Act;**
- **your current location, this information can be easily misused;**
- **your photos and recordings without paying attention to the background to avoid unknowingly violating privacy laws.**

3.4 Online resilience

Resilience

For the education of young people, it is necessary to focus on building *resilience*, to define the concept and to understand what resilience brings to an individual who is resilient. Resilience can be described as the ability of a system (in our case, an individual) to work reliably, regardless of the influences that affect it from the system environment; ability to cope with stressful situations and changes. It is a phenomenon defined by individuality and situation (the same demanding circumstances cause stress in some and not in others; the same demanding circumstances cause stress in the same individual only sometimes). Emil Komárik calls the ability to bounce back from the bottom as *“a philosophical approach to life that says that you do not have to be healthy or developed in a comprehensive and harmonious way, you do not have to have loving family, you do not have to have excellent teachers, you do not have to have a happy childhood and you do not even have to have a free democratic society, but you can still live a full life. But you need to have the properties of a rubber ball, which does not remain lying like a piece of mud when it hits the ground, but bounces back. Because that is exactly what resilience is.”*

Example

Annamaria is from a single-parent family in which the only adult is dependent on social benefits. Despite a lack of funds and non-existent role models, Annamaria tries her best to succeed in school and likes to run. She also goes to the local cross-country club. There she has found a circle of friends and a supportive coach. The unfavourable situation into which she was born has not influenced her to such an extent as to prevent her from abandoning the “predestined” path that could have awaited her.

Mastens, Best, and Garmezy (1990) identified three types of personal resilience in children:

- ▶ **Overcoming the unfavourable.** This is characterized by achieving positive results despite an adverse situation.
- ▶ **Ongoing competence under pressure.** This refers to the successful behaviour and attitude of children living in an disadvantageous environment of conflict, poverty, violence, and the like.
- ▶ **Recovery from trauma.** Indicates the behaviour of children who continue to thrive despite having just experienced a severely stressful event.

Risk, damage and resilience in the context of online exposure

This view can be applied on a psychological level, in terms of resistance to risks and negative phenomena not only face to face, but online as well.

One of the main undertakings of EU Kids Online, a multinational research network, which seeks to enhance knowledge of children’s online activities, on whose ideas and suggestions we rely for our research, is to distinguish between the risk and the actual harm that results from children’s use of the internet. As is the case in a face-to-face environment, the total absence of a degree of risk on the internet is considered to decrease the opportunities that the internet as a medium can provide.

Therefore, is it not recommended that parental restriction should mean that only a parent should have sole or dominant access to children’s internet. Also, not all children are exposed to the same level of risk and not all risk leads to harm. Here, it is more important to address what makes children vulnerable and how to promote risk resilience.

Online resilience and misinformation

Resistance to disinformation involves overcoming adversity in those situations where a young person grows up in an environment that

supports the spreading of false and misleading information, or in which it often occurs. Active use of the Internet needs to be encouraged, especially in situations where young people have experienced or witnessed inappropriate behaviour or hate speech on the internet. This building of resistance to misinformation and inappropriate behaviour on the internet is possible through non-formal education, media literacy classes, and by supporting peer programs.

Online resilience and incidents of incorrect communication on the Internet

In identifying when negative incidents on the internet occur, especially on social media, which are perceived by victims as significantly hurtful, we find that many teenagers are already accustomed to incorrectness in electronic communication (Tomková et al., 2015). Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of teenagers aged 15-18 have experienced negative interaction and almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of those take it as the norm, however, the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ felt slightly to strongly upset after negative electronic incidents; feeling various degrees of grief, shame, or anger over a period of weeks to months. The younger the children, the more they suffer from such incidents. The degree of harm is also related to the individuals' own resilience, the quality of their peer relationships, the intensity and duration of bullying, and the *coping strategies* they apply to incidents. Children are significantly more upset if the incident is part of serious bullying, if the person is experiencing online and offline bullying, and if they are more personally vulnerable overall.

Resistance to pressure from information overload and non-stop online communication

Until a certain age, it may indeed be good to avoid certain online platforms due to their high-risk potential. Such as currently, the social media application, Instagram. At the same time, however, it is appropriate to teach users

how to overcome certain phenomena and help them to be more resilient. This is because they don't live in a vacuum and social media will find them through various platforms and later through their friends anyway. However, there is no need to see applications and social media as the "work of the devil". Risk does not always mean harm and the most important relationship is always towards an activity. These can be freer or dependent. According to latest research, most children are resilient to FOMO syndrome, i.e., the fear of missing out, and only two-fifths of schoolchildren had a small risk of fear of missing out.

When building resilience, it is necessary to focus on:

1. **Knowledge of one's own feelings and how to control them.** Resilient people will not be trapped in their feelings. For example, when reading an article that contains views that promote hatred against refugees or LGBTIs, they will not preserve their hatred, neither against the group targeted in the article nor against the writer of the article.

2. **Impulsivity control.** It is necessary to lead students to the following procedure: Stop - breathe and think - react.

3. **Optimism, insight.** It is necessary to evaluate a situation realistically and then make a conscious decision to focus on the good that can be learned from it. For example, in an online confrontation with a person who is spreading conspiracy theories, it is good to focus on one's own ability to argue logically and not to fall into troll's trap.

4. **Plan B or flexibility in online behaviour.** Popular Facebook pages or groups sometimes change their administrators, which causes the pages to act differently, have different content than we expect. Then it's a good idea to find other sites or join a different online community.

5. **Building empathy.**

6. Self-sufficiency or “I” as a reference for my further success. Even if a person, as a social creature, thrives in the community, it is necessary to recall one’s own achievements, for example, when the social network removes the hate post or misinformation article I have reported.

7. Social contacts that help to make meaningful friendships. The ability to critically evaluate information online is also important here, for example when confirming friendships or watching channels or various influencers on social networks.

3.5 Addiction in digital environment

“Internet addiction is behaviour in which the Internet is overused and leads to mental, social, work or school complications.”

Humans are not dependent on technology, we are dependent on a certain type of behaviour or on specific applications, websites or internet services, with which a specific type of activity is associated. For example, shopping, porn sites or gambling.

The World Health Organization has officially approved the inclusion of video game addiction in the international classification of diseases.

Social networks generate the same thing in a teenager’s brain that chocolate or monetary winnings do. This effect is a result of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that helps control the brain’s centres of pleasure and reward. It helps to regulate movement and emotional reactions so that a person can perceive something as a



reward and react consciously towards the fulfilment of their needs and desires. Nerve endings in addicts become increasingly sensitive to dopamine and react more rapidly to it. Fast, impulsive decision-making processes gradually replace the slower, rational decision-making processes of the forebrain grey matter, and in the developed stages of dependence, grey matter even decreases.

Tolerance to an active chemical or activity is one of the symptoms of developing addiction.

There are many tests online that will tell you whether you are addicted or not. Not all of them are certified and care must be taken to ensure that they have been made by a real authority on addiction.

However, you can think for yourself about the following points that are present in real dependencies:

Dependency is a state where a given activity is significantly important or the most important in a person’s life. It pushes other activities and values to the side-lines. Most of a person’s energy is invested in performing or thinking about the activity. Simply put, they are only fulfilled by doing the activity on which they depend.

Mood swings can be seen in the presence of what one is dependent on. The subject of an addiction has a significant effect on the mood of the individual. When available, their mood improves significantly, sometimes to euphoric states.

Tolerance to the activity or substance **increases**. This means that for the activity to continue to provide sufficient pleasure, an increasing intensity, frequency, or greater range is needed.

Withdrawal symptoms are a set of symptoms that occur if the activity is not possible or not sufficient. The individual’s mood worsens significantly, they can be irritable, unfocused, short-tempered, and even aggressive. This can be compared to withdrawal symptoms in substance dependence.

Conflict is an inevitable symptom of addiction. Repeated addictive behaviour can bring many difficulties, whether on an interpersonal or work level or in the form of internal conflict (one feels guilty, suffers from self-hatred).

Relapse is a term for a return to problematic behaviour after a long period of abstinence, which is associated with the rapid development of the original intensity, frequency, or extent of behaviour. For example, a person can cancel their profile on a social network or a user account in an online game, i.e., deletes the chat program, but returns to it after a while and creates new one.

In the 21st century, it is impossible to avoid the internet, so it is important that we have control over the internet and not the other way around.

It is popular to say, “*I’m addicted to my mobile*”, however, as we are already aware of the term FOMO - fear of missing out, we should rather talk about excessive use of technology / mobile / internet. Although it does not sound cool, it is true, as, for example, a survey of the Catholic University in Ružomberok from 2016 showed that only 2.3% of respondents were really addicted. In 13%, it turned out that they only suffered from excessive use of the Internet.

Excessive internet use is reflected in the increased narcissistic personality traits of internet users. This is due to, for example, constant comparisons with others, with the photographs of their perfect lives or the number of *likes* received on their posts.

You can find studies on the Internet that confirm the positive and negative aspects of social media in every area! We must be objective, we can’t say that YouTube or Instagram are entirely negative, because YouTube spreads *hate* or Instagram presents fake idols of women with pricked lips and men with steroid muscles.

The negative side-effects of excessive internet use include **anxiety and depression**, to

which up to four out of five social networks contribute. Anxiety and depression can lead to a young person being unable to leave their home, go to school and participate in normal life. The fact that teenagers observe others as they seem to be enjoying life, travelling the world or spending all their free time having fun makes them feel like they are missing something. This in turn causes their self-confidence to decline.

Social media also has a **bad impact on sleep**, as young people are often online at night when they should sleep. **Lack of sleep** leads to fatigue, difficulties in everyday life, lower self-confidence, stress, and all this continues to impact sleep further

Teenagers also perceive their bodies differently, most girls are not satisfied with their appearance, to which social networks also contribute. Many of the photos that are uploaded to social networks contain images of seemingly perfect people, with whom they then compare themselves and which can lead to the additional negative effect of cyberbullying.

However, social media also have positive effects on mental health. These include access to other people’s information and experiences, emotional support and community building, the opportunity to express oneself and one’s identity, or building and maintaining contacts.

Caution: Several studies have shown that when we *browse* the Internet (browse pages, read briefly), our brain does not turn on. It turns on only when we are interested in the site, and we must decide to continue to read on. These studies use an electroencephalograph (a diagnostic method to measure electrical activity in the brain) and eye monitoring devices. Therefore, when we say that we learn something, when we scroll on Instagram, we are deceiving ourselves. We learn only when we stop at a post and there is some interaction.

3.6 Safety on the Internet

Safety of the web browser

The basis for safe internet use is the selection and use of a safe and up-to-date web browser. How many times a day do we need to *google* something on the internet?! If we have more than one browser installed, they all need to be updated. Browsers usually also provide the user with the option of “*Safe Browsing*”. In this mode, they protect them from cybercrime such as *phishing*, password theft and sensitive data. You need to activate it in the “*Settings*” section. This browser mode reports when a user tries to connect to a site that looks suspicious or is already known to spread malicious code. This will make it easier for us to know when we may be at risk from cybercrime.

Browsers have the feature of “**creating a history**” set up automatically. Its use has pros and cons, so consider carefully whether the benefits are so important to you.

- The benefit is that it allows us to return to one of the websites we have visited in the past, thus speeding up the process of finding the desired content.
- The downside is that it’s a source of information about us, our preferences and online activities. All this can be abused by cybercrime.

When a user visits places on the web that handle their personal data (such as e-mail, social networks, internet banking), and does not have the most secure browser installed, it is safer to use the so-called “*Incognito mode*”. In that case, browsing history and personal information are not stored in the browser.

Teach children to choose from a wide range of browsers. Also teach them what is useful and what safety is.

More information about secure browsers can be found here:

<<https://restoreprivacy.com/secure-browser/>>

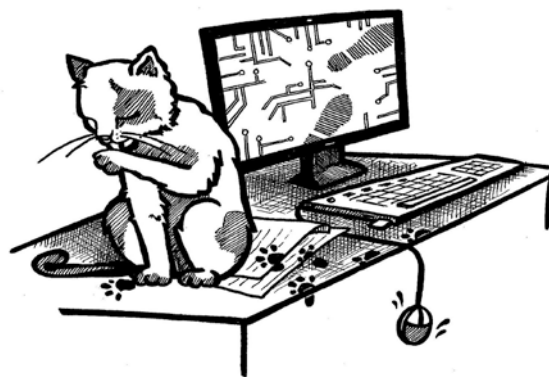
<<https://proprivacy.com/guides/most-secure-browsers>>

Digital footprint

A digital track is a label for a set of data that a user actively or passively creates through their online activities.

1. A passive digital footprint consists of information left unconsciously by users in the online space. It is not directly visible, but anyone can search for it specifically. Examples at these are information in the history of pages visited, which is collected by the browser, or even an IP address stored by a website or online service visited by the user.

An IP address serves as the identification number of each device on the Internet and can be compared to a postal address for simplicity. Instead of letters and packages, however, so-called “*packets*”, i.e., blocks of user data, are transmitted over the Internet. The IP address in this process ensures correct the addressing, routing and delivery of all data. It helps to locate the approximate geographical location of the user and internet service provider (ISP) through which they are currently connected to the Internet with their device.



Whether you are at home, at work or on the train, your current IP address has been assigned to you by the ISP you are currently connected to. Therefore, your home IP address does not travel with you, and if you move from home to a I, you will be accessing the Internet with a different IP address within the Wi-Fi in the café. Sometimes an IP address will also change after restarting of a router.

With normal use of the Internet, you may not care about the type of your IP address. However, you can find it, for example, on this page: <<https://whatismyipaddress.com>>

2. An active digital footprint is what you create and / or publish yourself on the internet: sending an e-mail, posting on social media, posting blogs on websites, adding your comments or *likes* to social media content, sharing video or text on a social media network, but also the written text in a chat. All this becomes part of the 'ser's digital footprint, it remains on the internet and is searchable, even after deletion.

A digital footprint is thus part of online existence, and since it is permanent, it is essential to be responsible in creating it so that one does not complicate one's life at some point in the future, for example in career advancement or future personal relationships.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

On 25 May 2018, the General Regulation on Personal Data Protection came into force in the EU. This strengthened the protection of consumers' personal data and increased the awareness of parents and young people about their right to privacy. It gives people more rights and better control over their personal data, consent to the processing of data must be unambiguous and the provision of the service cannot be conditional on the granting of consent to the processing of personal data. The new law also introduced the right to be forgotten, which offers the possibility to request the deletion of all data about oneself. IP addresses, cookies, or other identifiers, such as radio frequency identification tags, are also considered personal data (if they are used to identify a specific device or user).

The provision that the processing of personal data of a person under the age of 16 is lawful only if the parent or legal guardian has given

their consent to its processing is problematic. Although the Regulation requires the operator of information networks, i.e., websites or applications, to make reasonable efforts to verify that the legal representative has given their consent to a visitor under the age of 16, this is limited to one click, which is often carried out by the child without parental knowledge. It is therefore necessary to further strengthen young people's awareness of what personal data is, how to take care of its protection, whether to allow *cookies* and what websites do not need to know about us.

Passwords

Basic rules for creating a strong password:

- ▶ **Secret.** Except for the owner of the password, no one should know or have access to it.
- ▶ **Unique.** You should not use your password in more than one location or service. You run the risk that if the password escapes from one place, the attacker will know all your accesses at once. For example, if he gets the password for your Facebook account and you have the same password in your email.
- ▶ **Long.** Sometimes cybercriminals try to break the password by trying all possibilities (so-called *brute-force attack*). Especially if you have a short password, it's easy to try all the possible options. A cybercriminal can detect a 5-letter password with special software in about 1 second.
- ▶ **Contains various characters.** Using different characters makes it significantly more difficult to guess or crack the password by trying combinations of all the variants of using different characters.
- ▶ **Is not guessable.** It must not be a typical word or phrase, or something directly related to you. For example, Ferko Carrot, who lives at Secure 13, Bratislava, should

certainly not have the following passwords: “FerkoCarrot”, “FerkoSecure13”, “Secure13”, “CarrotBratislava”, etc. And he certainly shouldn’t have generally easy-to-guess words like “topsecret,” “mypassword,” and so on.

- **Beware of special software** that looks like a page that you often use, you are requested to enter your password there, and the only thing they want to do is find out your password. Such a *keylogger* (system for obtaining passwords) can be prepared even by a skilled high school student.

3.7 HATE – correct communication vs. hate speech in communication

Fundamental human rights are protected on a global level and are clearly named in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The purpose of this handbook is not to discuss the legal aspects of human rights. While it is important to make young people aware of criminal law relating to hate speech, it is more important to emphasize those rights that are inalienable and belong to everyone from birth. These rights and freedoms apply to all people, regardless of race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, gender, or other status. Since the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, prohibition of discrimination has been extended to several areas. According to the definition of the International Cyber Hate Network (INACH), discrimination or segregation must not be based on actual or perceived membership of any race, ethnicity, language, nation, nationality, colour, religion, or absence of which, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political beliefs, social status, property, birth, age, mental health, disability, and illness. The prohibition of discrimination is also clearly defined in the legal framework of the Slovak Republic, and the denial of rights to others and the spread of extrem-

ist ideas may be qualified as a misdemeanour or criminal offense. In Slovakia, young people from the age of 14 have criminal liability. In other countries it may be different.

Disinhibitory effect in the Internet environment

A disinhibitory effect is an example of circumstances in which a person loses inhibitions, whether unconsciously or consciously, positively, or negatively. Factors causing this type of behaviour are **anonymity**, invisibility, etc. Without the pressure of social expectations, a person gives free rein to emotions, desires and behaviours that are normally subdued. The Internet creates and strengthens this disinhibitory effect, as electronic communication often takes place asynchronously and in perceived relative anonymity, the internet user often does not see their communication partner and therefore does not clearly feel the consequences of their actions and communication.



The disinhibitory effect is also beneficial in some cases. For example, for those who are overly anxious or shy contact via the internet is easier. The possibilities for joining and being accepted in a group or seeking support increase for them.



The negative and dangerous side of the disinhibitory effect is an increase in aggression, hate speech, **trolling** (harassing activity in discussions and chats, inappropriate posts and unfounded criticism), **flaming** (deliberately provoking a heated debate) and all these types of incorrect communication that are more controlled and less acceptable in the face-to-face environment. This “relaxed” negative behaviour can take the form of individual incorrect behaviours, incidents, but it can also take a systematic form of harm such as **cyberbullying**, **cyberstalking** (persecution on the Internet).



It is advisable to start more systematic work on activities aimed at recognizing more specific forms of harm (also due to the disinhibitory effect) by recognizing this phenomenon. The teacher, together with the students, will try to

unmask the disinhibitory effect, reveal its nature, effect, negatives and positives without attempting to blame and moralize.

Stereotypes

These are relatively stable emotionally charged ideas and assumptions, almost independent of people’s experiences, transmitted as an expression of collective wisdom by family, school, authorities etc. These are ideas that people have about themselves, about “their” group, as well as about members of other groups and which can be positive as well as negative (e.g., “*Slovaks are hardworking and goodhearted people.*”).

Prejudices

On the contrary, prejudices are always negative and always towards someone from another social group. They are also transmitted without satisfactory rational arguments (e.g., “*Gypsies are thieves.*”, “*All homeless people are lazy drunks.*”). These attitudes are relatively stable and have a strong emotional charge at the expense of rational content. Insufficient knowledge of a phenomenon or lack of experience with members of a social group is manifested in prejudice through disproportionately generalized opinions received without verification from other people, family, different groups, the media.

Stereotypical thinking and prejudices can be perceived not only through specific content, but especially through the fact that they are a manifestation of a certain way of thinking about the world. There is a pattern of strong categorization, a separation into “I / we and them”, black and white vision and emphasis on an aspect of power. People learn it very early, often in early childhood. Since it is about irrationality, rational arguments do not apply to it, which is also the reason why it is difficult to eradicate prejudices.

Intolerance and its manifestations

Stereotypes and prejudices against certain groups often result in **intolerance**, which has

many behaviours, such as **chauvinism** (sharp nationalism, belief in the supremacy of one's own nation or nationality), **racism** (a system based on the privileges of race, operating at all levels of society and held by a humbly sophisticated ideology of skin / race domination), **xenophobia** (attitude of hostility towards any non-native in a given population), **anti-semitism** (hatred towards Jews), **Islamophobia** (a form of intolerance motivated by unsubstantiated fear, hatred of Islam or anti-Muslim), **anti-gypsyism** (anti-Roma), **homophobia** (includes a full range of negative attitudes and feelings towards homosexuality or people identified or perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender intersex and non-binary) Young people should be familiar with these terms through civics subjects.

Xenophobia, as a term from psychology, expresses a morbid fear of everything foreign (people, environment, places, food, etc.). However, in the context of human rights and society, it is used to describe of fear of foreign people, other nationalities, cultures or ethnicities. Xenophobia, i.e., the feeling of being threatened by otherness, usually leads to the establishment of an increased sense of security, to the assertion of one's own value, to the removal or avoidance of what one fears. When a person does not have a sufficient repertoire of skills to dissolve their own fears, it's easy to slip into intolerance and hate speech. Additionally, they seek out like-minded thinkers and people with whom they confirm the legitimacy of their fear and resistance. **The internet, social networks and closed groups on social media, serve wonderfully for this purpose.** From there, it is only a small step towards sympathizing with ultra-right groups, which are organized based on the ideology of the superiority of one group of people over another. Ultra-right ideologies are dispersed very quickly through social networks.

The refugee crisis, terrorist attacks, political frustration and social insecurity have contributed greatly to the feeling of threat and insecurity that has led to hate speech and greater support for the far right, which offers simplistic,

democratic solutions. In such times, the far-right supports instability and fear, for example by spreading disinformation, stereotypes, prejudices, intolerance and hateful attitudes very simply - through social networks.

The Internet plays a specific role in the process of spreading an atmosphere of fear, misinformation and hate speech. Social media helps to organize groups of people with similar interests and opinions, which is useful on the one hand, but is also easy to abuse. It also goes hand in hand with the risk of polarizing society and reinforcing harmful and anti-social views. This can be partially prevented by reporting illegal content on the internet, but especially with sufficient knowledge of these phenomena, young people can be more resilient to propaganda. Therefore, it is necessary to sufficiently cover this area in the cross-cutting theme of media education and human rights education.

Human rights issues in the context of Internet use - education of children and professionals

It is necessary to define and try to prevent manifestations of intolerance in society, such as chauvinism, racism, xenophobia, anti-Gypsyism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and homophobia (including transphobia).

As it has been found that the age for the crystallization of extremist attitudes is approximately 17-18 years of age, we recommend starting with the prevention of extremism especially in primary schools.

Human rights both offline and online

Social networks, like private companies, rely on the right to free expression in the operation of their services, which allows them to share opinions in the public online space, even non-conformist or eccentric (extreme) ones. However, we need to teach children where the boundaries of free speech and the limits of violating someone else's rights are. Human rights must be respected both offline and online.

Civic engagement both offline and online

Another area to consider is experiential learning about active citizenship and responsibility. When children see behaviour that they do not approve of, both offline and online, they may tacitly disagree or react in a proactive way that will influence that particular behaviour and which may do something positive for the wider society. From passive spectators, children can become active creators of a better online environment. Unwanted and illegal content can

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be reported to the relevant authorities (reporting via applications on Facebook or YouTube, reporting via civic associations e.g., digiQ in Slovakia, or to the police). They can “cool the hate” in discussions using factual argumentation, humour, by standing up for the weak, offering facts and significantly influencing the development of online discussions in the appropriate direction. Adults, parents as well as educators are responsible for guiding children to civic proactivity both offline and online.

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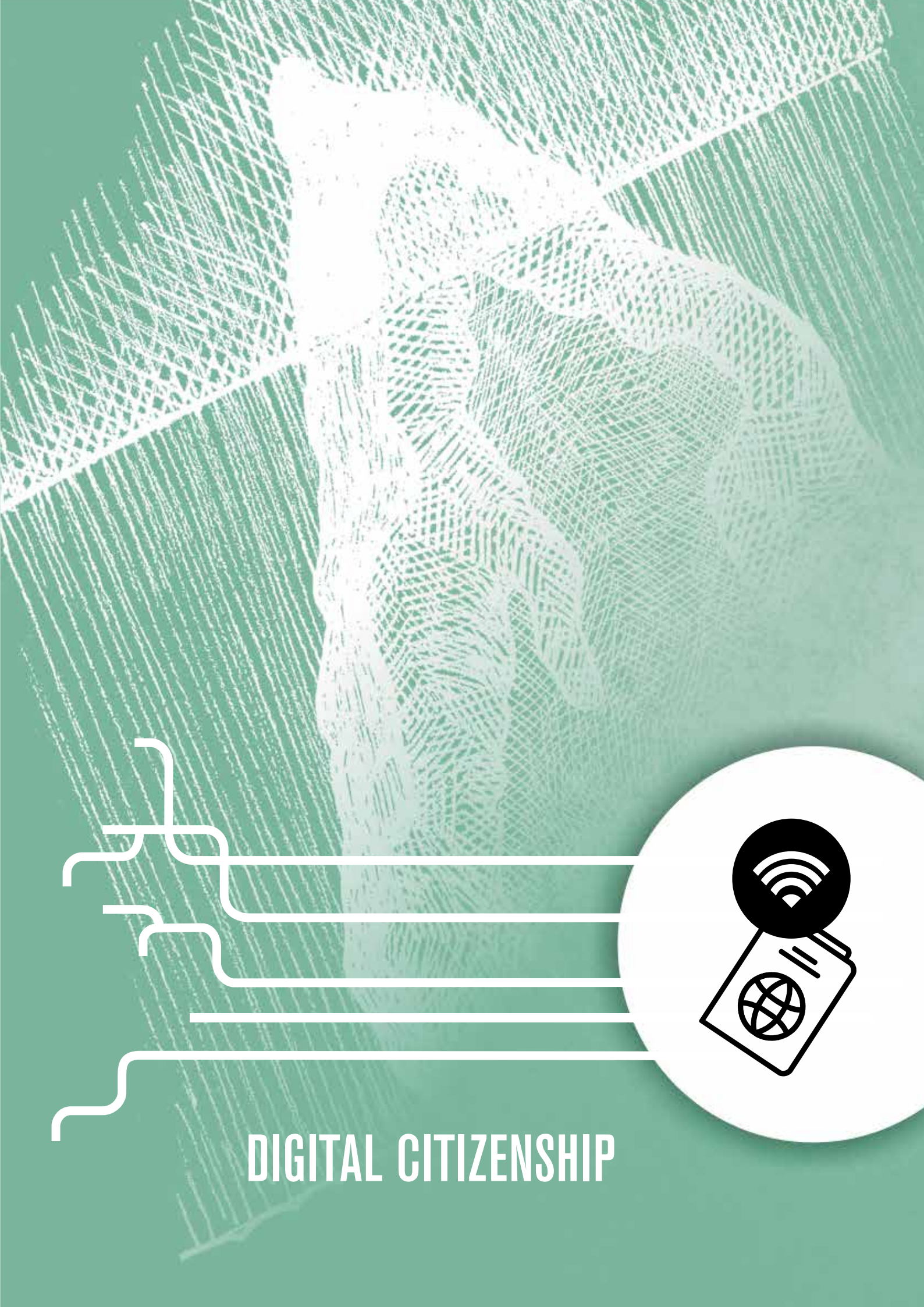
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Recommended learning materials:

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DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

4.1 Introduction to the chapter

Although the online world is an everyday part of our life, the concept of digital citizenship is not well known to us. In this chapter, we will therefore try to approach this concept, name its characteristics, and explain its meaning for today and society.

Even though the US has been working on this issue for a decade, Europe seems to be trailing behind. While there were many projects at European Union level that highlighted the various risks associated with the use of the internet and digital devices, it was the Council of Europe's recommendations and documents that set the framework and served as inspiration for the development of specific tools for teachers and students. Online tools and the world of the Internet are now included in education in several subjects. However, the online space is becoming more and more complex and only skilled users of the internet and digital technologies have sufficient control over their online activities, virtual identity, or operation in the online space. In our everyday operations we should keep the concept of digital citizenship in mind we should try to combine all the knowledge we receive in the process of formal or non-formal education with the experience we gain ourselves through the active use of the Internet.

4.2 What does digital citizenship mean

Digital citizenship is overall behaviour and movement in the online space (including media literacy, online security, online participation, etc.).

The essence of digital citizenship is based on an active person who uses digital technologies consciously and safely, participates in public life and who in society participates in the use of information and communication technologies.



The basic characteristics of a conscious approach within digital citizenship include the use of technology for purposes that are in line with the goals of a democratic society, the rule of law and respect for human rights, respecting communication online with people of different views and evaluating the quality of online information sources. Digital citizenship uses the advances of modern technology, which should serve for the good of humanity.

“Digital citizenship means competent and positive use of digital technologies for (creation, work, sharing, socializing, discovery, play, communication and learning); active and responsible participation (values, skills, attitudes, knowledge) in communities (local, national and global) in all spheres (political, economic, social, cultural and intercultural); it means to be included in lifelong learning (formal and non-formal) and constantly protect human dignity.”

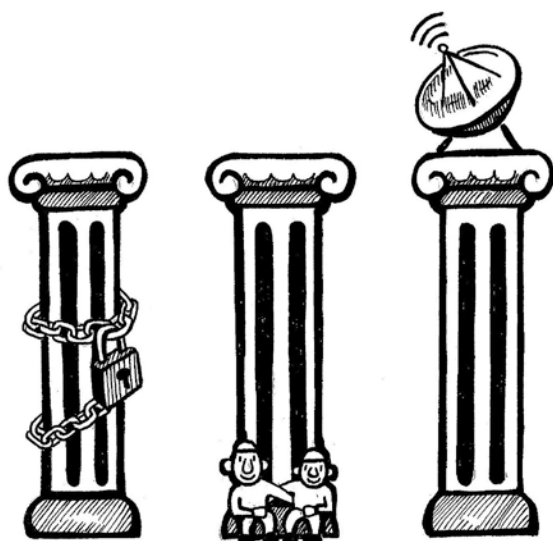
Council of Europe

Three pillars of digital citizenship

Simply put, digital citizenship is based on three pillars, namely:

- **security** (securely: 1. pillar);
- **participation** (individual/group as active participant of the process: 2. pillar);
- **online** (with usage of interconnected digital: 3. pillar).

This proactive approach involves much more and emphasizes the individual who can evaluate not only their actions, but also the behaviour of others online.



4.3 Digital citizen

Like our behaviour in the real (not online) environment, the three pillars of digital citizenship above (1st security, 2nd participation and 3rd online) are based on certain principles.

- **Citizen activity** - The citizens themselves actively search for information online and prefer to use online tools.
- **Citizen involvement in public life and for the common good** - They are interested in what is happening in society and in the community and volunteer.

- **Knowledge of how to navigate online safely** - The Internet user masters the basic principles of cyber security.
- **Involvement of several elements of society** - Digital citizenship is not only based on the individual but requires the involvement of several components of society (more in section “4.4. Who is affected by digital citizenship?”).
- **A state that cares about the lifelong learning of its citizens** - The state finances and creates opportunities for further education programs for citizens in the field of safe internet and cyber security.
- **Helping others gain positive digital experiences** - Citizens actively pass on their experience in society, they are in the position of a teacher / lecturer.
- **A conscious approach and the fact that every action has a consequence** - The internet user knows the content of published or shared content, re-evaluates the truthfulness and value of information, considers whether his contribution will contribute to quality public debate and is aware that his actions can also have criminal consequences if he carries out illegal activity.
- **Competent and knowledgeable user of technology and the Internet** - Knows how to use technology, knows the security settings of social networks, software, and applications.
- **Problems and solutions are global** - The internet user is aware that the internet knows no boundaries and that online information can be shared and disseminated around the world in minutes. Likewise, hate speech spreads without borders. Therefore, the proposal for a solution to stop the spread of hate speech must also be global.
- **Ethical approach of all involved** - The internet user does not publish or share prohibited or harmful things online. They think about the consequences of their behaviour towards others. (More on this point was given in chapter “3. Safely online”.)

Digital Citizen:

Is constantly improving their digital competences

Can advise others on how to move around the online space as safely as possible

Is a positive part in the digital society



Why is it necessary to educate digital citizens?

The aim of digital citizenship education is to provide practical guidance on how to use the internet safely and ethically in order to increase involvement in public life.

The media often report opinions supported by experts, which point out the negative consequences of using technology. These should not be taken lightly and a balance needs to be struck between the use of technology and a person's mental and physical health. It should

be noted that technologies are neither good nor bad. It is up to their users, for what purpose and how they will use them. For example, tracking a child's location using their mobile phone may help the child gradually gain independence (the parent knows where the child is and the child feels more secure), but it can also limit privacy.

In addition to raising awareness of the problems associated with the use of ICT (information and communication technologies), it is important and responsible to offer strategies

for managing the use of technology. Simply put, “provide a solution to keep things under control.” Thanks to our knowledge and skills, we can minimize the risks associated with using the Internet and technology to maximize the opportunities of our digital reality.

4.4 Who is affected by digital citizenship?

A society (sometimes referred to as the ecosystem), in which the digital citizen can use modern technologies actively and safely and thus participate in public life - whether at local or national level - is built on several components:

1. An active state that promotes media education through all of its policies in all elements of formal and non-formal education, recognizes companies that work with organizations active in the field of media literacy in their social responsibility programs;

2. An educational institution that ensures that media education, critical thinking and computer literacy are included in their educational program. It actively cooperates with students and participants as partners, listens to them and involves them with a participatory approach;

3. Pupils or trainees who are not only recipients of information and knowledge mediated by teachers and professionals but are actively involved. For example, they are involved in peer programs or work with future employers;

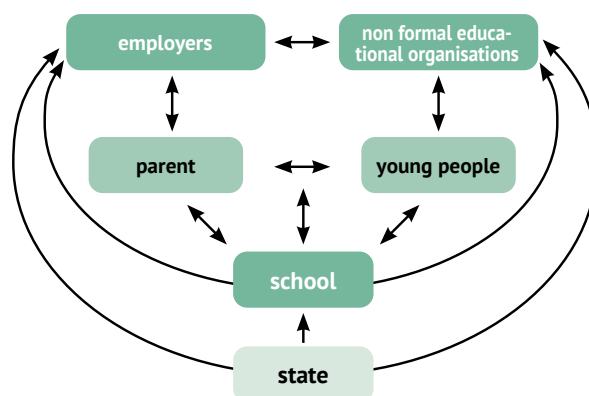
4. Parents who understand the need to nurture and educate young people; they participate in activities implemented within the framework of formal and non-formal education. The relationship between parents and children in terms of digital citizenship is important not only during compulsory schooling, but also after leaving school. The digital citizen further conveys the knowledge gained through education. If in

formal education the emphasis is on the parent → child relationship, it is in non-formal education that the child → parent is more important;

5. Third sector organizations (non-governmental organizations) dedicated to training, in particular to critical thinking, safe use of the internet, protection of human rights, and which have an interest, space and sufficient education to carry out training events;

6. Employers who can create opportunities to provide student placements in their organizations, which may require the fulfilment of certain traineeship requirements, such as digital literacy, the ability to think critically, knowledge of computer and statistical data processing systems and the like.

The relationship between all these components in society should be two-way and there should be mutual interaction between the individual components.

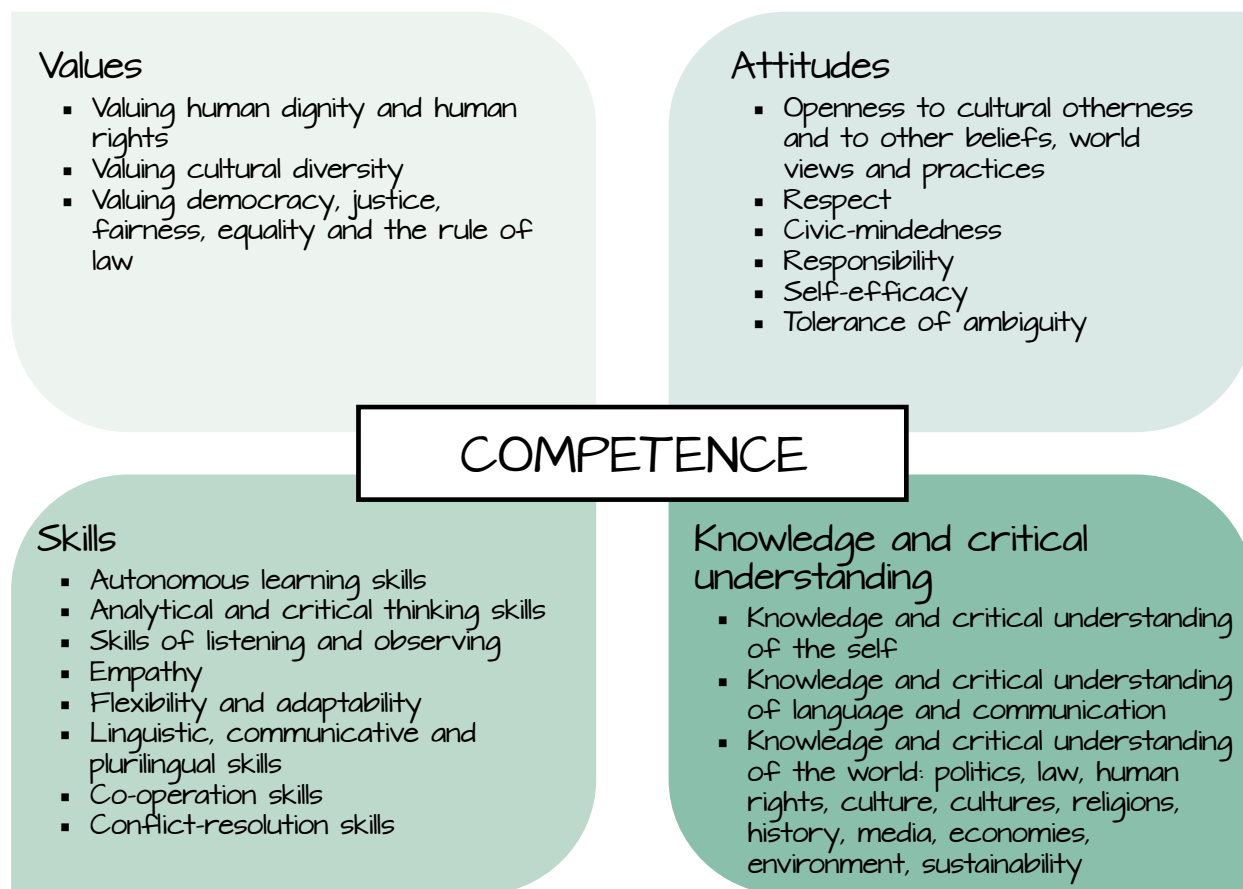


4.5 Competences for democratic culture and their connection to the online world

The Council of Europe has prepared a Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture. Its aim is to prepare young people for their lives as active citizens in a democratic society and to support their personal development in terms of lifelong learning. This document provides a list of skills that can help to make a positive contribution to the

development of a democratic society. In the following table, 20 competencies are divided into four categories, namely **values, attitudes, abilities, knowledge** and **critical understanding**.

These competencies can be acquired in the process of formal or *non-formal education*, but also through *informal learning*, based on one's own experiences.



As our behaviour has been increasingly transmitted to the online environment in recent years, digital citizenship experts have transferred these 20 competences for democratic culture to 10 digital domains (Richardson, Milovidov, 2019), which are:

1. Access and inclusion (digital environment open to any minority and group with a diversity of views);

2. Learning and creativity (the need for life-long learning and the development of personal and professional skills, the use of different forms of creativity and tools in different contexts);

3. Media and information literacy (the ability to interpret, understand and express one's cre-

ativity through digital media);

4. Ethics and empathy (ethical behaviour online and interaction with others based on the ability to recognize and understand the feelings of others);

5. Health and well-being - the state of "well-being" (draws attention to factors that can affect our health, such as ergonomics, posture and excessive use of technology);

6. e-Presence and communication (presence and appearance in the online space, interaction with others, management of own data and tracks online);

7. Active participation (promotes conscious, active and positive participation in the democratic life of society);

8. Rights and obligations (right to privacy, security, access and inclusion; freedom of expression; responsibilities such as ethics and empathy, etc.);

9. Protection of personal data and security (online information management and active use of navigation filters, password protection, anti-virus programs, *firewalls*, etc.);

10. Consumer awareness (understanding the commercial principle of how online space works)

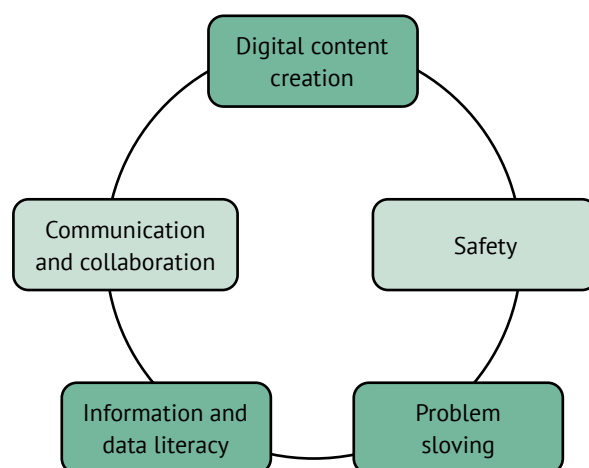
4.6 Digital competences framework for citizens

Working in the online space impacts our daily lives, and therefore also our jobs. Digital technologies affect how we manage our lives, change traditional structures, methods, and assumptions, how we communicate, learn and work. It is therefore necessary to realize that the skills we will present here will become more and more important for everyone.

This section lists five areas of competence that have been defined as a *Digital Competences Framework for citizens (DigComp)* (<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp>). These areas are seen as essential for workers during the Fourth Industrial Revolution (an industry that uses state-of-the-art technology, including artificial intelligence), but also for European citizens as such.

Five competencies of DigComp:

Information and data literacy means that the user can search for data, information, and digital content, analyse it, critically evaluate the credibility and reliability of resources and process the information obtained. For example, a user can evaluate whether a site is secure, if information on it was created or downloaded from other sources and can therefore continue to work with it.



Communication and collaboration through digital technologies include a wide range of skills in using digital technologies, interacting with others, sharing information and content through digital technologies. A typical example of engaging in civic life through digital technologies is the use of social networks to mobilise their communities, such as the call for people to network for a good cause, sewing clothes, helping senior citizens, cleaning the environment and so on. The Internet and digital services can be used to enhance or gain voice (for example, using the *#metoo hashtag*, and others).

Emphasis is also placed on *netiquette* (rules of good behaviour for internet users). It is essential to be familiar with standards of behaviour and *know-how* in the use of digital technologies and in interaction in the digital environment. Online communicators should tailor their communication strategies to specific audiences and be aware of cultural and generational diversity in the digital environment.

The creation of digital content is largely associated with the skills that create material that communicates the message of the individual. This includes creating content in various formats (e.g., data, text, multimedia). This necessarily involves knowledge and respect for copyright and licenses. For example, “*memes*” are fine, but beware of other content where someone else’s work is used: if so you have to admit

this! Naturally, programming also falls within these competencies.

Security and problem-solving are cross-cutting competences, as they can be applied to any activity using technology and should form the basis of any educational activity.

To protect devices and data, it is essential to understand the risks and threats in the digital environment, to know about security and safety measures so that internet users can protect their privacy and personal data.

To avoid the health risks associated with the use of digital technologies, users must be able to protect themselves and others from the possible dangers arising from excessive or inappropriate use of technology.

The use of the Internet is also associated with the solution of (technical) problems because the user should know what tools they need to use to solve simple or more complex complications and take a creative approach to solving conceptual problems.

Education policies fall within the competence of the European Member States, which

is why the situation is different in each country. Since 2015, the European Commission has been monitoring the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) (<<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>>). It monitors the digital competitiveness of Member States. The index assesses the level of internet connection, human capital, the use of internet services, the digitization of public services and the integration of digital technologies.

It is important to realize that working in an online environment is beginning to be a part of every citizen's life. This fact about the increased use of digital technologies in education, but also in other areas of life, has been reinforced and highlighted by the global crisis caused by the spread of Covid-19. Therefore, we shouldn't close our eyes to this phenomenon and we shouldn't condemn it. It is necessary to realize that society is evolving, and the world is changing. When we understand and accept everything from this chapter, then summarize and start philosophizing a bit, maybe one of the conclusions we could come to is that, just as we now have civics in schools, in a few years we may have also digital civics.

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Recommended learning materials:

<<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp>>



ACTIVITIES

5.1 Introduction to non-formal education

The activities listed in the 2nd content block of this publication mostly use methods and techniques of **non-formal education**, which are very attractive for young people due, but which are still seldom used in formal education, so we consider it important to provide some basic information on this topic. The issue is elaborated in more detail in the publication *The Syllabus of Non-Formal Education in Youth Work*, created by the YouthWatch and ANEV organizations as part of a project supported by the *Erasmus +* program, from which we also draw in this chapter.

According to the understanding of the European Commission and the Council of Europe, an education system consists of three interconnected components - **formal education, non-formal education, and informal learning** (Compass - Manual for the Education of Youth on Human Rights, 2006), where:

Formal education refers to a structured education system that includes all schools from primary to university, including specialized vocational and professional training programs. The law requires compulsory basic education (i.e., nine years) - usually in the range of 6 to 17 years. After finishing this, the graduate receives a certificate of completion, at higher education an academic degree.

Non-formal education refers to all planned personal and social development programs for people, which are designed to develop a range of competencies outside the formal education curriculum.

Informal learning refers to the course of a lifetime. In it, everyone acquires certain attitudes, values, skills and knowledge through the influence of various educational stimuli in their environment and from everyday experience, such as from home, neighbourhood, library, media, experience gained at work, at play and so on.

5.2 Education or learning?

Education is a system in which the learning of individuals and groups takes place in a structured and targeted manner under specific conditions created by the organizers, on a theoretical or conceptual basis using certain methods and techniques.

Learning is an individual process of acquiring competencies - knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Non-formal learning activities can be very diverse. Nevertheless, there are several elements that are characteristic of such activities.

Non-formal education takes place outside a formal education system (formal education leads to the achievement of a certain level of education evidenced by a qualification, e.g., a certificate, diploma) and does not lead to a comprehensive school education. These are organized educational activities outside the established official school system, offering those who are interested in the deliberate development of life experiences, skills and attitudes based on a comprehensive system of values. These activities are usually voluntary. The organizers are children and youth associations and other non-governmental non-profit organizations (NGOs), school facilities for hobby education - especially leisure centres, educational agencies, clubs, cultural facilities and more. (<<http://www.msmt.cz/mladez/neformalni-vzdelavani-1>>)

“**Non-formal learning** is intentional, but at the same time voluntary, it is learning that takes place in a variety of settings and situations in

which teaching, education and learning may not necessarily be the only or main area of activity. These environments or situations may be temporary or alternating, and relevant activities or courses may be led by professional learning facilitators (e.g., youth workers) but also by volunteers (e.g., youth leaders or young leaders). Activities and courses are planned, but rarely structured like traditional lessons or subjects.” (Chrisholm, 2005)

5.3 Prerequisites for non-formal education

Voluntary - the decision to participate in non-formal education is solely on the side of the participant. This applies not only to participation in the whole program, but also in a part of it. Non-formal learning should also allow for the different involvement of participants according to their needs at a specific time during an activity.

They set intention and goals - the activity meets the project logic - has set specific goals based on the needs of the participants and their input experience. Objectives are set for the whole program as well as for individual sub-activities in order to ensure the continuity and gradual logic of the program.

Conscious and holistic learning - participants are aware of what and how they are learning during the activity. Participants themselves evaluate their learning and leadership activities, e.g., youth workers, trainers, etc., support their awareness. They give them feedback only if the participants show interest in it. Participants in non-formal education not only develop their knowledge, but also work on their skills (i.e., the ability to put what they learn into practice), attitudes and values. An important part is also the emotional side of learning and being aware of what we experience internally.

Partnership between participants and organizers - activity leaders act as guides to the edu-

cational process. They support the participants and identify their needs throughout the process so that they can adapt the program of activities to them.

Valuation of mistakes - mistakes are perceived as an opportunity for further development. Non-formal education works with the approach that “one learns through mistakes”.

The role of the group - the group is very important for the learning process in non-formal education. Participants develop not only based on their own experience, but also use the experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes of others, e.g., leaders of activities, but also other participants. Non-formal education creates a space for cooperation in a group, and thus creates additional opportunities for learning and self-development.

Responsibility for learning outcomes - lies with both the leaders of the activities and the participants. Thanks to the fact that each participant can determine for himself what he needs to learn (sometimes also in what way), the responsibility for the result is on both sides.

Areas in which it is possible to describe non-formal education, or to distinguish it from formal education or other approaches, are still evolving. Therefore, we only present here a list of those areas to which importance is already attached by various actors.

5.4 Kolb cycle of learning

There are many different theories about how people learn. From simpler ones, such as VAK, which names three basic learning styles - *visual, auditory and kinaesthetic*, to Howard Gardner’s concept of *multiple intelligences*. However, to us, a slightly different aspect is important. We want to set up educational activities so that they are universally effective for all our participants, regardless of which ways and styles of learning are most effective for them. In addition, to ensure that there is something enrich-

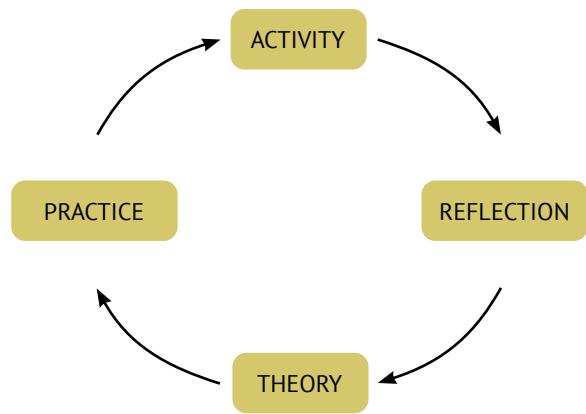
ing for everyone in our activities and that we can teach all participants what we set in the educational goals.

As a “tool” in the preparation of educational activities, there is a long-established theory of the four learning styles from the authors Petr Honey and Alan Mumford, which builds on the work of David Kolb.

Kolb's learning cycle - points out that learning is effective when it involves four consecutive phases.

The participants first experience something, i.e., they try it first-hand (**concrete experience**), then look back at what happened and identify what the key moments in the process were (**reflective observation**). Then they name why this was the case, what the principles behind it were or the broader context (**abstract conceptualization**) and then they try to experiment again in real life and do it better (**active experimentation**).

In practice, this means that we design the programme to include activities during which the participants themselves can train situational behavior (**ACTIVITY**). At the same time, there is space to reflect on their own experiences, but also to discuss the views and perceptions of the others (**REFLECTION**). We also link the topic being discussed to specific theories and put it into a wider context (**THEORY**) and we also dedicate some space to application of the activity content in practice (**PRACTICE**).



Picture: Kolb's cycle

Example:

If we prepare an exercise on team collaboration and the goal is for participants to realize what roles they most often play in the team, this can be done in different ways. But if we want to cover all four learning styles, you'll probably find:

- activities during which participants will collaborate in teams and perform an assignment, ideally so that they have to split some tasks or roles into preparation and implementation (**ACTIVITY**);
- a view of the experience of working together – how their work in the team went, what worked and what didn't, what roles they held within the team and how it suited them (**REFLECTION**); this is a process that affords a deeper understanding of what's going on, why it's happening, how it's happening and what it means to us. It's like we're sitting in front of a mirror and having a chance to talk to ourselves. We can reflect on different themes and areas according to what is relevant in terms of promoting learning and educational objectives.
- an introduction to one of the theories of team roles that we will work with (**THEORY**);
- a discussion also in the field of practice – for example, if they are close to creating a team for an upcoming event, from which

types of roles or people should they create the team for it to be effective, or how to re-allocate team roles so that they cooperate well with each other (PRACTICE).

There is something for activists (specific activity), people who reflect (reflection of experience and discussion), theorists (selected theory of team roles) and pragmatists (how to use it in the next team compilation).

The great advantage of this learning cycle is that we do not necessarily have to go in the order of activity – reflection – theory – practice, but the order of individual phases can change.

5.5 Methods and activities of non-formal education

We characterize the **method** as a certain standard procedure in education, which has its specifics - such as a lecture. At the same time, there are several **techniques** for each method

that can be adapted, customized and fine-tuned to best meet the objectives set. For example, if we choose a lecture, we can do it through various techniques - using pictures, stories, or presentations, or even so that the pre-studied topic will be given by the participants themselves.

An activity is a comprehensive set of methods and techniques that has proven itself in the long run and is used in approximately the same form (although it must always be at least slightly adapted to the group, environment, or context in which it is used).

For simplification, the methods used in non-formal education in youth work can be divided into two categories - **methods aimed at supporting group dynamics (*energizers* and *“ice breakers”*, *teambuilding*) and other methods that are easily adaptable and practical in various topics**, these are part of various activities and can be focused, for example, on the development of a specific component of competencies.

Name of the method	Description of the method	Benefits	Risks
BRAINSTORMING	Producing as many ideas as possible on a given topic and their subsequent analysis.	Universal use, support for creative ideas and potential solutions.	Possible high inconsistency results in the complexity of the subsequent analysis.
DISCUSSION	Exchange of views and views on a given topic, often with the aim of mutual inspiration.	Universal use, use of participants' experience and expertise.	Uneven involvement of participants, possible dominance of individuals. Not suitable if the participants have no, i.e., minimal experience in the topic.
GROUP WORK	Participants receive assignments in a small group to complete.	There is usually not just one right solution. Participants' expertise is used, a space for the involvement of all participants.	Possible diversity of output, and thus higher demands on the trainer to work with the output, possible dominance of individuals.
ACTIVITY	A task aimed at better understanding the topic covered.	This can be carried out in groups or individually. Quick verification of the level of understanding of the topic by the participants.	In the case of more complex assignments, it may take too long for some participants.

LECTURE	Transmission of new information to trainers or other experts.	Suitable if the group does not have enough information and experience in the topic, i.e., for large groups of participants.	Ineffective when not combined with other methods and difficult to maintain attention.
CASE STUDY	Analysis of a specific case from practice related to the topic.	Connection with a specific reality, use of the participants' experiences.	For some participants, the limited amount of information about a given situation may be limiting.
ROLEPLAY	Taking over another person's identity when dealing with a situation.	The possibility of gaining a different perspective on the topic, complex experience, touches on the level of attitudes.	Perhaps too emotional involvement of the participants, a demanding analysis if the participants did not return to their own identity.
SIMULATION	Surviving a pre-prepared possible situation, which participants may face in the future and subsequently analyse their reactions and behaviour.	Opportunity to test your behaviour "trial" and say how to do it better in the future.	Often demanding on the preparation and experience of the trainer. It will not work if participants do not feel safe.
REFLECTION	Regular opportunity with the same people in the same place and at the same time to look back at the previous program.	Safe atmosphere, the opportunity to express oneself for less significant participants, enhancing learning from the previous program	The risk of not meeting the goal in the absence of the trainer, more demanding in terms of time with other groups.
EDUCATION VISIT	Opportunity to see and experience examples from practice related to the topic.	A real example from practice as inspiration for participants with the opportunity to ask about broader contexts.	Challenging to coordination, dependence on a third party, sometimes challenging to find the perfect example on a topic.
ENERGIZER	Activation of participants and induction of an informal atmosphere.	Usable almost anytime, it creates a light atmosphere, a possible connection to the topic.	If it is not adapted to the target group, it may be perceived as childish and unnecessary.
TEAMBUILDING	Promoting group interaction, building relationships and a secure environment.	It creates preconditions for going over personal topics as well as openness in a group.	Rejection by participants for too simple assignments and in case of misunderstanding of inclusion.

"The goal of education is not to increase knowledge, but to create opportunities for children to invent and discover - to create people capable of doing new things."

Jean Piaget

5.6 Tips for management of the activities

Division into groups

- **PAIRS - Who belongs to whom**

The lecturer writes down different pairs that belong together on cards in advance. Each participant draws one card before the activity. The participants then create pairs according to the drawn cards.

Examples of pairs: Pat - Mat, Smurf - Smurfette, John - Marianne, Puf - Muf, Kremienok - Chocholúšik, Jacob - Mathias, Chip - Dail, Bob - Bobek ...

Option 1: The trainer can prepare pairs such as *living and non-living beings, animals and humans* and the like. This gives you extended subdivision options.

Option 2: The lecturer creates a *concept-definition pair*. Participants should be paired with a *concept - a definition* of how they belong together.

- **STRINGS**

Before the activity, the lecturer prepares some strings according to the number of participants. Each string is about 75 - 120 cm long. The strings are tied tightly into smaller bundles according to the required number of participants in each group. The instructor then grabs the strings in one bundle and asks each participant to grasp one end of the string. The whole group is then to "unravel", with those who hold the same string to work with each other.

Example: We have 20 students in a class, and we want to divide them into 4-member groups. Before the activity, we prepare 20 strings and then 5 bundles of 4 strings. We tie the strings in each bundle at one end firmly to hold them together, therefore creating 5 bundles. When dividing into groups, we grab all the bundles

and invite the participants to stand up, come to you and each grab one free string.

- **SIMILARITIES**

Participants will move to a place with no desks. Their task is to line up according to the required criteria, for example: height, name, surname, date of birth, name of the street on which they live, etc. When the participants are lined up, the facilitator verifies the correctness of the arrangement. E.g., when arranged alphabetically by name: Adam, Anna, Beata, Cyril ... Subsequently, the lecturer can divide the participants into smaller groups of 2, 3, 4 ...

Option: Participants line up without words, just based on non-verbal signals.

OTHER TOOLS FOR DIVISION INTO GROUPS:

- Pairs game (pairs);
- Triplet's game (triples) e.g.: flag - name of a country - capital city;
- quartet, playing cards, joker cards;
- coloured balls or other small objects (candies, game figures, animals, etc.);
- cut coloured paper (participants join according to the colours of the pieces of paper);
- papers with numbers, symbols, terms (participants with the same symbols on the papers can be put together);
- classical counting (according to the number of groups): 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2 ...

Debrief (final analysis)

A method of linking what has happened with practice

How can we ensure a participant's maximum takeaway from activities, model situations, dis-

cussions, etc.? How can we ensure that they really use the information obtained?

A debrief is used for this - also referred to as the “final analysis”. The essence of a *debrief* is to look at what has happened during the activity and put the principles that will help us move forward into practice. A *debrief* means creating a bridge between the educational situation / activity (role-playing, a model situation ...) and the real world of the participants, it is a link between what has happened and the long-term benefits for practice.

How to implement a debrief?

There are several techniques for carrying out the final analysis. In this publication, we were inspired by the publication “*Teaching Skills*”, which is listed in the sources used.

In realizing a *debrief*, we rely on Kolb’s learning cycle, which consists of the four phases: activity, reflection, theory, and application / transfer to practice.

Practical tips

- In the analysis, the most important is the intention / goal (to where the lecturer wants to lead).
- Focus on key areas - a large quantity of information can be extracted from one and the same activity (what questions were asked, has the participant listened to the other party, to what extent did they notice their partner’s body language, what strategy did they choose, how did they react to disruptive stimuli etc.). You don’t have to break down each of them.
- Choose from the situation what you need to achieve the goal of the training.
- Wrap up the job by creating a bridge between the situation and practice.

Reflection

The aim here is to complete all the data, observations about what happened during the activity. Questions can be focused on thoughts, feelings, or behaviours (if questions are behavioural, summarize the facts). It may happen that the participants perceived what was happening differently. Encourage participants to compare their individual observations.

Questions example:

- *What did you plan? What did you want to achieve?*
- *How were your roles divided? Who did what?*
- *What information did you specifically ask for / obtain? What led you to ask for just this information?*
- *When did you disagree with the group? What led you to this?*
- *What helped you, what caused you problems? What caused ...?*
- *What happened when ...?*

Next possible questions in reflection:

- *What was the key to solving this task?*
- *What helped you?*
- *What role did communication play in this activity?*
- *How did your team work together?*
- *How firmly did you stick to the assigned roles?*
- *What were your priorities?*
- *What was the most significant result of this activity for you?*
- *What was the biggest challenge?*
- *How did you deal with the obstacles?*
- *Were there cases during the activity in which you could not reach an agreement? How did you react / proceed?*
- *How did you feel during the activity? What did you like the most and what didn’t you? (What was easiest and hardest for you?)*
- *Were you satisfied with the result?*

- *What was most difficult for you during the activity?*
- *What helped you the most? Which information / event during the activity helped you the most to reach the goal / solve the task?*

Practical tips:

Leave space for participants to express their feelings:

- *How do you feel?*
- *How was working together as a team?*
- *How satisfied are you with the result?*
- *What did you think, when happened?*

It is important that they talk about what happened during the activity here and now. Sometimes participants tend to defend themselves and point out that in practice they would solve it without mistakes.

While the questions in the *Theory and Application* sections are more or less standard, the questions in the Reflection section will vary depending on what the training is aimed at.

Theory

The essence of this step is to map what key points the participants discovered and to generalize the conclusions they came to.

Questions example:

- *What did you learn?*
- *Did you realize something during the activity that you didn't know before?*
- *What would you do the next time? What would you do differently / better?*
- *What could you do more effectively in the group next time?*
- *If we wanted to create a set of rules for your work based on this activity, what would it be?*
- *How does this relate to ...?*

Other examples of questions about the theory:

- *Have you changed your mind or modified your argument after interacting with others / after getting some information?*
- *How would you describe the outcome of this activity to your friend?*
- *Do you think that a similar situation can occur in real life? Which cases do you remember?*
- *Did this activity affect your attitude towards ...?*
- *Did you get new information with this activity?*

Practical Tips:

Write participants' statements on a flipchart. They can later bounce back from them at the next stage in the search for the transfer of the information obtained into practice.

Application

The aim of the last step is to find a link between the situation here and now (training situation) and practice / everyday life, to find out how the participants learned what they did during the activity, the real world, their work.

Questions example:

- *What is the parallel between this (training) situation and practical use?*
- *How can you use this information in practice?*
- *What intrigued you most from what you heard?*
- *What will you personally take with you to a real-life experience / practice?*

Next examples of questions in application:

- *What have you decided to change in your real life?*

- *Where do you see parallels in life?*
- *What steps can you take if you encounter a similar situation in real life?*
- *When can you put into practice what you have learned?*
- *Who should be responsible for solving / applying these tasks / rules in an online / offline environment?*
- *Would you be able to apply the knowledge from the activity in real life? In which cases / situations?*
- *What have you decided to change in your real life?*

Source:

PEŠEK T., ŠKRABSKÝ T., NOVOSÁDOVÁ M., DOČKALOVÁ J. *Šlabikár neformálneho vzdelávania v práci s mládežou*. YouthWatch a ANEV v rámci projektu podporeného programom Erasmus +, 2020. ISBN 978-80-973031-2-9

Practical tips:

If the participant expresses themselves, it is important to make sure that they speak for themselves and do not hide behind the group. It is important that they feel responsible for their own progress, e.g., if the participant says “... we could ...”, return him: “*What exactly would you do differently?*”

MIKLOVIČ, I. *Lektorské zručnosti*. (Sprievodca pre začínajúcich lektorov.) Bratislava: GtoG, 2013. ISBN 978-80-971420-6-3

Activity number	Activity title	Topics	Recommended age group	Activity duration	Participant count	Page
1	How to be a digital citizen	Digital citizenship, Safely online, Critical thinking	10 +	60 min	up to 30	99
2	How to face cyberbullying	Safely online, Digital citizenship	10 +	45 - 60 min	up to 30	101
3	How can I contribute?	Digital citizenship, Critical thinking	15 +	120 min	up to 20	105
4	A safe password	Safely online, Critical thinking	10 +	60 min	up to 20	111
5	Bicycle	Critical thinking	10 +	30 min	up to 20	113
6	What if I disagree with someone on a social network?	Digital citizenship, Safely online	10 +	90 min	up to 30	115
7	What is cyberbullying?	Safely online, Digital citizenship	10 +	90 min	up to 30	119
8	What you (don't) know about me	Critical thinking, Media literacy, Digital citizenship	10 +	20 min	up to 25	124
9	What do you do on the internet?	Media literacy, Critical thinking, Digital citizenship	10 +	90 min	up to 30	126
10	What is hidden behind the memes?	Media literacy, Critical thinking, Digital citizenship	15 +	45 min	up to 20	129
11	What happens to a picture on the internet?	Safely online, Digital citizenship	10 +	45 min	up to 20	132
12	What are media?	Media literacy	10 +	60 min	up to 30	134
13	Detecting logical fallacies	Critical thinking, Media literacy	15 +	60 min	up to 20	137
14	Digital footprint online	Safely online, Digital citizenship	10 +	60 min	up to 20	145
15	Digital defenders	Digital citizenship, Safely online	10 +	90 min (+20)	up to 30	149
16	Search	Media literacy, Digital citizenship	15 +	45 min	up to 20	154
17	Witch hunt	Critical thinking, Media literacy	10 +	40 min	up to 20	157
18	Different point of view	Media literacy, Critical thinking	15 +	45 min	up to 20	160
19	Should I buy what influencers offer me?	Digital citizenship, Critical thinking, Media literacy	10 +	60 min	up to 30	163
20	Aviation experts	Critical thinking	15 +	45 min	up to 20	167

21 A letter from the future	Safely online, Digital citizenship	10 +	60 - 80 min	up to 20	170
22 On two banks of the river	Critical thinking, Media literacy	15 +	60 min	up to 30	174
23 Find the flaw in the argument	Critical thinking, Media literacy, Safely online	15 +	40 - 60 min	up to 30	177
24 Not all theories are equal	Critical thinking, Digital citizenship, Media literacy	15 +	120 min	up to 25	180
25 Journalists in practise	Media literacy, Digital citizenship, Critical thinking	10 +	60 min	up to 30	184
26 Check your facts!	Safely online, Critical thinking, Media literacy, Digital citizenship	15 +	60 min	up to 20	189
27 True or fake news?	Critical thinking, Media literacy	15 +	60 - 80 min	up to 20	194
28 Civilized online discussion rules	Digital citizenship, Safely online	15 +	90 min	up to 30	199
29 The story of the seven blind mice	Critical thinking, Media literacy	10 +	30 min	up to 30	201
30 Advertising agency	Media literacy, Digital citizenship, Critical thinking	15 +	60 min	up to 30	204
31 It's won't be done by itself – a project for my school/community	Critical thinking	15 +	45 min	up to 25	208
32 Freedom of speech or censorship?	Digital citizenship, Critical thinking, Media literacy	15 +	90 min	up to 30	211
33 Embarrassing photo	Safely online, Digital citizenship	10 +	60 min	up to 20	213
34 Ad development	Media literacy, Critical thinking, Digital citizenship	10 +	60 min	up to 30	216
35 Cheerfully, sorrowfully	Safely online, Digital citizenship	10 +	45 min	up to 20	219
36 Creating my own infographic	Digital citizenship, Media literacy	15 +	120 min	up to 30	221
37 Responsibility online	Safely online, Digital citizenship	10 +	45 min	up to 30	224

1 How to be a digital citizen

Topics: **digital citizenship, safely online, critical thinking**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: teamwork, discussion, presentation, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- perceive the digital dimension of citizenship,
- define the rules of digital citizenship,
- state examples of behavior following the rules of digital citizenship,
- encourage empathy online.

Equipment: a worksheet for each participant, writing tools, flipchart board, markers

Keywords: citizenship, digital citizenship, empathy, engagement, respect

Activity process:

1. We distribute the printed worksheet to the participants and let them have enough time to read and think individually about the text. We make sure that everyone understands all the expressions and knows the meaning of words. We look at words such as citizenship, empathy, respect, and we can explain or define them. While reading, we let the participants think about the following questions:

1. Do these rules apply to everyone? Should everyone follow them or are there any exceptions?
2. Does a good citizen interact with others or do they do everything just for themselves?
3. Where do we learn these rules?
4. Is it possible to add something to this list of rules? Is something missing?

2. We open a discussion about these issues and talk about each rule and try to apply it to real life. We invite the participants to describe the situations where they have encountered the rule and where it can be implemented. After the discussion, we ask a question for further consideration:

Do you know anyone who behaves this way offline? Do you usually follow these rules in your daily actions?

If we have enough time, the participants can share their opinions and tips.

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



60 minutes

3. We then divide the participants into pairs or groups of three and ask them to try to apply these rules in the online environment. Each group is supposed to develop one rule for digital citizens in accordance with the offline citizen model. After about 10 minutes, the groups present their suggestions. With the help of the participants, we summarize the main ideas by writing them on the flip chart board (participants can also write them down in their worksheets). For each stated idea, we also ask for the opinions of others and ask them to complete those ideas. Together we look for practical examples they have already come across.

Final analysis:

With a few questions we verify whether the participants have understood the topic and the rules of behaving in the digital space. We also ask how they felt doing the teamwork and whether they're satisfied with the result of their work. We talk about why digital citizenship rules are needed and if the participants follow them or not.

- *Are they also used by other people they encounter online/the people around them?*

We can also add some theoretical basis about digital citizenship, an explanation of certain concepts: digital citizenship, digital citizen (sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the handbook (Un)safe in the net).

Activity variations:

- After presenting the ideas about how to be a digital citizen, participants can be re-divided into working groups and prepare an action plan: How to be a digital citizen in 10 days. For each day they prepare a set of tasks, correctly applying a certain rule in practice. For younger participants, there is the possibility to ask them to create a hero who behaves according to the rules: they name the hero, give them citizenship, show how an exemplary digital citizen behaves so that they can become a model for others.

- The activity can be divided into two sections, offline and online, or the group work can be done individually (worked on at home) and there would be more time for the group discussion. Also, the action plan for self can be done either as a separate activity or an individual «at home» task.

Source: FINGAL, D. *Infographic: I'm a digital citizen!* International Society for Technology in Education,[online]. Dostupné na: <<https://www.iste.org/explore/Digital-citizenship/Infographic%3A-Citizenship-in-the-digital-age>>

ANNEX

CITIZENSHIP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Many of the hallmarks of any good citizen – from being respectful and responsible to doing what is right – are key elements of digital citizenship as well. But students must learn how to apply these tried and true qualities to the realities of the digital age.

CITIZEN

- 1** Advocates for equal human rights for all.
- 2** Treats others courteously and never bullies.
- 3** Does not steal or damage others' property or persons.
- 4** Communicates clearly, respectfully and with empathy.
- 5** Mluví upřímně a nešíří nepodložené fámy.
- 6** Spends and manages money responsibly.
- 7** Upholds basic human rights of privacy, freedom of speech, etc.
- 8** Protects self and others from harm.
- 9** Proactively promotes their own physical and mental health.



DIGITAL CITIZEN

Advocates for equal digital rights and access for all. U.S. citizens with internet access at home: 56% Hispanics, 62% African-Americans, 74% Whites



Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



45-60 minutes

2 How to face cyberbullying

Topics: **safety online,**
digital citizenship

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 45 – 60 minutes

Methods of education: simulation, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- discuss the importance of an appropriate reaction when witnessing bullying/unfair online communication.
- describe the relationship between bullying offline and online.
- explain what affects the decision to act in a certain way regarding bullying/cyberbullying
- notice different opinions about a certain situation.
- analyse personal tendencies and decisions when reacting to bullying/cyberbullying.

Equipment: printed „scenarios“ for the lecturer (in the annex), A3-size paper with text.

Keywords: cyberbullying, online hate, democracy, participation, internet literacy.

Lecturer preparation: Before the activity, we arrange the room so that the participants can access/move to each corner of the room. We prepare four A3-size pages with the following statements and place them in each corner of the room. Statement texts:

- **I don't do anything.**
- **I respond to bullying right away.**
- **I report such behavior.**
- **I behave differently.**

Activity process:

1. We start the activity with the question of *what the participants consider bullying*. We encourage them to think about different ways in which people can bully others. We invite them to share their thoughts with others in a brief discussion.

2. We show the participants the statements placed in the corners of the room and explain that they should choose the reaction that would most likely represent their behavior in each particular situation. After reading the scenario the participants stand in one of the corners of the room with the comment that matches how they

would behave in the given situation. After reading those comments we can add examples for better understanding:

- I don't do anything.
 - I report such behavior (to a teacher, parent, webmaster, or other authority).
 - I react to bullying immediately (I take part in the discussion, defend the victim, etc.). In the case of an unknown aggressor, answering should be avoided.
 - I behave differently (for example, I involve others in the discussion, I set up a support group).
- Participants then present their own ideas for solving the situation.

3. Depending on time constraints and the size of the group, we can choose one, several, or all scenarios to read aloud and ask the participants to decide on their most likely reaction and stand next to it in one of the corners of the room. We support them for their honesty and ensure to give them enough time to think about their reaction.

4. When the participants are standing in the corners of the room, we ask a few participants from each group to explain their choice. Enough time allows us to continue reading other scenarios until we feel that the discussion no longer brings new input. At this point, it is advisable to end the activity.

Final analysis:

We use some of the following questions to evaluate the activity:

- *How did you find this activity? Was it difficult for you to take a stand on some of the situations? Which ones and why were they difficult?*
- *Do you think all the scenarios contained bullying?*
- *Have you ever encountered cyberbullying, as a victim or as an observer? What can you say about the relationship between bullying offline and online? Are there any differences between the two? If so, what are they?*
- *Has the activity changed your view on bullying/cyberbullying? Do you think that if you come in contact with cyberbullying in the future, you will react differently than before?*
- *What actions can you take against cyberbullying?*
- *Who should take action to prevent hate speech online? What role should the media, internet service providers, police, parents, or school management play in this?*

Tips for leading the activity:

- If the group is too large or if the participants are not used to discussing in a structured way, we use a fake „microphone“ or a stick to indicate which person is speaking. This prevents classmates from talking over each other and maintains the sequence order for the discussion.

- Participants may want to choose more than one option (for example, report behavior and react immediately). In this case, we direct them to the corner with the reaction that is more important in the given situation.

We also give them space to explain their views to the rest of the group.

- Some participants may be victims of bullying, possibly even of the people in the group. It's important not to force anyone to speak unless they are willing. The activity should allow participants with personal experience of bullying to express their concerns and help them to realize the need for additional support. As the facilitator, we should consider in advance whether or not we're willing and able to provide this support in confidence or direct the participants to other experts (local or national support networks: hotlines, victim counseling organizations).

- The theoretical background for raising awareness of the topic and solutions: section 3.2 of the handbook (Un)safe in the net: Cyberbullying.

Activity variations:

- We can simplify the activity to only two reactions: “I do nothing” and “I react”. The pages with the statements can be placed on opposite walls in the room and the participants will move to the wall depending on which option they select.

- This activity can, with minor modifications, be used in the topic of hate speech on the internet too. At the beginning of the activity, we focus on hate speech online, possible forms, and the experiences of the participants. We select suitable scenarios from the options offered in the annex and at the end of the activity, we adjust the questions according to the needs of training.

Source: KEEN, E., GEORGESCU, M.: *BOOKMARKS - PRÍRUČKA BOJA PROTI NENÁVISTNÝM PREJAVOM PROSTREDNÍCTVOM VZDELÁVANIA K ĽUDSKÝM PRÁVAM*, [Aktivita: Ako čeliť kyberšikanovaniu, str.59–62], Rada Európy, 2016, Available at: <https://www.iuventu.sk/files/nove_pdf_bookmarks_okok_final.pdf>

ANNEX

Scenarios / situations

a) You have received several offensive messages and emails from unknown accounts and numbers. Some of them also contained threats. The aggressor seems to know you personally. What do you do?

b) A few people from your networking circle (acquaintances, friends, classmates) have edited your photos and posted them on social media, along with rude comments. You know who's behind this. What do you do?

c) A boy from another country has just joined your team/class. The other members of the group have started making fun of him and posting racist jokes about him on social networks. They are pushing you to also share these jokes/opinions. What do you do?

d) Your acquaintances/classmates have started spreading negative gossip about you through social networks. Many people do not want to talk to you and some have stopped meeting you completely because of this. Even your closest friends start believing the gossip. What do you do?

e) Your teacher informs the class that a classmate is being bullied and has even been attacked on the way home from school. The teacher has asked anyone who knows about the incident to contact her. You think you know who it is. However, you are afraid because you have received threatening messages with a text ordering you to keep you quiet. What do you do?

f) You see a lonely girl in the park. You know that other young people make fun of her because she has a learning disability. They call her a nerd or a retard. Your peers are not exactly an innocent sort of people and often laugh at her even when you are together. What do you do?

3 How can I contribute?

Topics: **digital citizenship, critical thinking**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 120 minutes

Methods of education: group work, discussion, presentation, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- identify a problem in own community/society,
- work out the steps leading to a solution of the problems according to a specific structure given in advance,
- present own problem solution proposal,
- name online and offline sources for solving the problem,
- get to know examples of civic activism in own environment,
- evaluate the extent of personal civic engagement.

Equipment:

- a print-out of the article (which can be found in the annex) for each participant,
- a worksheet for each pair or group of participants,
- writing tools, flipchart paper, markers.

Keywords: online participation, civic activism, community problem, nature protection

Activity process:

1. Introduction to the topic: *Today's rapidly changing and interconnected world constantly offers young people new opportunities to get involved in solving problems around them. There are many areas where it's possible to get involved and which need our attention. Climate change, racism, LGBTI rights, refugees - these are just some of the urgent issues that are not easy to solve. Awareness, accessible information as well as financial instruments provide many opportunities for young people to be motivated to take interest in the challenges taking place at a local, national, and global level.*

After the introductory entry, we address the participants with the question:

- *How do you use current (including online) opportunities for your own civic activities?*

We can discuss for a few minutes how the participants get involved and what civic activism really is. Examples of other questions to discuss:

- *To what extent do the internet and modern technologies make civic participation easier?*

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 20

Time



120 minutes

- *What digital tools can an active citizen use?*

A short discussion can help the participants to think about the topics that are to be addressed in the next larger part of the activity.

2. As an example of civic activism, we let the participants read a newspaper article about a citizen's struggle to protect the environment he lives in. During their individual work, they should pay particular attention to information answering the following questions:

- *What was the main problem addressed by the activist in the article?*
- *What steps did he take to solve it?*
- *Who were the main partners, co-workers, and people who helped him?*
- *Why did he do it all?*

We discuss the given issues together.

3. When the discussion is no longer lively, we divide the participants into pairs/groups of three and assign the task to look for an urgent social or community problem and try to find the ways to contribute to its solution (the aim can also be to draw attention to or to inform about it). There are four steps to take when thinking about solving a problem:

- Find out as much as possible about the problem.
- Listen to what others have to say.
- Express your opinion.
- Take steps to solve the problem.

The groups can use the internet, take notes, or elaborate on the assignment on the flipchart paper. If several participants share the same issue, it's possible to group them together according to the topics. A worksheet should be a helpful tool. We let the groups work for enough time to elaborate the solution-making steps (60 minutes), preparation for the presentation should also be included in this time period. If the participants try to use images for their design, the presentation will be more interesting for others. Then the groups present the problems and the proposed solutions they worked on (approximately 5 minutes per group).

Final analysis:

Is devoted to group work and the topic of civic activism. Suggested questions for the reflection:

- *What was it like to work as a group/in pairs? How satisfied are you with the result of your work?*
- *What was difficult/What was the easiest part? What was challenging for you?*
- *Do you think that your proposed solution to the problem could be successfully implemented? What would you need for that?*
- *What are the benefits of using the Internet to solve a particular problem? What are its disadvantages/limits?*
- *Have you ever done anything like this (were you involved in solving a problem in the community)? What was the end result?*
- *How did working on a problem-solving proposal benefit you?*
- *What did you realise about civic activism during this activity?*
-

Activity variations:

- If there isn't enough time available, we can adjust the third part of the activity as follows: We let the participants individually think about the problem they see as urgent. Then they express their problem proposals and write them on the flipchart. For the following piece of work, we pick the one which was the most often named by the participants, or we can agree on the chosen problem by voting. Then we go through all the parts of the worksheet together and we invite the participants to contribute to the group work by expressing their opinions.

Alternative magazine article (for younger participants):

<https://sk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greta_Thunbergov%C3%A1>

<<https://svet.sme.sk/c/22522817/thunbergova-presunie-protesty-za-ochranu-klimy-do-online-priestoru.html>>

Source: Magazine article:

<<https://spravy.pravda.sk/eurovolby-2019/clanok/512892-aktivista-jaroslav-ak-sa-clovek-niekde-citi-dobre-je-prirodzene-ze-si-to-chrani/>>

More information about the activity: <https://www.digitalcivicstoolkit.org/participate-1>

ANNEX

Worksheet

For each step, write which online tools, sources, web pages, social media you can use.

Find as much information as possible about the problem. Analyse the information with the goal of learning about urgent societal, civic, or political matters.

Listen to what the others have to say. Look at the opinions of others and start a dialogue with the ones who have an impact on solving the particular problem.

Express your opinion. Share your world view and spread information about things that are important for you.

Take action. Join and cooperate with others while working on achieving civic goals.



Magazine article

A civic activist: If a person feels good somewhere, it's natural to protect that place.

A joint project of the European Commission in Slovakia and the daily newspaper Pravda 22nd May 2019 12:00

“Water enthusiasts from all over the world go to the Hron river to raft and admire the natural beauty of the area around Trnavá Hora,” says civic activist Jaroslav Gazdík. However, not only the unique habitat but also the inhabitants of a village near Žiar nad Hronom were endangered by the construction of a small hydroelectric power plant in the local district Jalná. Residents fought actively for the preservation of the environment and their homes for more than eight years. These heroes of everyday life, who have worked together across borders to protect nature and the environment, are also supported by the European Union as part of the EU Protects project. Jaroslav and other active citizens are such heroes.



A small frozen hydroelectric power plant in Hronská Dúbrava. The water in small power plants can often freeze and then cause ice floods which endanger the local inhabitants and their homes. Author: Jaroslav Gazdík

In addition to a full-time job, you are a very active citizen. Why did you get involved in nature conservation?

Being considerate of nature has always been a matter of course for me, my parents and grandparents have encouraged me in this since I was a child. The aluminum factory where I work puts great emphasis on reducing the negative impacts of its activities on the surrounding area, and thanks to its approach, I have become more interested in protecting the environment. However, I only became really active during the petition against the construction of a small hydroelectric power plant, which was initiated by the inhabitants of the village of Trnavá Hora, where I live.

Why did the inhabitants of Trnavá Hora decide to write a petition against the planned small hydroelectric power plant?

The inhabitants of the village already have extensive experience with the negative effects of such a construction on the environment, because a small hydroelectric power plant already stands on the river Hron in the village of Trnava Hora, only three kilometers away from the place where another was to be built. They knew that building a small hydropower plant would raise water levels and threaten their homes near the river with permanent waterlogging, floods, and ice floods. In addition, the construction endangered the fish and animals living in the river, as well as the flora around.

How?

The construction of the additional hydroelectric power plant would have completely eliminated the waterside flora - more than two thousand trees and large areas of shrubs were to be cut down. The social value of the damage would have been more than one million Euro. In addition, rare species of fish and animals of European importance, such as the dice snake or the river otter, would have been wiped out in this part of the river Hron. For such hydropower plants, good consideration should be given to where to build them and what to sacrifice. In this case, however, the environmental losses and threat to the local population significantly outweighed the benefits of the new power plant.

In addition to writing the petition, did you have to take any other steps to prevent the construction of a power plant in your district?

While examining the project documentation for the power plant, we found that there were administrative errors in deciding on the location of the building, and that the analysis of the impact on the environment had not been calculated correctly. At the same time, with the help of people from environmental organisations, we discovered that the construction of the plant in the protected area of the Jalná wetland district is not even in line with the Water Framework Directive issued by the European Union. Therefore we submitted a complaint to the European Commission about the incorrect interpretation of community law when approving the power plant project.

Did anyone help you with that?

We were supported by the mayor and citizens of the adjacent village of Pitelová, who also wrote a petition against the construction. We were also helped by the ombudsman, the prosecutor's office, the State Nature Protection Agency, representatives of the academic community, and non-governmental environmental organisations. We filed a complaint with the Regional Court in Banská Bystrica and subsequently the court opposed the construction of the power plant in Jalná, and this ruling of the regional court was upheld by the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic.

What is the European Commission's position as regards your complaint?

The European Commission accepted our complaint and agreed with us. It immediately began to pressurise the Slovak government to incorporate the framework directive into Slovak legislation in order to prevent certain parts of the directive from being circumvented in future.

How would you like Trnavá Hora to look in twenty years?

Regarding the environment, I would like it to look at least as it looks now – for people to be happy here and to have the opportunity to relax in the countryside. I believe that even in twenty years, people will be able to sit in a boat, sail down the Hron, become one with nature and enjoy the wonderful views that the scenery provides. This cannot be seen in any better way than from a boat. However, if we build barriers on the Hron every 5 kilometers, not only will nature be affected but also canoeing will disappear, because when the trees are cut down, there will be nothing to look at. Fortunately, last year Trnavá Hora approved a new zoning plan, which does not include the construction of any other hydropower plants.



*Rafting on Hron near Trnavá Hora.
Author: Jaroslav Gazdík*

Are people interested in rafting on the Hron around Trnavá Hora today?

Yes, visitors from all over the world come here, for example from the Czech Republic, Finland, Norway or Canada. They like to stop in Jalná, which is an ideal place for lunch, relaxation, or camping. They eat at the local restaurant and store their boats in our garden. At times there are even twenty boats docked here.

What do you think ordinary people can do to protect nature in their areas?

If a person feels good somewhere, it's natural to want to protect that place. And when they get to know more about what's going on around their home, the instinct to protect it is activated even more. But only if they are convinced that what they are doing serves a purpose, can things change. We must have courage and perseverance, and the support of others is also very important. I had huge support from my family and from the other inhabitants of the village, they literally filled me with energy. We fought together for more than eight years to protect the environment in our village.

A magazine article about successful civic activism <<https://spravy.pravda.sk/eurovolby-2019/clanok/512892-aktivista-jaroslav-ak-sa-clovek-niekde-citi-dobre-je-prirodzene-ze-si-to-chrani/>>

4 A safe password

Topics: **safety online,**
critical thinking

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: discussion, teamwork

Aims of the activity:

- discuss safe behavior online.
- create and compare strategies for making a strong password.
- name the risks connected to insufficient security of personal accounts, information, and data.
- assess personal privacy security online.

Equipment: A4-size paper for each group (at least 2 pages), writing tools, smaller cut pieces of a thicker paper for the evaluation of other groups' work.

Keywords: safe password, securing account and a device, online safety

Activity process:

1. Topic introduction:

Think about the password you use most often on the internet for a moment. Do you think it's safe? Do you find it impossible to guess a combination of several numbers and/or letters? However, passwords are not cracked by people, rather by computer programs. And it only takes a few minutes. An attacker most often accesses your password by intercepting it in communication with the device you are logging in to, or by retrieving it from a stolen database. After the following activity, you might change your mind and your password 😊. You're going to become members of teams who are trying to create the best password for your group. The best team will be rewarded. After we explain that it doesn't matter what strategy the user chooses to decide on their password, we move on to the experience activity. We don't yet explain the exact process for creating passwords to the participants so that they can find out for themselves first. It is advisable to make groups of 3-4 members, organized randomly or according to the needs of education/lecturer.

2. Group work assignment:

1. **Discuss how to proceed** when you're choosing as reliable a password as possible for long-term use (for example an internet banking password, science library password, etc). It must be indecipherable, but memorable for a long time because you're not going to write it down anywhere.

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 20

Time



60 minutes

2. Write down the steps you have taken to create the most secure password. That is, what rules you follow. Write these down so that they can be presented as a **recommended strategy**.
3. Follow this procedure to agree on and **create a mutual secure password as a group**. Write it on the same piece of paper as the process/strategy.
4. **Transfer and evaluation**. Leave your work on the table just the way you created it and proceed clockwise to the workstation of another group (all members who worked together move to the next workstation.
 - a) At the second group's **workplace**, discuss how effective you consider to be the strategies developed by its members. Write the **strategy** rating from 1 (weakest) to 5 points (strongest) on the prepared voting cards. Leave the voting cards face down on the table so that the rating is not visible to other groups.
 - b) Use the same procedure as in point a) **to evaluate the quality of the password** created by the original group. Write down the password rating and leave the voting cards in place.

3. The activity continues as follows:

After the first evaluation, the teams move to the next workstation - the third group - and there they do the same as at the workstation of the previous group: they discuss the strategy and evaluate it and then they discuss the password quality and evaluate it. Finally, they return to their own workstation. The teams look at the points they received from other groups and count them. Each team then presents their strategy and the password to the others and states the number of points they earned. Finally, we show them a webpage address to calculate the security of the password (eg <https://howsecureismypassword.net/>), where they can verify the strength of the password created and also how long it would take hackers to break it.

Depending on the number of created groups and the time allowance for the activity, we can stop the rotation of groups after 3-4 evaluated groups so that each group receives the same number of ratings. Or we can let the teams move until they get back to their original starting position.

We give a prize to the most successful team which is a pre-prepared reward (for example a USB key with the webpage address of a page about safe internet use; there may also be recommendations for creating passwords and links to pages to help them evaluate password quality).

Final analysis:

We evaluate the work in groups and our satisfaction with the results of the teamwork. We reveal the recommendations of experts to the teams that they should follow when creating a secure password. We can compare these principles with the most successful strategy of the winning team, or compile a new strategy using the proposed solutions from previous teamwork. We take a photo of the compiled list of rules, print it out, and distribute it to the participants or share it electronically. This will serve as a reminder of the "wild discovery of the rules of creating a secure password".

Activity variations:

- The activity can be performed as a „world cafe“ or a simulation.

Source: *How Secure Is My Password?*, [online]. Available at: <<https://howsecureismypassword.net/>>

Recommendations for making a safe password: HATOK, M., *Heslá: čo robiť, nerobiť a prečo to riešiť*, [online]. Available at: <<https://www.itcity.sk/clanky/clanok/53/hesla-co-robit-nerobit-a-preco-to-riesit/>>

5 Bicycle

Topics: **critical thinking**

- Recommended age group:** 10+
- Participant count:** up to 20 participants
- Activity duration:** 30 minutes
- Methods of education:** exercise, discussion, reflection
- Aims of the activity:**
- understand the importance of observation in the process of critical thinking,
 - notice how many things escape our attention and how easily we forget,
 - be sensitive to phenomena and things around us and realize how they work,
 - be aware of one's own observation skills and use them while performing a certain task.
- Equipment:** paper and pen for each participant (writing pad), projector and computer
- Keywords:** critical thinking, attention, observation, forgetfulness

Activity process:

1. We give the paper and pens to the participants and explain the task: Everyone should draw a bicycle on their page. We ask for the most accurate representation, without the use of any aids (photos, pictures etc). We make sure that there are no bicycles in the area. The task would therefore lose its meaning. We define an intentionally short time (3 - 5 minutes) for the task.
2. Subsequently, a presentation of the results can take place. Each participant raises their picture in front of them and shares their creation with the others. Participants may sign their image. We give everyone enough time to review their work.
3. We thank the group for their engagement, artistic and technical design, but we also point out the shortcomings in some of the drawings (which would make it impossible to actually use the bicycle). "Here, for example, there are no pedals, no chain, etc." Some may have replaced the imperfections of the technical design with other details: basket, reflectors, lights, etc. Gradually, we can go through the created drawings and invite the authors to evaluate the real life usability of each bike. For example, imagine that this is a construction plan.
 - *Could a real bicycle be built according to your design?*

We continue with a short discussion:

- *How did you feel when drawing the bike?*

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 20

Time



30 minutes

- *Why does each of you have a different bike drawn?*
- *What is the reason your bikes look like this?*
- *How come you couldn't draw a bike correctly? Why was your image so accurate?*

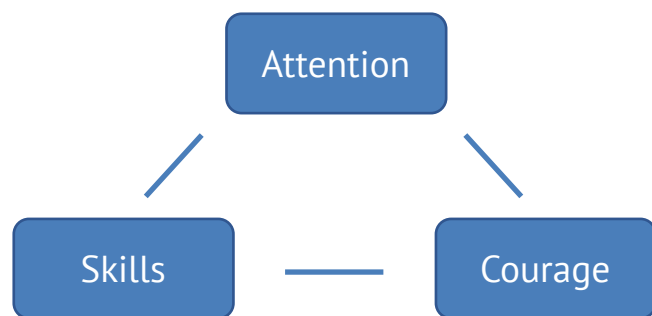
the end of the discussion, we try to praise and motivate the participants - the following examples prove that they are not the only ones who couldn't draw a bicycle "perfectly".

4. We show the participants similar images on a projector, on the basis of which the artists created prototypes of bicycles (links below). Italian graphic artist Gianluca Gimini has been working on this experiment since 2009 (Velocipedia project). In that time, he has already asked hundreds of people to draw a bicycle. Surprisingly, only 25% of the participants in the experiment were successful.
5. We point out our deficit of observational abilities. We simply don't notice some things, some we forget. And we take some for granted, and then with such a simple task like drawing a bike, we realize that we forget details, we don't know how the pedals are attached, what the construction of the bike is like, and we all have different ideas about things, we perceive different details. This also applies, for example, to the objects we use and see very often. What makes us unable to draw a thing we've seen many times? We ask participants to share their observations and thoughts on this topic. We conclude the discussion with a summary: *Attention and observation are basic components that contribute to critical thinking.*

Attention - notice the world around you, including details

Skills - personal development or support from a lecturer

Courage/predisposition - personal assumption and personal interest in using critical thinking, even though it is often the more difficult path.



Final analysis:

- *What did you realize during the activity?*
- *Think about a thing that you always take for granted in your surroundings (everyday life), and at the same time don't you know its basics and details? (eg. zipper) Why is that so?*

Activity variations:

The activity can also be used as an icebreaker. In that case, we will skip the discussion and end the activity in point 4.

Source: The activity is inspired by the workshop of Ján Markoš, the author of the publication *Sila rozumu v bláznivej dobe* (N Press, 2019).

Links to bicycles and their prototypes: <https://twistedstifter.com/2016/04/artist-asks-people-to-draw-bicycle-from-memory-and-renders-results/>

<https://www.wired.com/2016/04/can-draw-bikes-memory-definitely-cant/>

6 What if I disagree with someone on a social network?

Topics: **digital citizenship, safety online**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 90 minutes

Methods of education: discussion, exercise, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- discuss manners of communication on social networks,
- compile the rules of communication online,
- recognize appropriate and inappropriate communication,
- adjust personal reactions on social networks,
- point out the consequences of inappropriate communication online.

Equipment:

- a worksheet for each participant,
- a piece of paper with a question to think about for each participant,
- writing tools, flipchart board and a paper, markers.

Keywords: online communication, internet, netiquette, online communication rules

Activity process:

1. We facilitate a discussion with the participants addressing the following questions about personal experiences with sharing opinions on social networks:

- *Have you ever expressed your opinion about a controversial issue on social media?*
- *What was your motivation?*
- *Did you think about the short-term or long-term consequences of the way you shared your opinion?*
- *What was the result?*
- *Would you do something differently now?*

If necessary, we guide the discussion in the right direction. We thank the participants for sharing their experience.

2. In another part of the activity we try to introduce the participants to a different point of view on the issue: *If a younger sibling or a cousin came to you to ask for*

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



90 minutes

advice about how to share an opinion about a controversial topic in the media, what advice would you give them? We encourage the participants to talk about whether they have already encountered a similar situation and how they proceeded. We write some of the recommendations on the flip chart board.

If none of the participants have experienced a similar situation, we try to create a compilation of tips suggesting how the less experienced participants of the online communication should proceed = online communication rules.

3. We distribute the worksheets to all of the participants and let them work individually for approximately 15 minutes. Then we discuss the presented opinions (answers to the questions). We encourage the participants to openly share their attitudes. If necessary we review the list of online communication rules we created together.

Recommendations for guiding the discussion (for the lecturer):

- Support the discussion with questions leading the participants to learn how to express their doubts and insecurities.
- Connect the reality with examples from the environment they live in.
- Emphasize their empathetic human nature. Ask them how they feel, how they would feel if...
- Have trust in the participants. They need to find the answers on their own.

Final analysis:

During the reflexion we point out the fact that social media can provide interesting opportunities to experiment with various ways of expressing thoughts – including humor, irony, inspiring quotations, and other strategies for getting attention. However, while expressing feelings of anger, frustration or injustice it's necessary to mind our words so that they are not misinterpreted or taken out of context. There are five things in life that can never be undone: a thrown rock, a voiced word, a wasted opportunity, time already passed and trust if it has been lost. Finally we can explain the term netiquette and review the rules of online behavior.

We will close the activity by thanking the participants for sharing their views and experiences and by handing out the reflection worksheets. The participants are asked to answer these afterwards when they find more time to do so. This can also be preparation for further work on the topic in discussion.

Reflection question: *How can we strike the right balance so that people can express their views freely but without harming others?*

Background for the trainer/participants:

Netiquette is a modern term for the principles of polite behavior on the internet and social networks. E-mail, texting (SMS) and phone communication is also included. People have the impression that everything on the internet is private and thus they consciously or unconsciously overstep the boundaries of the standard „brick-and-mortar“ type of social contact according to traditional etiquette customs. The golden rule of netiquette goes: *„Always behave online as if the person you're communicating with were with you in person and face-to-face!“*



Source: TRUBAČ, MAREK. *NETIKETA: Sú sociálne siete ešte „sociálne“?*, DALITO. [online]. [cit. 2021-03-09]. Available at: <<https://www.dalito.sk/netiketa-su-socialne-siete-este-socialne/>>

ANNEX



Worksheet

Read the following comments from the social network Instagram regarding the winner of the Superstar contest (in 2020).


A

 **_luka_** Can't believe this cow won i'm speechless... 😡😡 
4w 3 likes Type a reply



B

 **[REDACTED]** Superstar never had a worse winner. I hope there are no more seasons in plan. It just keeps sinking lower and lower. 👎 
4w 6 likes Type a reply

C

 **[REDACTED]** I didn't like any of the contestants 🙄🙄 
3w 3 likes Type a reply

D

 **._.jia._.** You look like crap 
4w 148 likes Type a reply

Try answering the following questions for all of the comments:



1. Are these opinions or hate speech?

- A)
- B)
- C)
- D)

2. What could be the motivation for such comments?

- A)
- B)
- C)
- D)

3. What's your opinion about the specific comments?

- A)
- B)
- C)
- D)

4. Is it okay to express oneself in such a way?

- A)
- B)
- C)
- D)

5. Can something be done about that now?

- A)
- B)
- C)
- D)

6. What are the possible long-term risks of such a comment for the future, even a few years?

- A)
- B)
- C)
- D)

7 What is cyberbullying?

Topics: **safety online,**
digital citizenship

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 90 minutes

Methods of education: group work, presentation, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- analyse the definition of cyberbullying
- recognize the signs of cyberbullying,
- describe different forms of cyberbullying and their consequences,
- pay attention to the emotional experiences of others,
- notice the impact of cyberbullying on people's lives,
- understand the actions of a bully can be harmful,
- name various possible reactions to cyberbullying,
- discuss the connections between offline relationships, unresolved conflicts, and negative online behavior – cyberbullying,
- state the possibilities of providing help in connection to cyberbullying.

Equipment:

- a video about cyberbullying (the video is about 12 minutes long, it's necessary to stop it after 6 - 7 minutes, the second part is dedicated to the issue of "grooming" – the creation of a trusting relationship between an adult and a minor in a way that allows the child to stop being aware of the dangers of such a relationship. Frequently the goal of such behavior is sexual abuse).
- a computer and a projector for the teacher,
- a worksheet with questions for each group of three (Annex 1),
- flipchart paper divided into 3 areas by thick lines, paper, writing tools, markers for each group,
- flipchart paper or other A3-sized paper for recording the answers (1 page, Annex 3).

Keywords: bullying, cyberbullying, a specific example, signs of cyberbullying

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



90 minutes

Activity process:

1. We make the participants of this workshop acquainted with the topic of cyberbullying, which the activity is dedicated to: *The earlier we notice and stop cyberbullying, the lesser the effect it has on the victim and on those close to them. However, sometimes we don't acknowledge the bullying on time and sometimes we might even overlook the signs purposely. If we're sufficiently informed about the topic of cyberbullying, it can help us to react correctly if we come into contact with cyberbullying personally.*

2. We play an informative video about cyberbullying (6 - 7 minutes). We remind the participants that the video contains a lot of information presented relatively fast and as we're going to continue working with the information gained from the video, it's important to pay attention for the following few minutes. They are going to discover some basic information about cyberbullying, examples and a specific incident of cyberbullying, its consequences and the possibilities of protecting oneself.

3. After watching the video we discuss the participants' feelings. We create a trusting atmosphere for sharing the participants' opinions and experiences. Questions for the discussion:

- *How are you feeling? How did the information from the video affect you in any way?*
- *Were you surprised by any information? If so which?*
- *Have you ever witnessed bullying/cyberbullying or do you know anyone who has been cyberbullied?*
- *Raise a hand if you think cyberbullying is relevant to you. Anyone willing can answer the question: „Why?“*

4. After the discussion we divide the participants into groups of three. Each group's task is to answer the questions from the worksheet. Many answers were stated in the video but, probably, the participants will not have got them all and so they will have to largely work the answers out for themselves. They have 20 minutes to work out the answers in their groups and after that, we go through the answers together. We don't evaluate whether a certain answer is correct or not, rather we try to pick the most relevant ones and write them down on the prepared flipchart. In this way we are creating a theoretical basis for cyberbullying. If any of the questions aren't answered sufficiently, we search for the answer together or we can play the video again in order to find the missing answers. The answers are stated in Annex 2 for the tutor.

5. Again we divide the participants into groups, this time the maximum capacity for each group is 5 pupils (we change the composition of the groups). Each group gets an A3-size page divided into 3 areas, writing materials and markers. The goal of the task is to identify the primary signs of cyberbullying, to get to know the phenomenon of cyberbullying.

The third area remains empty for now. The time limit for working these out is 15 minutes. The answers are stated in Annex 2 for the tutor.

On the page you write:

- In the first area: *What is the difference between cyberbullying and teasing?*
- In the second area: *What is the difference between bullying and cyberbullying?*

6. We let the speakers of each group present the group's answers to the first two questions. We continue to write down the main signs of cyberbullying on the flip chart as keywords. Cooperating with the participants we pick the most important signs (we circle them, underline or rewrite them).

7. Group members get back to their flipcharts and use the third area of their pages to write down their own definition of cyberbullying. Task: *Create a definition to describe the cyberbullying phenomenon using the signs that we spoke about.* After 15 minutes we take the flipcharts with the definitions, place them somewhere visible for everyone and the participants pick the definition they find the most eloquent. Each participant assigns one point to the best definition. A variation to this is to write the pupils' definitions on cards and send them from one pupil/group to another. To make things more interesting we can read or give the participants a few definitions from various sources. That way they can notice similarities and differences between the definitions.

Final analysis

We encounter harm and violence quite often in everyday life. Subtle mocking, "funny" nicknames, swearing, gossip, ridicule, and humiliation do not necessarily have to be bullying, but they can also bring negative experiences into relationships. We should not disapprove of technology because of the way people use it. If a person has negative goals, they will use any means to achieve them and technology simply makes that a lot easier right now. There is a negative side to each of us, we can be just as bad and hurtful as we are good and helpful. Behind such subtle attacks, there is often unmanifested anger and dissatisfaction. For example, if we don't tell others when we don't like something or when we feel negative emotions, but instead we make them feel our dissatisfaction and frustration behind their backs, indirectly.

Questions for reflection:

- *What was the goal of this activity?*
- *Did you learn anything new, anything important? What did you realize?*
- *Which part was the most beneficial for you?*
- *What was difficult for you?*
- *What feelings are you leaving this activity with?*
- *Did you find out anything new about yourself?*

Activity variations:

- The activity can also be implemented as two separate activities that follow one after the other.

Activity 1 (points 1 to 4) - focused on information from the video and answering basic questions about cyberbullying.

Activity 2 (points 5 to 8) - understanding the differences between harmless teasing and cyberbullying, recognizing the differences between bullying and cyberbullying, and defining cyberbullying.

Source: GREGUSSOVÁ, M., DROBNÝ, M.: *KYBERŠIKANOVANIE.sk – pracovný zošit [Aktivity: 1. Poznať kyberšikanovanie, 2. Spoločnými silami]*, (C) eSlovensko o.z., 2015, ISBN: 978-80-89774-00-5, Available at: <zodpovedne.sk/index.php/component/jdownloads/finish/1-knihy-a-prirucky/102-pracovny-zosit-kybersikanovanie-sk?Itemid=0>

GREGUSSOVÁ, M., DROBNÝ, M.: *KYBERŠIKANOVANIE.sk - metodická príručka*, (C) eSlovensko o.z., 2015, ISBN: 978-80-89774-00-5, Available at: <zodpovedne.sk/index.php/component/jdownloads/finish/1-knihy-a-prirucky/101-prirucka-kybersikanovanie-sk?Itemid=0>

Video: *Kyberšikana a sexuálni predátori na sociálnych sieťach | ft. BeWise | Zmudri.sk*, Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ObkfHArL5A

ANNEX

Annex 1: Questions about cyberbullying

1. What forms of cyberbullying are there?
2. How often do you think cyberbullying occurs in our country?
3. What were the consequences of cyberbullying for the victim in these cases?
4. What other effects can cyberbullying have on the victim?
5. What are the motives of the aggressor (the bully)?
6. How can witnesses of cyberbullying react?
7. Who are the most frequent victims of cyberbullying?
8. How can cyberbullying be prevented? What can a victim of cyberbullying do?

The lecturer will find the answers to the questions in the video.

Annex 2: Answers for the tutor

What is cyberbullying?

Just like other forms of bullying, cyberbullying is a repetitive and intentional behavior with the goal of making fun of someone, harming, humiliating, or injuring them. The aggressor is abusing their power over the victim. The victim perceives cyberbullying as hurtful and cannot defend themselves sufficiently against it.

In your opinion, what is the difference between cyberbullying and harmless teasing or poking fun?

For example, if two classmates swear at each other on a social network, we are the witnesses of an online argument. We may also encounter other similar forms of aggression online. These are annoying and hurtful, but in these cases, this is not cyberbullying. The following two elements are present in both bullying and cyberbullying:

- Imbalance of power (the attacker has power over the victim),
- Audience or bystanders who are a source of feedback for the antagonist (admiration, encouragement, rejection, ignorance). It's this audience's attitudes and reactions that can reduce harm and stop bullying. However, through passivity, bystanders help develop, maintain and legitimize the process of cyberbullying.

The definitions of the harm can also contain the following features: repetitive, intentional, long-term character. Even though it's obvious that the victim doesn't consider the situations to be fun and they are upset, the attacker continues to hurt them anyway.

How is cyberbullying different from bullying?

With the expansion of high-speed internet, social media, and smartphones, new forms of bullying have developed. They have their specific characteristics, process, and impact because of the uniqueness of online communication, in addition there are specific ways to prevent cyberbullying and resolve these incidents.

Cyberbullying is defined as the misuse of information and communication technologies (especially mobile phones, smartphones, and the internet) for the purpose of intentionally harming others. Such online behavior is unpleasant for the victim, and they can't defend themselves for subjective or objective reasons.

Annex 3: A3-size paper for recording the answers

Forms of cyberbullying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ➤ ➤ ➤ ➤ 		Incidents of cyberbullying (depict in a graph)	
The victim Consequences and effects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	The aggressor Their motive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	Witnesses Possible reactions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	
Most common victim <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 			
Ways to defend yourself if you're being cyberbullied <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ➤ ➤ ➤ ➤ 			

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 25

Time



20 minutes

8 What you (don't) know about me

Topics: **critical thinking, media literacy, digital citizenship**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 25 participants

Activity duration: 20 minutes

Methods of education: icebreaker, energizer, discussion

Aims of the activity:

- perceive the superficiality of judging information and people,
- note the ease of creating and disseminating information,
- estimate the truthfulness/untruthfulness of information about a particular person.

Equipment: paper and pen for each participant, enough space for the participants to move

Keywords: dissemination of information, assessment of information, communication

Activity process:

1. The activity should be used as an introduction to the topics of critical thinking, media literacy or digital citizenship as well as an icebreaker or energizer during training about these topics. Before the activity, we will prepare the space so that the participants can move freely in the room and have access to each corner. Each corner of the room is visibly marked with the numbers 1 to 4.

2. We will hand out paper and pens to the participants and ask them to write four statements about themselves. Three of these statements are supposed to be true and one is false. Then we collect the paper and we read the individual statements about each participant (one by one). The participants do not sign their pages, so no one knows who wrote the statements. Others may try to identify the author of the statements. After a few attempts, the lecturer invites the person who wrote the statements to reveal themselves. The lecturer then reads the statements again and the participants try to figure out which of the statements is a lie. They express their opinion by standing in the corner of the room marked with the number of the claim, which they consider a lie. The participant in question shall then confirm the truth or falsity of the statements. We proceed in this way until we have read all of

the statements. We can also make an adjustment according to the time allowance that the lecturer has allocated for the activity.

Instruction Example: *If you think statement number three is a lie, stand in corner number three. If you think another statement is untrue, stand in the corner with the corresponding number.*

3. If we use the activity as an icebreaker or energizer, we can end it without reflection and continue the lesson. However, with a short reflection we can connect it with the topic of education and get more out of it.

Final analysis:

- *What do you think this activity was focused on? What was its goal? (Answers can be different: get to know each other, learn more about yourself, find out which information is true and which is not, train your ability to estimate a person, etc.)*
- *How did you feel when you wrote the individual statements? What was important for you when creating false information?*
- *Was it easy for you to determine the truthfulness of the statements?*
- *When were you correct/incorrect? Why?*
- *Do you think it's different on the internet (when assessing the credibility of information)?*

Most likely, it was not easy for the participants to determine which of the statements was a lie. Nevertheless, we often do it in everyday life - we rely on our own assumptions, we make a guess about reality and based on that we are able to form an opinion.

Activity variations:

- A larger group can be divided into two subgroups, and one more lecturer is needed to lead the second group.
- We can omit the first part, where the participants guess who wrote the statements, and focus only on revealing the false statement. So each participant reads his four statements and the others guess which one is a lie. In this case, the reflection can also be focused on communication skills. Eg: Did you observe the behavior of the participants when they read the claims? Did you pay attention to their verbal and nonverbal communication? What did you notice?
- The method of indicating a false statement may also be different. Participants can vote, record answers on a whiteboard, raise a card with the right number etc.
- We can also specify the topic or nature of the claims. When assigning a task to participants, we ask that the statements be directed, for example, to their personal lives, work experiences, strengths and weaknesses, the online world, etc.

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



90 minutes

9 What do you do on the internet?

Topics: **media literacy, critical thinking, digital citizenship**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participants count: up to 30 participants

Activity durations: 90 minutes

Methods of education: discussion, group work, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- list the sources of information about current events,
- compare and evaluate the quality and seriousness of the sources of information in different media
- discuss what we can come in contact with on the Internet.

Equipment: flipcharts, post-its (stickers), markers

Keywords: internet, information, misinformation, trusted information, sources, information searching

Activity process:

1. We distribute small tickets (such as posts) on which everyone writes three websites from which they most often obtain information (these can be sites that are focused on a specific topic, events in the country or in general - types of websites where they usually search for information).

2. We evaluate the survey about the visited sites (with the help of a group) and present them to the participants.

3. We highlight 3 - 5 most visited pages. We divide the participants into groups and ask them to work in teams on the following tasks:

- identify the owners of these sites,
- assess their credibility
- name the audience to which the information is addressed
- identify the purpose of information on the websites

4. We will perform the final analysis of the activity. The groups present the results of their work on the task (findings, observations). Afterwards we start a discussion about the above-mentioned areas and concepts: owner, interest, audi-

ence and the purpose of the information on the websites. Further questions for discussion are listed below.

5. We will invite participants to try to formulate the *criteria that can be crucial in assessing the credibility and quality of information sources*. Subsequently, the participants (now together in the group) can try to reassess the credibility of one of the selected sources of information based on the established criteria. The facilitator will reveal all the other criteria for evaluating the quality of the source and will tell the participants about the *five basic concepts and key issues of media literacy* (section 1.7 of the handbook (Un) safely in the net). If necessary, explain the terms: *sources, information, misinformation*.

Final analysis:

- *What information do you look for most often on the Internet?*
- *Have you ever come across false information on the Internet? If so, what kind?*
- *On what basis do you choose information?*
- *Do you notice information about the resources you are following? Who is behind them?*
- *Do you search for information in other media as well?*
- *Why do you think someone publishes false information on the Internet?*
- *What would you do if you found the information to be false?*

Activity variations:

- The list of resources can be entered by the participants before the activity, for example through an online questionnaire, and afterwards they can work with them. Consequently it is possible to devote more time to analysis and discussion: who is behind the source, what topics it focuses on, what sources it refers to, analyze the comments under the posts, etc.

- When assigning a task for working in groups, each of the groups can be assigned a different page so that two groups will always work on the same page and then the results of the analysis can be compared.

Source: MARKOŠ J., GAŽOVIČ O., *N Magazín, Kritické myslenie*. Bratislava: N Press, s.r.o, Október 2017. [online]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/941774/stiahnite-si-prirucku-o-kritickom-mysleni/>>

Materials for the lecturer / participants

1. CHOOSE TRUSTED MEDIA

Choose a quality media that is trustworthy. Notice how the topics are addressed over time, notice the different approaches of specific editors.

2. ALSO MONITOR THE COUNTERPARTY IF IT IS TRUSTWORTHY

We are different, but we should try to understand each other. Religious people should know what atheists think, people from the capital should know what people in the countryside think, teenagers should try to understand what is bothering the elderly. Therefore, it is good to have a look at the quality media that do not write for you from time to time. Through them, you get a more comprehensive view of what is happening.

3. READ NEWS IN THE WORLD LANGUAGE

Our country (Slovakia) is relatively small. Therefore, the media have relatively few subscribers and low advertising revenues, so their teams are small and often falling behind. Media that publish in one of the world's languages are usually better and faster. They can therefore afford to focus on more topics in more depth. If you are interested in global topics, it is good to read the news in another world language.

4. FOLLOW YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

How do you feel when reading the message? Do you have the urge to read more and more articles? Much of the news on the Internet is like sweets. They are prepared to "be tasty" - to make the readers addicted and evoke in them some pre-calculated response, such as sharing the article on a social network. Even news can be quite harmful. It is therefore important not to respond to news immediately. Keep your distance and think with a cool head.

5. IF YOU WANT TO REALLY UNDERSTAND SOMETHING, USE THE BOOK OR PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENT

Journalists/editors are limited in their work by the time and the space in the media that are available to them. Newspaper articles are therefore often just a sample of the topic, an introduction to it. If you find that you are really interested in one of the topics, do not draw information from articles in newspapers or from the Internet only, but reach for books and more detailed documents.

10 What is hidden behind the memes?

Topics: **media literacy, critical thinking, digital citizenship**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participants count: up to 20 participants

Activity durations: 45 minutes

Methods of education: brainstorming, group work, discussion

Aims of the activity:

- recognize the relevance of media announcements through social networks and the so-called memes
- describe the way (s) in which the credibility of the memes can be assessed,
- perceive the consequences of sharing memes.

Equipment: worksheet, writing utensils, flipchart paper, markers, computer, projector (through which the lecturer can project images or PPT presentation)

Keywords: memes, edited/unedited messages, mass media

Activity process:

1. In the beginning of the the activity we will clarify the concept of *memes* as a basic term with which we will continue to work. In the form of joint *brainstorming*, we identify the associations that connect the participants with this concept. Through associations, we try to deduce the characteristics of memes with the participants. We will add an explanation (if necessary): At present, the so-called *memes* are a relatively common way of transmitting information and are most often created to entertain recipients. However, these “picture messages” may have a political or informative subtext, where the photos used(eg. of celebrities) are taken out of context and assigned any text. In the age of technology, almost anyone with a computer (or smartphone) and Internet access can be the creator and distributor of this type of content. In this way, it is not difficult to spread, for example, political ideology or extremism. *Memes* can deceive with images or content. It is important to know the context in which the image originated (people, places and events concerned) so that its content is understood correctly. It is easier to recognize photomontage rather than whether the description of the image is true.

2. Photoshop or reality?

Assignment: *In this activity we will focus on recognizing visual differences.* The Internet offers space for all kinds of advertising. One example might be products that change your life in 24 hours (for example, you will «lose” 10 kg per night if you

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 20

Time



45 minutes

use the product). However, in order to click on a link, something needs to catch your interest, which is best achieved through visual perception. With the help of this task, you can notice the ads and messages that use edited photos to engage recipients.

3. We will *prepare suitable images (memes)* for analysis beforehand. One example is given in the draft worksheet as an illustration. We can show them through a projector or distribute them to the participants in printed form. We will distribute the worksheets to pairs that the participants formed beforehand. *Their job is to determine if photos are edited or not and give a reason why they think so.* If they consider the image to be edited, *they will also provide the criteria by which the image could be considered unedited.* They have 10 - 20 minutes to complete the task (depending on the number of images).

4. We will then make an overview of the answers. The lecturer can record them on a flipchart board. This allows participants to see which images they consider to be edited and unedited. We can also reveal the right answers, but the aim of the activity is not to convince participants about the truth. The aim is to analyse *memes*.

The choice should be focused more on neutral topics that do not offend, whose message is clear to the lecturer, on memes without vulgarisms, etc.

Final analysis:

We observe:

- the success rate with which the pairs determined the correct answer,
- the reasons they provided that helped them to choose the right answer
- what would make the image more believable (eg more time to complete the change/ achieve the goal, higher price for the product, appeal to authority, etc.).

Other questions to reflect on:

- *How often do you encounter similar memes?*
- *Are you looking for them?*
- *What do you like about them? What interests you most often?*
- *What do you think is the effectiveness of memes?*
- *What are the disadvantages of using memes*

The answers to the questions asked will vary and there is no one right solution. The aim of the activity is to reflect on the message of *memes*. The recipient of the *memes* (child, adolescent or adult) can spread the information further. Therefore, when sharing information, it is always necessary to think about and evaluate the implications of this sharing.

6. In the following discussion, we can address the issue of how to recognize edited photos and images. Participants can come up with their solutions to the problem and we can also provide them with one of the possible tools, described in the Materials for the lecturer / participants.

Source: Examples of pages where the lecturer can find suitable memes for the implementation of the activity: www.zomri.sk, <https://www.facebook.com/TMBKOFFICIAL/>
KRÁLOVÁ, T., MACKOVÁ, M., a kol. *O pravdu?, Člověk v tísní*, o. p. s., JSNS.CZ, Praha 2018, ISBN: 978-80-7591-004-2, Available at: <https://www.jsns.cz/nove/projekty/medialni-vzdelavani/tmv-2018/publikace/tmz_brozura_web_verze.pdf>

ANNEX

Materials for the lecturer / participants

HOW TO RECOGNIZE MODIFIED PHOTOS AND PICTURES?

In the case of digital photos and images, it is relatively easy to verify whether they have appeared on the Internet before and in what context. Some browsers allow you to verify the authenticity of your images by simply right-clicking and selecting “Search with Google.” If this method does not work, you must first save the photo to your computer or copy its address (right-click on the photo and select “Copy image address”). Then click on the camera icon on *images.google.com*, enter the URL or upload an image, and you’ll see where and when the photo first appeared on the Internet. This way we can find out whether it comes from another location or was made at a different time than it appears at present.

Worksheet

1. Is this photo edited?

yes

no

Activity 1 - Photoshop or reality?



2. If you consider this photo edited, please state the reason(s) why.

- - -

3. What criteria would the photograph have to have met to be considered unedited? (e.g. different editing, text, etc.) This question is only relevant if you answered “yes” above.

- - -

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 20

Time



45 minutes

11 What happens to a picture on the internet?

Topics: **safety online, digital citizenship**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 45 minutes

Methods of education: discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- perceive the emotional experience of others
- express personal emotional experience
- assess the risks of sharing online content
- find out how prevent the misuse of personal information on the internet
- acknowledge the need for responsible sharing of content online

Equipment: many pretty colourful pictures from postcards, calendars, magazines – animals, landscapes, favorite cartoon/film characters, celebrities (chosen based the age of the participants), writing tools (markers, coloring pencils, pens, stickers).

Keywords: sharing online content, internet safety, risks of sharing content, misuse of photos

Activity process:

1. All the participants sit in a circle and we spread out the pictures in the middle. We let everyone choose the picture they like best. One after the other, everyone shows their picture to others and tells them why they chose this particular picture and what they like about it. What associations it evokes in them and what personal memories it's connected to. We tell the participants that they can keep the picture after the activity and put it somewhere at home so that it reminds them of a nice memory. We encourage the participants to remember which picture is theirs.

2. We collect the images and then we circulate them between the participants clockwise or anticlockwise. We add the writing tools (markers, crayons, pens, stickers) to the middle of the circle. Each participant adds (writes or draws) something onto the picture they get from the person sitting next to them. We intentionally don't specify in the instructions whether it should be something positive or negative, we leave it up to them. Negative, teasing drawings/text are likely to appear as well. Even if no one adds anything negative onto any picture, any additional drawing can be perceived as invasive. We continue drawing and passing pictures to the next person in the circle until the original images return to their owners.

3. Everyone looks at their picture and observes what has been added to it. Maybe something nice, but maybe something they don't like. We ask the participants to show their pictures to the group and evaluate how they find them now, after the intervention of others. In this reflective discussion we try to find out how the participants feel:

- *Do you still like the image as it is now? Does it still evoke that nice memory in you, as it did before? Would you choose it again - even in this state?*
- *Which newly added part of the picture made you feel happy/sad/amused/angry?*
- *Did you draw/write something unpleasant/annoying onto another participant's picture? Would you change anything about what you drew/wrote now? How do the others who don't like their current pictures feel now?*
- *Is it worse for you if you don't know who made the additions that made you angry/sad? What would change if you knew who it was?*

Final analysis:

We thank the participants for contributing to the activity. We ask what they think this activity was focused on. We talk about how it could be related to the internet. If none of the participants finds the connection of the activity with the online world, we explain to them that the images they have chosen were to represent their photographs on the internet. When they publish their photos on the internet, they essentially lose control of them. When publishing content on the internet, it could end up just like during this activity. We continue to discuss the following issues:

- *What can happen to pictures on the internet? (eg. teasing and offensive comments, photomontages, reposting on some other site, etc.)*
- *Who are the people that the photo can reach when you publish it online?*
- *How can I delete a photo when it's already been published?*
- *How to avoid the misuse of a photo?*
- *How much can a misused photo hurt someone? Do you know someone who has experienced something similar? Have you ever done something like that (possibly not on purpose)?*
- *What would you do if something similar actually happened to you (if someone misused your photo)?*

Theoretical basis: Handbook (Un)safe in the Net, Section 3.3 Responsible Content Sharing on the Internet, Basic Rules for Secure Internet Sharing

Activity variations:

- With a larger number of participants, the images may not reach everyone. In this case, we just send the pictures (anti)clockwise to 5 - 10 other participants and then return the pictures to their owners.

- Participants (especially younger ones) may react with anger if someone writes/draws something negative on their image. If we have enough images, we can suggest that in the end, they may choose a new picture instead of the one that has been drawn on.

- Using the participants' responses from the discussion, a set of recommendations can be drawn up to help prevent the misuse of photos/personal data and to explain what to do if the situation is already happening.

- Drawings/writings on the pictures may not personally affect the participant who selected it, but hate speech probably will. In this case, the lecturer can work with an example of intolerance and connect it with the online environment. The theoretical basis is provided in the (Un)safe in the net handbook in section 3.7 HATE - correct communication vs. hate speech in communication.

Source: *Ovce.sk, Ako nestratiť dieťa vo svete internetu, Príručka pre učiteľov*, str. 27-28, eSlovensko, ISBN: 978-80-970676-0-1, Available at: <http://sk.sheep.live.eu/sites/all/modules/pubdlcnt/pubdlcnt.php?file=/sites/default/files/prirucka_ucitelia_a4.pdf&nid=149>

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



60 minutes

12 What are media?

Topics: **media literacy**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participants count: up to 30 participants

Activity durations: 60 minutes

Methods of education: brainstorming, group work, exercise

Aims of the activity:

- define the concept of media,
- list the methods of media categorisation,
- give examples of individual types of media,
- name the purpose for which the media are used

Equipment: worksheet, flipchart board, flipchart paper, markers

Keywords: media, mass media

Activity process:

1. We will use brainstorming to collect as many words as possible, which the participants associate with the term “media”. The lecturer or participant records all the words on the flipchart.

2. We will explain to the participants that our goal is to create a definition of media together. From the recorded terms, participants select (circle) the ones they consider most important. We will continue to work with these selected terms.

3. Divide the participants into groups (3-4 members each). In the group, their task is to create a definition of media using the selected words. After the set time has elapsed, the groups present the created definitions (written on a flipchart). Together, they choose the one that seems the most representative of the word media.

4. The lecturer thanks the participants for their efforts and gives them some examples of media definition. For example, from the (Un)safely in the net(part 1.3 Media) *Under the term medium, you can imagine everything that is used to transmit some information. E.g. book, movie, cell phone or even speech. We most often understand the media as the source of information that serves to inform and provide entertainment. They include the Internet, newspapers, magazines, television and radio. Collectively, these media are called mass media.*

Note: Explaining the term media can sometimes be problematic because the term is broad. Focus your attention on the media as a means of mass communication.

With a larger number of participants, the activity requires a larger time allocation.

5. We ask participants to create new groups and listen to the new assignment. Each of the groups will receive a worksheet with possible ways of categorising the media and cards with the names of individual forms of media. The task of the groups is to assign the cards to the correct category.

6. After the set time has elapsed, we will ask the participants to try to assign to cards to the correct category together (the whole class). The lecturer or participant sticks the cards on the flipchart board according to the participants' instructions. Then the lecturer will tell the participants the correct solutions. The methods of media categorisation are part of the material for the lecturer/participants.

Final analysis:

We can dedicate the final analysis to group work and discuss the benefits of the implemented activity for the participants. Examples of questions:

- *How did you like working together in groups?*
- *What differences have you noticed in the results of group work?*
- *How did you proceed in completing the tasks?*
- *Which cards were hard to assign?*
- *Why couldn't you decide?*
- *What other media categories do you know?*
- *What new things did you learn/realize thanks to the activity?*

Activity variations:

- The activity can be divided into two separate activities (first activity = points 1 - 4, second activity = points 5 - 7), time allowance is 30 minutes for each of the activities in this case.

ANNEX

Materials for the lecturer / participants

Possible media structure models:

a) technology media model: traditional media (does not require internet - radio, print, TV, books), modern media (including digital media - includes anything that is transmitted over the internet);

b) media presentation model: paper, digital, audio, audiovisual;

c) media communication style model: serious, tabloid, serious-popular, semi-serious;

d) model of media intention: to inform, entertain, educate, disseminate opinions, promote, manipulate, make visible, etc.

A further media structure model can be related to **who owns it, what their objectives, and their sources of income are.**

Worksheet

Media structure models

technology media model	media presentation model	media communication style model	model of media intention
traditional media radio, newspaper, television, books)	paper	serious	informing
modern media (digital)	digital	tabloid	entertaining
	audio	serious-popular	education
	audiovisual	semi-serious	opinion dissemination
			promotion
			manipulation
			making visible

13 Detecting logical fallacies

Topics: **critical thinking,
media literacy**

- Recommended age group:** 15+
- Participant count:** up to 20 participants
- Activity duration:** 60 minutes
- Methods of education:** discussion, group work, reflection
- Aims of the activity:**
- name and describe certain types of logical fallacies,
 - give examples of certain types,
 - note their use in communication,
 - discuss reactions to them,
 - know one's own motives and thought processes in argumentation.
- Equipment:**
- logical fallacies: characteristics (Annex 1), pictures (Annex 2) - print and cut for each group,
 - themes and titles (Annex 3) - printed and cut only once,
 - handout for each participant.
- Keywords:** communication, critical thinking, sources of information, argument, argumentation, logical fallacies

Activity process:

1. We introduce the participants to the topic of the activity- logical fallacies. In the discussion we find out what they understand by the topic and how they perceive it:

- *What is implied by the term logical fallacy?*
- *Where do you get information about what is happening in the world? (social networks, friends, media, family, internet, publications, etc.)*
- *What do you think is the hottest issue in society at the moment? We can create a mind map of the topics that are currently resonating the most in our society.*
- *Do you ever engage in discussions on these topics (whether through direct discussion or comments in the virtual world)?*

2. After the introductory discussion, we will look at mistakes made not only by us but also by the people around us, the media, celebrities and politicians. We will divide the participants into groups of 4 to 5 members. We give each group strips of paper with the characteristics of logical fallacies (Annex 1) and all pictograms

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 20

Time



60 minutes

from Annex 2. The members of the group should try to solve the following task: to understand individual logical fallacies, discuss them and assign pictures with logical fallacies to the corresponding characteristic. It is possible that a certain characteristic will correspond to several pictures, as logical fallacies overlap in meaning to some extent. Groups have 15-20 minutes to complete the task. The lecturer observes the group work, explains ambiguities, and answers any questions raised.

3. When all groups have finished their work, we verify if the logical fallacies and their characteristics were correctly matched and discuss any ambiguities. Pictures and definitions can be glued on larger paper by the participants, which will serve as a basis for the next task. Or the lecturer can give the participants a prepared handout with logical fallacies and their description.

4. The participants return to their groups and draw two pieces of paper from each envelope offered to them by the lecturer. The envelopes and paper can be color-coded. One of the envelopes contains topics on which the groups will create logical fallacies, in the other are the names of logical fallacies (cut out Annex 3). Each group randomly pulls 1 - 2 pieces of paper from both envelopes. Their task is to come up with the best possible example of a given logical fallacy on a specific topic. If desired we can focus on a single topic and the participants will only draw one of the logical fallacies. Also, the tutor can come up with any other relevant topics. We can also use topics from the mind map, which was created in the introduction. When creating an example of a logical fallacy, participants have the possibility to refer to the definition of the example from the previous task or handout.

5. In a circle, the groups present their examples of logical fallacies. If necessary, other participants may add additional examples or reformulate a specific example to match the characteristics of the fallacy. We discuss the topic, fill in the missing information or summarize it with the help of participants.

Discussion questions:

- *Did you find some fallacies familiar? Where did you encounter them before?*
- *Do you know any other logical fallacies? What are they?*
- *Why are they called fallacies?*
- *How can we defend ourselves against such fallacies? How should we respond to them?*
- *Do you ever use logical fallacies (intentionally / unknowingly)? Which are the most common? In what situation?*

Final analysis:

- *Which of the assignments was most difficult for you to carry out? Assigning a fallacy to a characteristic or coming up with a logical fallacy? Why?*
- *What did you realize when performing group tasks?*
- *How will you use the information you have learned from this activity?*

Activity variations:

- Individual logical fallacies and their definitions can be placed in a visible place in the room and referred to in the case of multi-phase training. We can assign participants to carry examples of these fallacies (magazine clippings, newspapers, advertisements ...) during the week and place them in a reserved place for the relevant fallacy.

Source: ČAJKA, A., BIOLEK, J., a kol., *Komu patrí zem, Metodická príručka globálneho vzdelávania pre učiteľov*. Bratislava: Centrum environmentálnej a etickej výchovy Živica, 2019. ISBN 978-80-972962-5-4

ANNEX






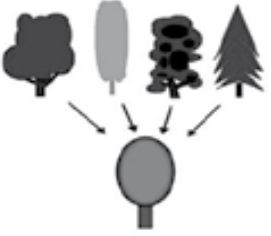




Annex 1

(cut)

<p>The speaker is trying to gain support for their argument by making a claim that creates fear of the alternative.</p>
<p>The aim of this argumentative foul is to divert attention to another, unrelated topic. The name originates from a story in which smoked herring pulled through the hunting area redirected dogs to the wrong trail.</p>
<p>Replacing the opponent's argument with a new, distorted or exaggerated statement. The other party pretends to respond to your argument, but in fact moves it to an absurd position that you do not share.</p>
<p>A procedure where fact A is presented as the beginning of a sequence of events B, C, D ... and where the arguments show that A follows from D. It is an attempt to raise fear of a given sequence without the person concerned presenting evidence of the necessary connection between individual events.</p>
<p>Defending the claim with the fact that others, most or all of them agree with it or believe in its truthfulness. The fact that the claim is known does not have a significant correlation to its accuracy. This fallacy often refers to what everyone is saying. First of all, there is no evidence that everyone claims that, and even if everyone does, there is no proof that it is true.</p>
<p>Drawing general conclusions and assumptions from a very small and limited set of experiences, facts or cases.</p>
<p>The fallacy is that one works with the unspoken assumption that everything rooted in the past is good or true. It also assumes that past reasons for introducing the traditions are still relevant today. However, just because something happened in the past doesn't mean it was right. Such an argument does not stand up in the discussion, it is necessary to evaluate the situation according to the current situation in the current context.</p>
<p>Instead of arguing, the other party attacks the opponent, their characteristics, appearance, personal history ...</p>
<p>This foul deliberately divides the topic into two extremes without recognizing the possibility of a neutral opinion, but also other possibilities and compromises.</p>
<p>This combines the desired statement with a positive evaluation and gives the impression that by rejecting it, the opponent automatically belongs to the opposite group.</p>

Annex 2 - Pictures with names of argumentation fallacies

(cut)

<p>Appeal to fear</p> 	<p>Appeal to tradition</p> 
<p>Red herring</p> 	<p>False dilemma</p> 
<p>Strawman</p> 	<p>Hasty generalization</p> 
<p>Slippery slope</p> 	<p>Appeal to society</p> 
<p>Personal attack (ad homine)</p> 	<p>Evaluation statement</p> 

Annex 3

(cut)

Topic	Argumentation fallacies
School should not start before 9am.	Hasty generalization
Climate change is not caused by humans.	Red herring
School attendance should be voluntary.	Appeal to society
Red versus green apples.	Slippery slope
The right to own a gun.	Appeal to fear
Living in the city is better than living in the country.	Strawman
Alcohol and cigarettes should be sold to those under 18.	Evaluation statement

Handout for participants

Argumentation fallacies (or delusions) are statements whose main goal is to defeat the opponent in a discussion, regardless of the truth or logic of the arguments offered. The essence of this argumentative foul is usually an inconspicuous violation of the rules of logical thinking, acting on emotions instead of reason, or both. When done intentionally and consciously, they are a popular part of propaganda and manipulation arguments, but they are often used unknowingly by each of us when defending our opinion and not paying enough attention.

Examples of argumentation fallacies:

Appeal to fear

The speaker tries to gain support for his argument by making a claim that creates fear of the alternative.

Example: *"Give me the map, because we'll get lost!"*

Red herring

The aim of this argumentative foul is to divert attention to another, unrelated topic. The name originated from a story in which smoked herring pulled through the hunting area redirected the dogs to a false trail.

Example: *"I can't understand why conservationists are bothered by the new dam, a lot of builders and their families will make a decent living from its construction."*

Strawman

Replacing the opponent's argument with a new, distorted or exaggerated statement. The other party pretends to respond to your argument, but in fact moves it to an absurd position that you do not share.

Example: *"You say that Israel should stop building new housing in the West Bank. So you say that Israel has no right to be a nation state?"*

Slippery slope

A process where fact A is presented as the beginning of a sequence of events B, C, D ... and where the arguments show that D automatically follows from A. This is an attempt to raise fear of a given sequence without the person presenting evidence of the connection between individual events.

Example: *"If we allow dogs to run freely in the parks, people will take them without muzzles on buses and then on board planes, and from there it is only a matter of time until one bites the pilot and causes an air disaster."*

Appeal to society

Defending an assertion by the fact that others, the majority or all of them agree with it, or believe in its truthfulness. The fact that the assertion is known does not bear any significance on its accuracy. This fallacy often refers to what everyone is saying. First of all, there is no evidence that everyone claims it, and even if everyone does, this is not proof that it is true.

Example: *"God exists, everyone knows that."*

Hasty generalization

Drawing general conclusions and assumptions from a very small and limited set of experiences, facts or cases.

Example: *“Economists cannot type with ten fingers. I knew one, and he almost broke his arms.”*

Appeal to tradition

This fallacy is that one works with the unspoken assumption that everything rooted in the past is good or true. They also assume that past reasons for introducing given traditions are still relevant in the present. However, just because something happened in the past doesn't mean it was right. Such an argument does not stand up in the discussion, it is necessary to evaluate the situation according to the current situation in the current context.

Example: *“If it has been working for five years, it must be good. Nothing will happen if we continue to do so.”*

Personal attack (ad homine)

Instead of arguing, the other party attacks the opponent, their characteristics, appearance, personal history ...

Example: *“All I have to do is look at the photo on your profile and it's clear to me why you're saying such nonsense.”*

False dilemma

This foul deliberately divides the topic into two extremes without recognizing the possibility of a neutral opinion, but also other possibilities and compromises.

Example: *“He who does not support me is my enemy.”* (There are also people who do not care.)

Evaluation statement

This combines the desired statement with a positive evaluation and gives the impression that by rejecting it, the opponent automatically belongs to the opposite group.

Example: *“Claudia is the most beautiful woman in the world.”* (the statement seems to express objective reality instead of personal opinion)

14 Digital footprint online

Topics: **safety online,**
digital citizenship

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: case study, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- accept the fact that our online activities leave a print and form our identities and reputation online,
- compare the digital footprints of different people,
- review personal reputations online.

Equipment:

- worksheet for each participant,
- handout information about the digital footprint (in a link below),
- computer/tablet/cellphone with internet for each participant.

Keywords: digital footprint, online safety, privacy protection, online reputation

Activity process:

1. Introduction to the topic: In everyday life, we leave a mark on people, things, events. Even in the online space, this trail remains, but because of the characteristics of the online world, we are not as aware of this as in physical life. Communication with people is less personal, we forget more quickly about the after-effects of our interactions and contact on the internet. Therefore, we may forget to control ourselves on the internet as people, but also as citizens.

We can start a discussion about our digital footprint on the internet with this statement. As part of the discussion we ask the participants the following questions:

- *Have you ever deleted something from your social network account?*
- *Have you commented on someone else's social media post? Do you remember where you posted all your comments and what you wrote?*
- *Can you delete a comment?*
- *Have you ever heard of the term 'digital footprint'? What do you think it means?*
- *What do you think is the difference between a passive and an active digital footprint?*
- *What are the risks of not taking care of your digital footprint? (reputation damage, stalking, identity theft, sharenting - excessive sharing of parents' information about their children, theft of personal data and others)*

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 20

Time



60 minutes

The purpose of these questions is to make the participants of the workshop realise that our opinions, comments, and other personal information are found in various places on the internet. We will never be able to track and manage them all. By managing we mean to edit or to delete them.

2. In the following exercise, the participants look at the digital footprint of three people. We give everyone the worksheets, they should fill them out within 20 minutes. It is necessary for the lecturer to familiarize himself with these three examples before starting the training. In the ensuing discussion, the participants share their observations and findings, their views on the behaviour of the main characters of the attached links. At the beginning of the discussion, we discuss the answers to the questions from the worksheet:

- *How does the main character use their digital track? Do they use it purposefully? Do they have a specific intention?*
- *What do you think of this example? Would you consider something similar? Why or why not?*

We add questions regarding the personal digital footprint of the participants:

- *What identity are you creating on the Internet? Are you building your best „online self“? = online reputation*
- *What about your civic footprint on the Internet? How is it manifested?*

We encourage the participants to reflect on their online lives and to openly express their views and opinions. We try to create a confidential atmosphere, we can support it with this rule: “All personal opinions and attitudes expressed by the participants during the discussion are to remain in the group”, or “We approach the opinions of others with respect, we don’t judge them” and so on. To break any barriers, the lecturer can use their own example and evaluate their own digital footprint, reflecting on the impact of their online activities. It might then be easier for the participants to review their own digital footprint in front of the others.

At the end of the discussion, we thank them for their opinions and thoughts and give the participants the handouts: What is a digital footprint? (see the link below).

Final analysis:

The final analysis focuses on reflection of the implemented activity and its impact on the future actions of the participants in the online space:

- *Would it be difficult for you to assess other people’s digital footprint? Do you have enough information? What else would you need to know to be able to form an objective opinion?*
- *Would it be easy for you to evaluate your own digital footprint? Are you aware of the risks associated with sharing content online?*
- *Are you satisfied with your online reputation? What would you change?*
- *Have you changed your mind about sharing personal information after completing this activity. If so, how?*
- *Will this activity affect your future online behaviour? How?*

Activity variations:

- If we have more time, we can divide the participants into pairs (if possible, the two pair members should not know a lot about the other) and we let them search each other's accounts on social networks. Then they should try:
 - to say what their partner's interests are,
 - to review whether they learned something new, interesting, or shocking, about their partner.
- It is not necessary to do the reflection after this exercise. The aim is to point out that everything we *post online* creates our virtual identity, which does not necessarily have to be a reflection of reality.

Source: *The Change You Want to See*, Common Sense Education, [online]. Available at: <<https://www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship/lesson/the-change-you-want-to-see>>

What is a digital footprint? (infographics): *Infografika: Čo je to digitálna stopa?*, Bezpečne na nete, [online]. Available at: <<https://bezpecnenanete.eset.com/sk/it-bezpecnost/infografika-co-je-to-digitalna-stopa/>>

ANNEX

Worksheet

Link	How does the main character use their digital track? Do they use it purposefully? Do they have a specific purpose?	What do you think of this example? Would you consider something similar? Why or why not?
https://www.facebook.com/mxsabo/videos/583650935606364/		
https://www.instagram.com/nataliapazicka/?hl=en		
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLBaR8BmaV6HPx_CjuaZ5xw		



15 Digital defenders

Topics: **digital citizenship, safely online**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 90 minutes (+20 minutes extension)

Methods of education: exercise, group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- identify harmful software/apps and define the possibilities of online safety,
- estimate the risks related to our own internet activity,
- be aware of the need for safe online behaviour.

Equipment:

- hero cards (attached in the annex), one set for each group,
- a worksheet (best printed on an A3-size paper)/ flipchart paper, color pencils/markers.

Keywords: internet safety, cybernetic safety, useful and harmful software/apps

Activity process

1. Divide the participants into groups (ideally with 2 or 4 members each) and give each a set of hero cards. We explain the contents of the cards to them: there are positive heroes who help online and villains who want to do harm. These characters represent real apps or the people who program these apps/software. The goal of the group work is to create pairs in which bad online behavior is in contrast with the protection of a positive hero. If participants read the character descriptions carefully, they can easily form pairs - this information can be helpful for them. The task is relatively demanding, we communicate with the participants while they are working in groups and guide them slightly (if we notice incorrectly assigned pairs) or praise them (if they assign one or more of the pairs correctly). We can invite another group to check the pairs by simply moving the groups to the place where the neighboring team worked. Alternatively, we can present the right solution to the groups and discuss the pairs that were not clear with them. It is necessary for the lecturer to get acquainted with the contents of the cards in advance and be ready to answer any questions.

2. We invite participants to return to the original groups for their cards and choose a character that:

- they feel like they need the most,
- is the most annoying,
- they most often meet online.

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



90+20 minutes

After answering these questions, the participants present their choice and explain it. We can assign points to heroes and villains according to the answers of individual groups and thus determine their strength. In the discussion, we look together for examples of apps that operate as positive heroes.

Final analysis:

In the final analysis, we try to find out the reactions to this form of work with information about useful/malicious software and apps, which we addressed in the activity through personalisation. Questions for reflection:

- *Was this form useful for you? To what extent has this helped you better imagine how the abstract world of the internet works?*
- *Who creates these positive and negative heroes and why?*
- *Which other positive heroes would you need?*
- *Was working in groups beneficial for you? Which part of working together did you like the most?*
- *What have you realized because of the activity?*

Activity extension: Creating your own hero (20 minutes)

For younger participants, drawing a positive online hero is a very popular activity. Divide them into pairs or groups of three and distribute the drawing paper. We explain to them that their task is to draw a hero they could use in their online life. They can divide the work between the group members, we remind them not to forget the name, description of the force, and the hero's weapon in addition to the drawing.

Activity variations:

- In the second part of the activity, there's a possibility to choose the character who is the most annoying and the one they need the most together as a group. At the same time, we discuss how to use the positive qualities of the hero, and how to protect yourself from the negative character's impact.

- Creating your own hero (20 minutes)

For younger participants, drawing a positive online hero is a very popular activity. Divide them into pairs or groups of three and distribute the drawing paper. We explain to them that their task is to draw a hero they could use in their online life. They can divide the work between the group members, we remind them not to forget the name, description of the force, and the hero's weapon in addition to the drawing.

Source: *Your guide to the Digital defenders*, Privacy for kids!, European Digital Rights, [online]. Available at: <https://edri.org/files/privacy4kids_booklet_web.pdf>

Theoretical basis:

Harmful software and how to protect oneself: <<https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/2375413?hl=sk>>

ANNEX (cut)

JOHNNY RANDOM



TEAM:

DIGITAL DEFENDERS

POWERS:

He was born on planet Entrepia, somewhere in a far away Galaxy. As all members of his species, he has the ability to change his shape at will. He can shield your secrets with randomly changing passwords.

WEAPONS:

His main weaponry are energy charged parts of his body that he can throw and recover at any time.

DATA SMUGGLER



TEAM:

DIGITAL DEFENDERS

POWERS:

He is very rich and has abilities far superior to humans. He is incredibly flexible and has superhuman strength. He collects precious personal data (like your photos and messages) and sells it on the black market.

WEAPONS:

He carries different types of weapons in his suitcase.

MS. ANONYMITY



TEAM:

DIGITAL DEFENDERS

POWERS:

Government tests have augmented her immune system. She also has the ability to use social networks anonymously, so nobody knows who she really is.

WEAPONS:

She is a skilled hand-to-hand fighter.

I.D. THIEF



TEAM:

DIGITAL DEFENDERS

POWERS:

She can see what you do online and then steal your personal information. She pretends to be you and tries to use your name, social media and e-mail accounts for criminal activities.

WEAPONS:

The Alpha Virus - which she uses to infiltrate computers and phones.

MIND FREER



TEAM:

DIGITAL DEFENDERS

POWERS:

He fights for your right to decide what to share and with whom. He has the ability to create a private and secure environment where you can say what you think.

WEAPONS:

His mind.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE



TEAM:

DATA ENTANGLED

POWERS:

He has mystical powers to intercept what you do online. He can pretend to be a legitimate person online and then use this to hack right into your communications, to read your messages, see your photos and watch your videos.

WEAPONS:

His suit and antennas.

PERFECT WAVE



TEAM:

DIGITAL DEFENDERS

POWERS:

He can navigate space, hyperspace and cyberspace on his board. The Perfect Wave does not require food or drink, he can survive by converting data into energy. He is almost totally indestructible.

WEAPONS:

His surfboard.

KRAZY KOOKIE



TEAM:

DATA ENTANGLED

POWERS:

He is always looking for a fight. He hates all Defenders but considers the Perfect Wave his worst enemy. He has a monstrous appetite for your secrets.

WEAPONS:

His spinning robot arm.

QUEEN OF LOCKS



TEAM: *DATA GUARDIANS*

POWERS:
She fights for privacy and security. She gives powerful private keys to people who are in danger and helps them to secure their personal information online.

WEAPONS:
Her helmet – she uses it to shoot energy beams from her eyes. She can cut right through Finn Phisher's dangerous net.

FINN PHISHER



TEAM: *DATA INTERLOPERS*

POWERS:
He possesses superhuman strength, speed and reflexes. He uses his powers to sneak into your phone and fish for your secrets.

WEAPONS:
He throws an electrostatic data net to stun his opponents.

Worksheet (activity extension)

NAME	
POWERS	WEAPONS
MOTTO	

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 20

Time



45 minutes

16 Search

Topics: **media literacy,**
digital citizenship

Recommended age group: 15+

Participants count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 45 minutes

Methods of education: group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- search the web for information using the right keywords,

- name the ways in which companies present themselves on the Internet,

- assess the credibility of the information we work with,

- explain the advantages and disadvantages of using Internet search engines,

- describe how the internet browser works.

Equipment: list of companies to search, internet access, computer/notebook/ tablet to each group, writing utensils, flipchart and markers for the final summary

Keywords: internet search engine, public control, credibility of information

Activity process:

1. Imagine a situation where 25 years ago you were given the task of writing a work on the modern history of India. You do not have an internet connection, Internet search engines do not exist and you can find only a few up-to-date information about contemporary India on the Internet. The only current book in the library is unavailable, and the one you have available is from the 1950s. This is a real situation that students faced during this period. *How would you accomplish this task?*

We can ask this question to the participants as an introduction to the topic. Then we ask them another question: *How would you solve the assigned task today? Where and how would you look for information?*

2. In the present we already have enough information. The easiest way to find them is to enter keywords into Internet search engines. However, the information we get to first is not necessarily a fact. It can be modified according to the needs of the person who published the information on the Internet. That's why it's important to know what information we need to get before we enter keywords. We will

divide the participants into groups of 2-3 members and prepare a suitable work environment. We will introduce them to a task that they have 30 minutes to complete.

Choose one company from the list (or it can be chosen by the lecturer) and find as much information as possible on the Internet:

1. *How does the company present itself on social networks? Does it use influencer services? (We are not interested in specific information, but rather in the range of information we can find.)*

2. *What kind of critical response does the company face from the public? Can we also find not too flattering information about the company, shortcomings of products/services and how the company responds to public criticism?*

The participants will present the results of their work in groups in the final discussion.

Final analysis:

As part of the final analysis of the activity, we will first reflect on the work in groups. We find out how the participants cooperated, whether they are satisfied with the result of the work, etc. We will then invite the participants to share with each other the information as well as the most interesting findings that they found and answer the questions asked in the task. Participants can describe the procedure used, the difficulties in completing the task, or what would help them improve the result. The final reflection is to explain the term “search engine” and how it works.

Questions for reflection:

- *What search engines and keywords did you use? Why?*
- *Why do you think internet search engines were created?*
- *How does the search engine work?*
- *What information did you see first? What do you think, why?*
- *Was the information you found true?*

Tips for companies: Coca-Cola, iPhone, Nescafé, Adidas, McDonald's, Škoda Auto, ...

Public control (controversial topics): recycling, sustainability, support of sport/education, ...

Activity variations:

- The lecturer can choose one company - the same one for all groups. In this case, the information obtained will be quite similar and will be repeated, but at the same time it will be possible to compare it. Finally, it is advised to discuss the information obtained.

Source: KUDRNA, D., PERICHTA, M. V *DIGITÁLNÍM SVĚTĚ: VYHLEDÁVAČE*, JSNS.CZ, 03/2021. Available at: <https://www.jsns.cz/nove-aktivita/v-digitalnim-svete-vyhledavace/aktivita_v-digitalnim-svetevyhledavace_01_otazky-a-odpovedi.pdf>

Materials for the lecturer / participants

An Internet search engine is a service that allows us to work with the Internet to search for information. Previously, people had to remember the exact addresses of websites because they lacked a tool that would allow them to search or browse individual websites one by one. However, there were more and more websites and this way of browsing the Internet quickly became impractical. Thus, Internet search engines were created primarily to make searching the Internet more efficient and convenient. As users, we enter keywords into search engines and we receive the results that the search engine system evaluated as the most appropriate.

How does the search engine work?

Search results are sorted by algorithms and everyone sees different results for the same keywords. Behind this is a search algorithm that tries to tailor search results “to” the person asking. There are two reasons for this:

- they make the internet more attractive to users because it is easier to find what we need;
- It's about profit. Much of the revenue of Internet companies comes from advertising, which, like search results, is personalized.

The better the search engine manages to offer us relevant content, the more time we spend on the Internet. This will also give Internet companies more room to push advertising.

How to refine your search?

The more accurate the question, the more relevant the answer of the search engines. One-word searches may not be enough, so it is better to be more specific when searching in order to narrow the portfolio of answers and filter out less relevant ones. These more complex entries are created in search engines using the correct search syntax and operators. In this way, we can refine the input by adding additional keywords (AND operator), selecting some of them (OR operator), or, for example, excluding sites according to certain rules. At the same time, we can set the answer to be limited to a certain file type, text placement, location in a specific URL, or further specify whether the keyword appears in the metadata or whether an element occurs in a certain range. In addition to the syntax and operators, a limit can be set in settings to a specific language or time period.

17 Witch hunt

Topics: **critical thinking,
media literacy**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 40 minutes

Methods of education: role play, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- accept the existence of different opinions and information,
- be aware of differing points of view on a certain matters /phenomenon,
- admit the influence of authority on the polarisation of society,
- analyse our tendencies and thought processes while working on a certain task,
- assess our argumentation skills,
- notice manipulation and argumentation fouls in a discussion.

Equipment: pieces of paper with the role of „a citizen“ for each participant (we may also whisper the role to each participant if the pieces of paper are not available)

Keywords: critical thinking, argumentation, argumentation fouls, manipulation, polarisation of society

Activity process:

1. The participants sit in a circle so that everyone can see each other and can communicate.
2. We set the atmosphere by telling a short motivational story: *„Imagine this situation: we find ourselves in the 17th century. We live in a town where various people live. Some of them know each other well, some don't. This era is also well-known for the witches who live among the common honest people. They're inconspicuous but they're among us.“*
3. We explain that each participant is about to receive the role of a citizen or a witch. If someone gets the role of a witch, they need to hide it and can't admit it to the group. They will try to persuade others to believe they're also a citizen.
4. We assign a role to each participant. Even though the participants have been informed about the possibility of being assigned the role of a witch or a citizen, we secretly assign the role of „a citizen“ to each participant (we

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 20

Time



40 minutes

may whisper the role to each participant or alternatively let everyone pick it randomly by drawing one of the pieces of paper with the role written on them).

5. We explain they can't show the pieces of paper to each other and the task can only be resolved based on a reciprocal communication and argumentation. Depending on our time allowance and the number of participants we set the time for working on the task (10 – 20 minutes).
6. We may or may not state how many witches there are in the group (how many participants have been assigned the role of a witch). The stated number of witches should be lower than the number of the citizens.
7. We encourage the participants to create as many witch-free groups as possible (a group must consist of at least three citizens). According to time restrictions and the group structure, we may challenge the participants to create one big witch free group.
8. When the group is/groups are formed, we invite „the witches“ to reveal themselves. No one responds as no one has been assigned the role of a witch.
9. We conduct the final analysis of the activity on two different levels:
 - a) critical thinking – the ability to understand and assess information, to debate and to notice manipulation.
 - b) tolerance/intolerance and exclusion of certain people from society – putting emphasis on differences whilst at the same time showing preference for the attacking group. The questions for the reflection are listed below.
10. We explain the terms: critical thinking, manipulation, argumentation, and argumentation fouls (we may use examples from the activity as reference). The glossary from the (Un)safe in the net handbook is also a suitable resource.
11. Even though no negative roles were assigned for the activity, a situation in which some of the participants feel uncomfortable may occur. For example, while trying to convict a participant of being a witch verbal attacks might occur, or indeed insults concerning physical imperfections (appearance, ways expression) or religion and beliefs. It's important to watch how the activity progresses and how the participants interact and to intervene in the case of any aggravation of the situation. We also watch the participant's reactions during the reflection, to ensure that no one retains a previously unassigned negative role even after the activity ends.

Final analysis:

- *How satisfied are you with the solution results?*
- *How did you proceed while working on the solution/figuring the roles?*
- *What did you feel like when you were a part of the big group (the citizens group)?*
- *What did you feel like when the people didn't want you to be a part of a certain group because they thought you were a witch?*
- *What was your reaction when you were labeled a witch? Did you start to defend yourself or to attack someone else?*
- *What assumptions did you use to judge whether someone was or wasn't a witch? (information, allegations)*
- *What arguments did you use to defend your own position as a citizen?*
- *What arguments did you hear the most often from the others when defending their positions?*
- *Why did you believe the group contained any witches?*

- Who could be put into the „witch“ category (those persecuted) by society in real life? (politicians, groups, NGOs, minorities, etc.)
- What or who supports the opinion that „witches“ exist, in real life? What’s their motivation?
- Would you change anything about your behavior in the future if someone tells you something about another person?
- What can you do and what should you be aware of in similar situations?
- What is your takeaway from this activity? What have you realised?

The story of the activity:

This activity is inspired by an unknown high school teacher who used a similar activity when teaching about the Salem Witch Trials lawsuit. The Salem witch trials were a series of interrogations and prosecutions of those accused of witchcraft in the Massachusetts colony between February 1692 and May 1693. More than 200 people were accused, 19 of whom were found guilty and executed by hanging (14 women and 5 men). One other man was tortured to death during the trial for refusing to ask for forgiveness, and at least five people died in prison. It was the most ruthless witch hunt in the history of the United States.

The Salem Witch Trials are one of the best known cases of mass hysteria in colonised America. In political rhetoric and in popular literature, this true story is used as a warning example of the dangers of religious extremism and false accusations.

Although we may see this as a medieval phenomenon, allegations and suspicions of witchcraft have been held for a long time, even in more developed countries. In Europe, the last witch execution took place in 1782.

Activity variations:

- At the beginning of the activity we can decide to use a different situation/topic for the motivational story (e.g.: humans and aliens, citizens and mafia, etc.).
- The participants can also be assigned individual roles they can take on while working on the activity (for example: farmer, merchant, tavern keeper, priest, etc.). This possibility requires more time to conduct the activity and the reflection.
- We may divide the activity into episodes. During each episode, the group as a majority chooses the participant considered to be a witch. This participant reveals their identity and stops contributing to the discussion, however, they continue to watch the role play. The rest of the participants continue in the same pattern until they realize they’re all citizens or until they all label each other as witches.

Source: WIKIPEDIA. *Salem witch trials*. [online]. Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salem_witch_trials>

WIKIPEDIA. *Salemské čarodejnice*. [online]. Available at: <https://sk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salemsk%C3%A9_%C4%8Darodejnice>

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 20

Time



45 minutes

18 Different point of view

Topics: **media literacy,**
critical thinking

Recommended age group: 15+

Participants count: up to 20 participants

Activity durations: 45 minutes

Methods of education: group work, discussion

Aims of the activity:

- identify differences and similarities in media articles in the press,
- accept a different perspective on a particular event or process,
- defend the reasons for choosing the media article in the group,
- compare the content of articles in terms of objectivity, credibility.

Equipment: selected printed media, paper for notes, pen and pencil, worksheet

Keywords: media article, printed media

Preparation for the activity:

If we have the opportunity, we will instruct the participants to bring the printed medium to the activity (any newspapers / magazines, or specific types - according to the assignment of the lecturer) in advance. In case the lecturer will not communicate with the participants in advance, it is necessary that they provide the media themselves. The number of media material depends on the number of participants and groups created. There should be no more than five participants in one group, with each group working with 3 printed media. We will select the media in such way, that the participants can compare the published media articles.

Media article:

Any information published by a medium becomes a media article. Some media outlets pay close attention to what they publish and make big efforts to have verified information and credible sources. Other media focus less on the veracity of information or the credibility of sources and pursue mainly their interests (economic, political, personal). For media such as social networks, control over the creation and dissemination of posts is minimal.

Activity process:

1. We introduce the participants to the topic by reading an interesting report or newspaper headlines. Then we ask them if the report was interesting for them and why. The following activity will raise similar questions and thoughts.

2. Divide the participants into groups (max. five members in a group). We will distribute three printed media and a worksheet to each of the groups. We will invite the participants to view the published media articles and compare their content. The worksheet will warn them about what they should notice in the media. Each group has 30 minutes to complete this task, during which they can take notes. While we are giving the instructions, we can explain the terms used, such as *media article*, *media*, *ways of categorising media*.

3. After the time for the task has elapsed, the groups present their findings in a moderated discussion. The subject of discussion are the questions from the worksheet. We will try to create an atmosphere that will encourage participants to open up and talk in front of others (make tea, choose a speaker, appreciate any answers, etc.). Part of the reflection can also be devoted to working in groups.

Activity variations:

- It can help the lecturer to get an overview of recent topics or events that resonate in society and appear in the media as part of their training.
- The time allocation for the activity depends on the number of participants and the number of media material with which the groups work.
- An alternative is that the lecturer selects specific media articles from different media in advance, which he copies and distributes to groups. The groups thus work with the same materials and the activity is thus more accessible to a larger number of participants. This alternative is also suitable for younger age groups of participants (10+).

ANNEX

Worksheet

● Do these media contain reports describing the same or similar events (presidential election, flood, accident, bank theft, etc.)?

● How do these reports differ (language, form of event presentation, facts)?

● On the contrary, how are they similar (language, form of presentation, facts)?

● Do similar news make the same impression on you?

● Do similar news give you the same information?

● What caught your attention during this activity the most?

● Which articles do you prefer / Which ones would you buy? And why?

● Try to identify what purpose do specific printed media fulfil by the content of the media posts.

19 Should I buy what influencers offer me?

Topics: **digital citizenship, critical thinking, media literacy**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: exercise, group work, discussion

Aims of the activity:

- discuss the power of influencers on shaping the shopping habits of young people,
- analyze own thought processes and tendencies as an online consumer,
- recognize a violation of ethical principles in an influencer's post,
- create a list of ethical rules for influencers.

Equipment:

- a computer and a projector or a computer/cell phone/tablet for each group, internet,
- a printed article (in the attached link) for each participant, markers, a flip chart board and paper.

Keywords: influencers, advertisement, influencer's ethical code, online consumer, online consumer's rights

Activity process:

1. We give the participants a **copy of the article** and let them read individually for a few minutes.

Article for print: NASTIŠIN, ĽUDO., Kupuješ to, čo ti radia influenceri. Vďaka nim totiž viac veríš značke, SKETCHER [online]. [cit. 10.03.2021]. Available at: <https://sketcher.startitup.sk/kupujes-to-co-ti-radia-influenceri-vdaka-nim-totiz-viac-veris-znacke/>

Make sure everyone understands all the expressions in the text. We explain the terms *influencer* and *sponsor*. We briefly discuss the following questions about the article with the participants:

- *What do you think about the information in the article?*
- *How often do you come across this kind of post?*
- *Do you trust influencers?*
- *Have you ever purchased anything you saw in an influencer's post?*

We thank the participants for their opinions and observations.

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



60 MINÚT

2. We divide the participants into workgroups of 3-4 members. Everyone watches the **videos** from the links attached below and answers the following questions within the group:

Links for the videos: Video 1: https://youtu.be/2NU8FPwly_A

Video 2: <https://youtu.be/16IKvR1iu3U>

Video 3: <https://youtu.be/tSbJvp58FBI>

Questions:

- *Would you be affected/inspired by the video you saw?*
- *How do you think the influencer and the video affect young people?*
- *Do you see any ethical problems in the way the products are presented?*
- *Who should regulate this area? Social network operators, countries, or a control authority of some sort?*

Depending on how much time we have left, we choose one of the options:

- All of the groups watch all of the three videos (approximately 25 minutes in total)
- we assign one specific video to each group (this way it's possible to compare the answers, but at the same time some of the other participants might not be able to imagine the situation the others are talking about),
- each group watches only one or two of the videos selected by the lecturer (most suitable in terms of time management).

Final analysis:

In the following **discussion**, the participants share their answers to the questions with the whole group. Everyone is or might become an online consumer. We ask them to answer the question: *As a consumer, what would you like to know when looking at an influencer's post?* The lecturer writes the observations down on the flip chart. We present one of the possible ethical adjustments of relations between a sponsor and an influencer in the form of an ethics code (link below). We compare it with the opinions of the participants written on the board. We encourage them to engage in a discussion about ethical influencers.

Activity variations:

We can extend the activity by adding one more exercise or use it as a separate follow-up activity:

In the following phase of the training, the participants are supposed to identify marketing strategies that brands often apply when promoting through influencers. We let the participants *browse* (view content of) influencers' accounts and look for examples of marketing strategies. These strategies include:

- donation (providing free products and services to the influencer in exchange for a review or mentioning the brand's name in the media),
- creating and posting content on the influencer's blog,
- sponsored content
- co-creating content (working together with the influencer to create content featured on various websites),
- references in social media,
- competitions (the influencer announces the competition to the public),
- the influencer manages the brand's social network accounts for a short time,
- the influencer shares discount codes for a product or service,
- brand ambassadors.

Ethics code (CZ): <<https://www.samoregulace.cz/kodex-influencera>> <<https://ferovyinfluencer.cz/>>

ANNEX

You buy what influencers advise you to. Thanks to them you trust the brands more.

Ludo Nastišin, 20TH OF APRIL, 2018

The role of branding in today's business is developing. Whether you like it or not, many influencers are stronger than ever before in this area. Social influence seems like the most effective way to generate a positive buzz and to obtain trust in the brand.

How important exactly are influencers for your business, though? Is it true they only generate a positive buzz?

Online friends and family members are our biggest influencers

Many influencers came to the spotlight when social networks started growing. In 2009 the agency Razorfish published a Fluent report, where it claimed the **only story about your brand that matters is the one the customers talk about online**. The research organisation Nielsen also found out that 92% of customers trust their friend's and family's recommendations more than any other form of advertisement because they lead to the brand's „Halo effect.“



Influencers have become consumers' best friends

How strongly are consumers affected by bloggers, Instagrammers, and influencers they have never met? This article by Deborah Weinswig for Forbes states that influencers are the golden children of today's marketing strategy. Even though people don't know them personally in the real world, 92% of consumers trust them more than they trust traditional advertising or celebrity endorsement. Are influencers on their way to becoming new celebrities?

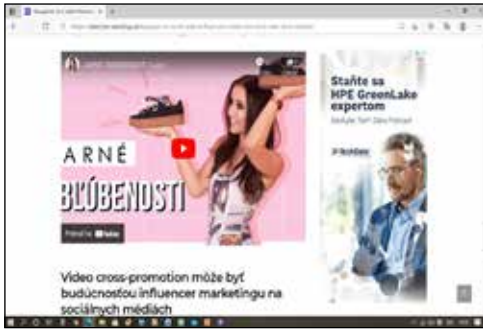
Millennials shop under the influence of the internet.

If the millennials are your target audience, you have an even bigger reason to invest in your strategy for social media. The organisation [Deloitte](#) affirms this information and estimates that **nearly half of the consumers of this generation are influenced by social media, especially when it comes to spending money**. Within the „non-millennial“ group it's only 23 %, which is a significant difference.

Influencers easily beat display advertising

The agency Tap conducted a sales study for „Almond & vanilla“ milk. An **18 times higher sales rate was recorded when the product was promoted by fitness and food influencers than when it was promoted through display advertising**. No wonder, Adblock use is on the rise. The study also suggests that a mere blog is capable of generating 11-times higher ROI than display advertising in a 12-month period.





Product-oriented influencers might harm your brand

It's also necessary to think about the situation when influencers can't help you anymore, or might even harm your brand. The magazine Marketing Science presented an experiment where the authors analysed nearly 400 marketing campaigns promoting 192 cosmetic brands on a community platform in South Korea. **The experiment provided interesting results as the campaigns managed to create a buzz around specifically promoted products but at the same time**

they observed less hype about the actual brand. Therefore, if you want to promote your brand in general, sending a specific product to the influencers might not be the right way.

Video cross-promotion might be the future of influencer marketing on social media

What is the future of influencer marketing on social media and how can you use it for your own business? Some experts claim the relationship between SMI marketing and brands will eventually weaken. However, it's more probable that the relationship will develop and adjust. According to Christini Newberry's article from Hootsuite, one of the most effective ways to increase your brand's credibility is not just inviting the influencers to publish about you. **If they're a part of the brand's content on your own page on social media, it's twice as effective.** And it's even better if it's video content now it's time to think about cross-promotion.

Source: virgin.com

Materials for the lecturer / participants

Sponsor = agency, client, brand

Influencer = Internet user with a broad follower base who's able to create content that can influence the viewers; participates in the communication activity of the sponsor for monetary or non-monetary compensation.

Ethics code principles:

If there is paid business cooperation or a barter (non-monetary exchange) between the influencer and the sponsor, the influencer is obliged to state the information about the business cooperation in written or spoken form within the content created for these purposes.

The influencer can earn money for promoting the brand's goods and services or they can agree on other types of compensation e.g. in the form of payment for the travel and accommodation at an event the influencer is to attend and to inform about in their social media accounts. This should be conducted in a way both sides have previously agreed on, or in the form of the possibility to keep the tested products or to use the brand's products and services for free. However, this kind of agreement corresponds with the characteristics of paid business cooperation and makes the influencer obliged to comply with the ethics code rules.

20 Aviation experts

Topics: **critical thinking**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 45 minutes

Methods of education: case study, simulation, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- acknowledge the impact of cognitive distortions on decision-making
- perceive the need to properly evaluate information in day-to-day decisions,
- explain survivorship bias and give an example,
- describe the effects of survivorship bias on our lives,
- analyze one's own ability to evaluate information when making decisions,
- pay attention to different points of view of a certain fact/phenomenon.

Equipment: paper and pen for each participant, projector and computer

Keywords: cognitive bias, data evaluation, survivorship bias, decision making

Activity process:

We will introduce the participants to the activity with a real event from World War II: "It's 1943 and World War II is raging across Europe. The losses suffered by American bombers are really high due to an efficient German air force. The Americans decide to add protection to their planes in an effort to reduce losses. But they can't shield the whole plane, because it would be too difficult. They will have to decide which parts to protect and therefore check the planes, which successfully return from bombing missions to identify the most vulnerable parts of the aircraft."

To enhance the atmosphere, we can play a video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhxzYWIfI60>

The lecturer should watch the video (3.20 min) before the activity and consider its use. In particular, take into account the age of the participants and the atmosphere that the video will potentially create.

The following graph will be projected for the participants using a projector. It shows the distribution of damage according to the location of the shot.

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



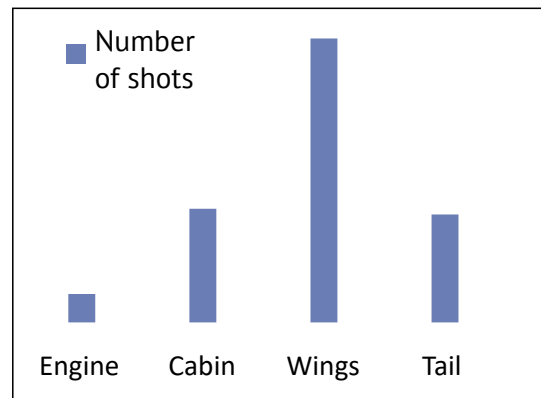
up to 20

Time



45 minutes

1. We assign the task: “Imagine that you are an American aviation expert during World War II and your task is to decide **which parts of the aircraft will be armoured.**” We leave the participants a moment to think about the answer independently. We then ask the participants to write their answers on a separate piece of paper and submit it. Alternatively, they can show their response to each other and help the lecturer to record the answers so that they can be evaluated. The lecturer can also prepare an electronic vote, for example via google form and evaluate the results anonymously.



Subsequently, we will try to start a discussion between the groups that had different answers, asking the representatives of the group why they chose a certain part of the plane.

2. The lecturer responds to the discussion: “Many people, including those in the US Air Force, said they should armour the *wings* because they take the most hits. But that is the *wrong* answer. It is important to realize what this graph says. In it, we are studying the aircraft that have returned. The attacks on the wings were not fatal, as those pilots managed to fly back with them. This mistake was pointed out by the American mathematician **Abraham Wald**, who noticed the flawed judgment of his colleagues. They were looking for the places with the most damage, whereas they should have been focusing on those places with the least damage - *the engines*. These were the places which, when hit, the aircraft had not returned, and these places should therefore be better protected.

We call this error of judgment the **survivorship bias**, that is, the failure to take into account the information we lack. It is a logical fallacy, based on the greater visibility of those who “survived = ended a certain process”. The survivorship bias can often lead to distorted or more optimistic conclusions. According to Nicholas Nassim Taleb (author of the well-known publication *The Black Swan*), a more sensible approach is to look at the unsuccessful and try to avoid the same mistakes. We tend to highlight and remember only successes and important events. In other words, we focus only on the surviving samples and therefore falsely evaluate a situation. The media often presents such positive achievements and thus a flawed message gets stuck in the viewers minds. This is basically a filtering out of the successful from the unsuccessful.

To end the simulation, it is advisable to play the following video to the participants (4.35 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kl67-lbSBhE>

What is the correlation of this example with the present:

We encounter similarities of this error in many situations:

- Many people build on the recommendations of their role models and so-called *best-practices* with the belief that success is a guarantee of functionality. The problem is that they do not take into account other companies and people who have behaved similarly and failed.

- A similar situation occurs when we ask for the impressions of a film from people who watched it to the end and compare them with the answers of those who left before it finished.

- If focus is only placed on successful entrepreneurs, a conclusion can be drawn that is strongly in favour of self-employment, while ignoring those entrepreneurs who have failed and no one has ever heard of them. If unsuccessful entrepreneurs were included in the whole consideration, the conclusion would not be so positive.

- Stories of determined individuals who have been able to overcome certain obstacles and achieve their goals often appear in the popular media. Of course, they do not report the incomparably higher number of those who have tried and failed.

Summary: It is not enough to collect and intuitively evaluate data, but it is also necessary to think about and understand it. If we are not able to obtain and work with information reasonably, it can turn out that we will make wrong decisions and we will reduce or even completely hinder our chances of success. Let's think about information wisely. Let's ask ourselves the following questions:

- *What does the data actually tell us?*
- *What do the results mean?*
- *What are we missing and what don't we know?*
- *Are we thinking about the conclusions in the right way? How can we view them differently?*

Final analysis:

- *What are other examples of survivorship bias?*
- *To which argumentation faults does this bias lead? (center of attention - we draw a conclusion about someone or something only on the basis of aspects that are obvious or in the center of attention; hasty conclusion - we draw a conclusion without sufficient consideration of all relevant and easily accessible evidence and circumstances)*
- *What effect does this delusion have on our lives? (The effect of only positive messages distorts our perception of reality. The effect of successes from the immediate environment affects our perception of ourselves.)*
- *Have you ever been affected by a message based on survivorship bias? What was it, what happened?*
- *How did you feel during the activity?*
- *How did you react when you found out the correct solution?*
- *What information did you lack so that you could make the right decision?*
- *What did you realize during the activity?*

Activity variations:

- The activity can be significantly shorter if we omit the simulation (omit the videos, part of the theory and shorten the reflection). This allows us to shorten the activity to 20 minutes, while leaving the processing of the activity more to the participants themselves.

Source: HÁNA, Lukáš. *Kritické myšlení – jak rozumněji pracovat s informacemi?* Manipulatori.cz [online]. [cit. 2020-12-10]. Available at: <<https://manipulatori.cz/kriticke-mysleni-jak-rozumneji-pracovat-s-informacemi/>>

JurajVie. *Prečo pravdepodobne nič nedosiahneš?* Youtube.com [online]. [cit. 2020-12-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kl67-lbSBhE>>

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 20

Time



60 - 80 minutes

21 A letter from the future

Topics: **safety online,**
digital citizenship

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 60 – 80 minutes

Methods of education: simulation, discussion, group work, role-play game, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- understand the impact of cyberbullying on people's lives,
- notice the different reactions of cyberbullying victims,
- consider the emotional experience of the harm on the victim,
- choose an appropriate reaction when supporting a victim of cyberbullying,
- name personal emotions and feelings of others in this situation,
- know how to protect oneself and others in the case of cyberbullying,
- know how to support the victim when in the position of witness,
- analyse personal tendencies and thought processes while reacting to cyberbullying.

Equipment:

- a printed letter from a person named Milan put in an envelope for each group of two to three people,
- office paper, empty envelopes, writing and art tools for each group,
- a printed copy of Milan's story for the lecturer

Keywords: cyberbullying, victim, reacting to cyberbullying, prevention against cyberbullying

Activity process:

Tips for leading the activity:

Listening - in the activity, we are working with the emotional experiences of the participants which might affect them deeply. The situation can arise for some that unpleasant and painful topics or memories from the past are opened up. In this case, it is more important to deal with the suffering of this participant than to complete the activity with the others. It's important to pay attention to how each

participant reacts during the activities and what's going on inside their minds. If necessary, we give them time, we listen to them, we express support and acceptance.

Trust and enough space - we're going to encounter different opinions, ideas, and reactions of the participants, some of which we may not like. Nevertheless, let's try not to lecture or offer the right solution. Let the participants discuss with each other and try to understand each different view on the situation. Freedom of expression is key to the successful implementation of preventive activities. This allows the participants to have more open conversations about sensitive topics.

Atmosphere of safety - participants need to feel as safe as possible while discussing and sharing. We need to create a safe environment by setting ground rules (for example, respecting and not judging the opinions of others). We try to prevent attacks, mocking, or personal criticism. Let's try not to bring our own subjective judgment into the simulation game, instead, ask questions that allow the participant to see different perspectives.

1. The participants sit in a circle so that we can share "urgent and important" news with them: *The fate of a person is in your hands, so please approach the following task very responsibly. I have received a letter from Milan*, your classmate/peer, maybe some of you know him or have already met him. However, this is no ordinary letter, this one came from the future. Fate, God, or coincidence (or whatever it was) has given Milan one more chance. You can be his last rescuer. You are the last people to have the chance of preventing a horrible disaster.*

*We choose a name that is not the name of any of the participants in the activity and the character's age is approximately the same as the participants.

We describe to the participants what has happened and try to involve them in a simulation game:

Milan, a boy from our city (a pupil of our school, your peer), was greatly hurt by how his friends had made fun of him online. At that time, however, he didn't know exactly who was responsible. Milan was a normal boy, an average teenager, you could say that he had never had any real problems or conflict with anyone. He was a little bit shy, but not too shy. What happened was this: he told his friends that he had liked a girl for a long time and that she had actually asked him out and that he was happy about it. However, his friends were not so happy and they probably envied him. They therefore created a fake profile of him on a social network (eg Instagram), where they posted a photomontage of how he treated girls inappropriately and they made fun of him. They also added humiliating and vulgar comments. They sent the link to everyone in their circle of friends which caused a wave of mockery and ridicule. The girl obviously didn't want to meet him anymore and she decided to join those who were teasing him.

The letter says that Milan is so unhappy and that he cannot see any way out of the situation. It's so serious that he is considering a terrible act, one from which there is no coming back. You must act very quickly, because he's planned it to happen this evening, in a few hours, and you only have one chance to save the situation and prevent a catastrophic incident. Milan is very sad and angry, he has stopped using electronic media and refuses to meet or talk to anyone. He hasn't told anyone about what he was planning to do.

2. After telling the story, we ask the participants if the disaster, in their opinion, can still be avoided. We talk to them about what aspect makes this situation most urgent (it's the fact that he did not confide to anyone about his distress).

- *How does Milan feel right now? (isolated, deceived, excluded, ashamed)*
- *How does he feel about his friends? (anger, hatred, lost trust)*
- *Why do you think he didn't tell anyone about it? (he's scared, he's ashamed, he doesn't see the point, he has no one to tell)*

- *If you were in his place, what would you need to hear and experience to regain hope / to change your view? (e.g. from friends, from the girl he likes, from parents)*

We continue by assigning a task:

At this point, you only have one option to help Milan - to write him a letter. Summarize everything you would like to tell him so that he feels that someone understands him, that someone stands by him, that someone knows how he feels/knows how to help him solve the situation ...

3. Divide the participants into groups of two or three and let them agree on what to write in the letter to Milan together (15-20 minutes). After writing, they can stamp the letter and the envelope (with a pictogram, letters, word, etc.). Then each group places their letter on a pile on a table or the floor in the middle of a circle we form together.

4. We thank the participants for their involvement and willingness to help. We ask them to try to empathise with Milan, to put themselves in his shoes, and think about whether a written letter would help them. Then each group picks one of the letters (not theirs) from the pile and everyone returns to the place where they worked.

Assignment: After reading the chosen letter, evaluate:

- *How would you be able to endure the pressure of such cyberbullying if you were in Milan's position? What would help you?*
- *How did you feel after reading the letter? (still in Milan's position)*
- *Did you find what you needed in the letter to help you change your mind?*
- *If so, what convinced you to reconsider?*
- *If not, what was missing?*
- *What else surprised you in the letter? What did you like?*
- *Was there something in the letter that you did not like or that would have a negative effect on you? What was it?*

After 10-15 minutes, everyone returns to the circle and shares their answers to the questions with the others. The lecturer collects the most interesting answers and writes them down as a set of recommendations to help victims of cyberbullying. After writing and presenting the recommendations, we explain the objectives of the activity and the reason for the choice of training method (simulation and role play) to the participants. We thank the participants for their involvement and help them leave Milan's role/a role of witnesses to harm. We choose a suitable way to end the simulation. For example, we can give a reason (which was voiced during the activity) that would lead us (as Milan) to change our minds about his radical solution to the problem. We can describe what we, as Milan, would do next and how the letters from the participants helped us. We closely monitor the atmosphere and tension in the group after the activity. In case we perceive any unresolved questions or doubts of the participants, it is necessary to ask for reasons, feelings, and needs. If the role play/simulation evokes excessive emotions in the participants, it is useful to include a short activity before the final reflection. This will make it easier for them to leave the role (for example, the participants in the circle say their names or we implement a different short *energizing activity*).

Final analysis:

- How did you perceive this activity? Did you have any difficulty taking a stand in the situation you found yourself in? Why?
- Did the activity change your view of cyberbullying? How would you respond to it after this experience?
- Is there anything you could do to lower the impact of cyberbullying?
- Was there ever a time you had such a problem, where your only alternative was to write a letter?
- What did you need - could you express it in words? What steps would you have rather taken?
- If there was only one more option available besides the letter, what would it be?
- Did you like the learning methodology in this workshop?
- Was there anything pleasant/unpleasant about the activity? What? Why?
- What did you become aware of thanks to the activity?

Theoretical base for creating advices for the victims of cyberbullying: GREGUSSOVÁ, M., DROBNÝ, M.: *KYBERŠIKANOVANIE.sk - metodická príručka [Podklady: Čo by malo každé dieťa vedieť o kyberšikanovaní, str. 20]*, (C) eSlovensko o.z., 2015, ISBN: 978-80-89774-00-5, Available at: zodpovedne.sk/index.php/component/jdownloads/finish/1-knihy-a-prirucky/101-prirucka-kybersikanovanie-sk?Itemid=0

ANNEX

The letter from Milan

I am writing this letter to let my loved ones know why I decided to do what I did. I don't want you to be sad, but I don't know what to do anymore. It will be easier for everyone if I finish it. I don't understand why the guys did what they did. I know I didn't quite fit in with them, but I really didn't expect this. I don't know exactly who was behind it and I don't even want to know anymore. I know one thing for sure, I didn't hurt them in any way and I would never have done anything like that to them. I thought so long about asking Kristína out. She's great and she didn't deserve this either. I know she'd never talk to me again after this. I shouldn't have told them how much I was looking forward to meeting her. How could they have created a fake profile and made that stupid photomontage where I was acting like a moron and making fun of both of us?! They also put those obscene comments there, which was a completely disgusting thing to do and then they sent it to the whole group where everyone saw it. I hate them all. Kristína refuses to meet me and I can't explain it to her. I don't even know if I'd have the courage to stand in front of her now. She prefers to pretend that she doesn't care and that it was all an embarrassing joke.

I'm sorry, but it'll be better this way.

Milan

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 30

Time



60 minutes

22 On two banks of the river

Topics: **critical thinking,**
media literacy

Recommended age group: 15+

Participants count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- look for arguments in support of a certain claim in the media,

- use the arguments in the debate,
- identify argumentation mistakes

- try to take on the role of someone who has a different opinion

- pay attention to and respond to the arguments of others

Equipment:

- list of topics for participants, or the most frequently used arguments with the topics (prepared by the lecturer for his/her own needs),

- *handout* - a guide explaining the basic concepts for each of the groups (debate, argument, argumentation, digital media/argumentation mistakes, argument structure),

- writing utensils, computer or tablet for each group.

Keywords:

discussion, argumentation, argumentation mistakes, digital media

Activity process:

1. Interest for the activity: There is no consensus on many topics. Even the most educated professionals may have a different perspective. They grew up in different environments, were and are surrounded by other people, have a different personality, different knowledge, interests, priorities, motivation and goals. Last but not least, they receive different information from different sources, which they process individually. It is therefore necessary to look at issues that affect society from different perspectives and try to understand the position of others.

2. We will introduce the participants to the activity that awaits them: *The following activity can be an opportunity for you to understand others. You will work in groups (in pairs or triplets). One pair of groups will choose one of the 10 topics to discuss. However, the exchange of views on a contentious issue will be hampered by the fact*

that you cannot choose a “for” or “against” position, but it will be assigned to you. The facilitator will form pairs of groups (group A and group B) that will have the same topic so that they can meet in a discussion after preparation. Group A will hold a “for” position and Group B a “against” position. The topic is either chosen by the lecturer or left to the participants.

3. Assign the task to the groups: *In the next 20 minutes, prepare for the discussion by selecting arguments for the position you are holding. However, these should not be your reasons for supporting the position, but the arguments that are most often made in digital media.* It is possible that some participants will personally hold the opposite position than the one assigned to them. In that case, the formulation of arguments and their subsequent presentation in the debate will be more difficult. However, this is an argumentation exercise that allows a different view and will be all the more beneficial. After writing the arguments supporting the position, there will be a discussion (argumentation exercise).

Before starting the work in groups, we check whether the participants understand the basic concepts: *argument, argumentation, argumentative mistakes, digital media.* If not, the terms need to be explained or at least given into groups as handouts (section 3.2 of the (Un) safely in the net manual). One or two groups (according to the number of groups created) will be given the *handout* about the argument structure and the most frequently used argumentation mistakes (section 3.2 of the (Un) Safely in the Net) and a special task: *During the discussion you will monitor the arguments used to see if there are argumentative mistakes. While searching for arguments by groups, you can become familiar with the theory and argumentation mistakes.*

4. The subsequent discussion can take place in several ways:

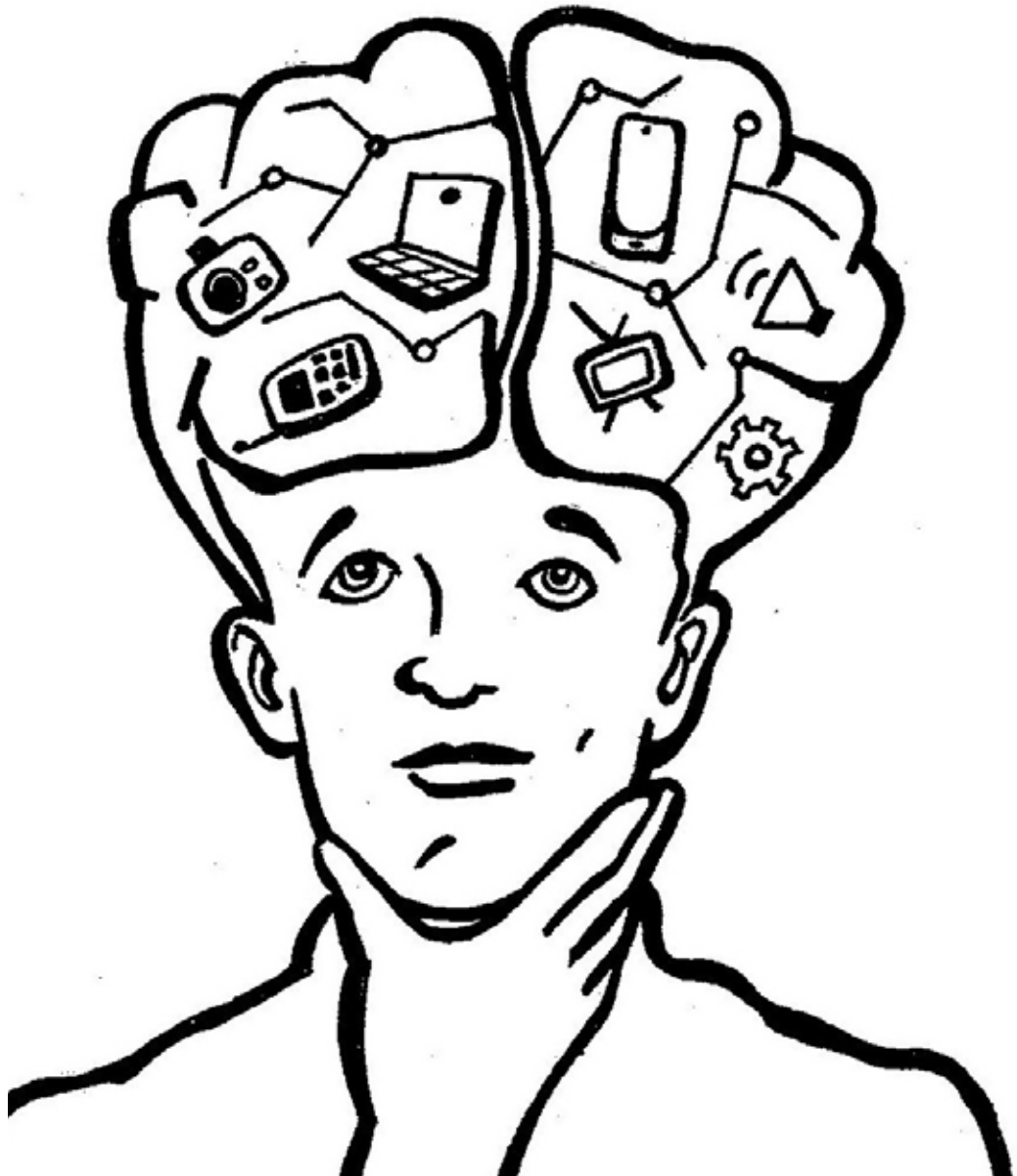
- a) One on one; others observe the discussion (better implemented in a smaller team): Each group shall choose one representative to represent them. Selected students lead a discussion and provide arguments to support a “given” opinion *for* or *against*. They have 5 minutes to exchange their views.
- b) Facilitated discussion of individuals or groups: participants have a dedicated time during which they can speak. Each group (its member) speaks first for two minutes, then every minute, and finally for 30 seconds. The debate is facilitated by the lecturer.
- c) The lecturer calls one or the other side as needed.

Tips for leading the activity: It is important to be able to accept the other party’s arguments and the ability to react well - not to win a discussion! Emphasis on this idea is very important for the participants’ further attitude to the discussions, whether competitive or in everyday life. Discussion is important as it is a process during which the opinions of discussing and listening individuals are formed, not as a result of one side standing victorious and the other defeated.

5. At the end of the discussion, the groups entrusted with this task give *feedback*. They will evaluate the structure of the arguments used and the argumentation mistakes. They can add other interesting things that they noticed during the discussion (who formulated the arguments well, who was involved, whether the reactions were factual, etc.). If appropriate, the feedback will be completed by the lecturer, or he can recommend how to improve the argumentation and discussion.

Examples of topics for discussion:

- Pupils should be banned from mobile phones in schools.
- Pupils should be able to choose what they want to study according to what they enjoy.
- Globalization benefits everyone.
- Smoking in bars should be allowed.
- Marijuana should be legalized.
- Vegetarianism is nonsense.
- Man has no influence on climate change.
- The refugee crisis can be solved only by closing borders.



23 Find the flaw in the argument

Topics: **critical thinking, media literacy, safety online**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 40 - 60 minutes

Methods of education: group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- find and identify types of argumentative fouts and explain them,
- recognise manipulative communication techniques used,
- give an argument to support a certain claim,
- notice the impact of argumentative fouts (on oneself and on others),
- name the reasons for the use of argumentative fallacies,
- notice different ways of arguing and assess own personal argumentation skills.

Equipment:

- paper, pens, flip charts, markers,
- printed examples of argumentative fouts for each participant,
- handout for each participant: argumentative fouts and strategies of manipulative techniques.

Keywords: argumentation, cognitive biases, argumentative fouts, manipulative techniques

Activity process:

1. Introduction to the topic: *Part of critical thinking is taking in and re-evaluating the information we receive. Assessing its validity, accuracy or objectivity is our daily task. Knowing how to question and argue helps us to navigate the flood of information all around us. However, the ability to assess arguments is hindered by the various manipulative techniques of others or by our own cognitive biases.*

In the next activity, we will focus on argumentative fouts. These are arguments in which someone tries to confuse us or divert our attention and which can involve logical fallacies or other manipulative techniques. A handout with the types of argumentative fouts and three strategies of manipulative techniques will be provided to participants.

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 30

Time



40 - 60 minutes

2. Divide the trainees into groups of 3-4 members. We will give them examples of argumentative fouts from the attachment (without solutions). We can give each group a different example of an argumentative foul or all groups can work on the same examples (depending on the training needs and time allocation). The participants read the excerpt as a group, discuss and work on these tasks together:

- *Assess whether there are argumentative fouts in the example. If so, try to identify which ones.*
- *Suggest what you think a correct argument should look like.*

Allow sufficient time for the participants to work out the tasks (at least 10 min. per example). The information in the handout may be helpful.

3. After completing the assignment, the results are presented and discussed together. A selected group member reads the example aloud, names the problems they found in the statement and explains why it is manipulative. At the same time, they will offer suggestions as to what better arguments could have been used. If the groups work on the same examples, the results can be written down on a flip chart / board and compared. If necessary, the lecturer will provide the solution for the example, help to identify the argumentative flaw and correct it. They can also offer examples of appropriate arguments to support the claim in the example.

In this activity, it is best to use excerpts of texts on current topics that may be of interest to the participants. A selection of fictional examples is attached, together with the highlighted argumentative fouts they contain.

Final analysis:

- *How did the text (example of an argumentative foul) affect you?*
- *Have you encountered similar types of communication before? Where? How often?*
- *Who do you think uses similar manipulative techniques? Why?*
- *How does the use of argumentative fallacies impact us? What effect does it have on us?*

Final summary: Lack of awareness of manipulative techniques and not being aware of what/who influences us and how we can eliminate these influences results in stereotypes and prejudices and opens up space for the spread of hate speech, whether towards individuals or groups of people.

Activity variations:

Participants can:

- try to write (create) an example using appropriate arguments or argumentative fallacies,
- search for examples of posts on the internet themselves,
- use posts related to the topic under discussion.

Source: MARKOŠ J, GAŽOVIC O, N Magazine, Critical Thinking. Bratislava: N Press, s.r.o, October 2017. [online]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/941774/stiahnite-si-prihrucku-o-kritickom-mysleni/>>.

Attachment: Example of logical fallacies and their solutions

Example 1: A left-wing government has decided to increase both the minimum wage and parental allowance in the country. At the same time, it has introduced substantial social grants to enable pupils from poorer families to cover the full cost of their travel to school and their working materials. The right-wing opposition has reacted to these measures as follows: „*It is clear, the Prime Minister is a liar and a thief, nothing good can come of such a proposal! He is sailing on a yacht and playing at being a philanthropist. The money could be used much more wisely.*“

Example 2: The government has decided to improve conditions in refugee camps, which are extremely overcrowded. It has started intensive construction of new facilities and increased the number of teachers who work with child refugees in these camps. The tabloids reacted to these measures as follows: „*The government is inviting more migrants here! At this rate, they will soon each get a new car and their own house with a garden as a bonus.*“

Example 3: The website of a company offering questionable medical treatments published the following text: „*Little Sarah has conquered cancer. The harsh treatment in the hospital almost killed her, the doctors stuck one needle after another into her despite her crying. Her desperate parents couldn't stand to watch any more, so they took her home. They turned to us, and we provided them with our daily nutrition plan. We put her on a special programme of fasting, eating sauerkraut, and gargling our product three times a day. The effects were miraculous and today the beautiful little girl is smiling again. Are you suffering too? Are your loved ones suffering? Contact us and we will cure you as we cured Sara.*“

Materials for the lecturer:

Solution to Example 1: Contains a personal attack. Even if the Prime Minister in question did steal, it says nothing about the usefulness of the measures he has put in place. It is also irrelevant whether he has a yacht. It is necessary to comment on the core of the measures (can they realistically help anyone? how many people and how fundamentally? at what cost? could these people be helped more effectively? how, for example?) and it is wrong to attack the personality of the proponent.

Solution to Example 2: It contains a false claim (the government has not invited anyone, the proposal is for refugees who already are in the country) and a slippery slope (no one mentioned cars, houses and gardens). A fair criticism of the proposal should go to the heart of the measures (do we have enough money for this? Can we get new teachers quickly when it takes several years to train them? etc.) and to the possible alternatives (wouldn't it be more effective to better protect common borders first in order to reduce the number of illegal migrants? shouldn't we be investing money primarily in educational courses and language training for adult refugees so that they can become more employable in the labour market and then find independent accommodation with their families? etc.).

Solution to Example 3: The article uses highly emotional language (“harsh treatment”, “doctors stuck despite crying”, “miraculous effects and a beautiful little girl”) to evoke the difference between a bad hospital and a good alternative. There is also the problem of confusing causality and correlation - even if Sarah happened to be cured after fasting, being on a special cabbage diet and gargling, there is no evidence that she recovered as a result of that. The hospital's treatment is based on strict medical standards and research that has shown the beneficial effects of that treatment on particular types of cancer. Its impact and effect require careful assessment and the consideration of options and consequences.

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 25

Time



120 minutes

24 Not all theories are equal

Topics: **critical thinking, digital citizenship, media literacy**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 25 participants

Activity duration: 120 minutes

Methods of education: group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- identify the characteristic traits of conspiracy theories,
- explain the purpose, the target group and the channel used for spreading an invented conspiracy theory,
- compare various conspiracy theories, look for the similarities and the differences,
- use the typical aspects of conspiracy theories while creating a conspiracy theory,
- invent a conspiracy theory based on a historical or current event(s),
- observe the various points of view of a certain phenomenon,
- analyse personal tendencies and thought processes while completing a certain task,
- understand the developmental process of conspiracy theories and disinformation.

Equipment:

- flipchart paper, markers, paper, coloured paper, post-it notes, pens,
- video projection technology devices (computer, projector, audio tech, etc.), internet connection,
- a printed copy of "The list of conspiracy theory components"
- variations: cards with topics we want to focus on/ cards with the names of social networks (where the theory would be posted).

Keywords: conspiracy theory, conspiracy, critical thinking, logic errors, manipulation

Activity process:

1. We begin the activity by playing a video presentation of one of the most infamous conspiracy theories, e.g. „The Earth is flat.“ (video hyperlinks are attached below)

„Flat Earth“ videos: National Geographic. *Flat Earth vs. Round Earth | Explorer*, Youtube.com [online]. Available at: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=06bvdFK3vVU>

Interez. *What would it look like if the EARTH WAS FLAT?*, Youtube.com [online]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWWiOEFQeyY>>

2. We continue the discussion using the following questions:

- *What techniques do the video creators use to persuade the audience?*
- *Which conspiracy theories have you encountered?*
- *Why do you think these theories are created?*
- *What are the characteristic traits of conspiracy theories?*

The lecturer may write the answers down on the flip chart and add any information not stated by the participants: „*People tend to believe conspiracy theories because they are usually easily comprehensible, they're interesting and they offer an alternative misleading explanation of how the world around us works. Conspiracy theories are based on the assumption that nothing is a coincidence, appearances are deceiving, everything's connected, power is the main motivation. The human brain looks for causality in all happenings, even when there is no cause-effect (when an event is not a result of another event) and sometimes fails to draw the correct conclusion (logic errors). Signs of conspiracy theories include: mysteriousness, unspecified sources, plagiarism/falsification, inner inconsistency or contradiction, information flood, inconsiderate choice of facts, complicated constructs, etc.*”

3. We divide the participants into a few groups of 4 or 5 members and we ask each group to work together to come up with their own conspiracy theory.

4. We distribute the printed list of conspiracy theory components (Annex). Each group's task is to include 2 – 3 of the components into their own presentation. They may pick the components randomly (by drawing) or choose the 2 – 3 they want to use. The choice of topic and social network is also up to them (they decide where they'd want to present their entry (Youtube – a video, Facebook – text/photo, Instagram – image/story, TikTok – a short video, etc.) We let the groups work for 50 minutes.

5. During the first phase of the group work the participants choose the topic, define the target audience and the aim of their conspiracy theory. We ask the participants to remember that it's important to answer the following questions:

- *What event is your conspiracy theory based on?*
- *Who/which group strives to use a conspiracy to benefit another?*
- *What is the aim of your conspiracy theory?*

We recommend that the participants do not use any religious or ethnic group and to focus rather on other social groups to avoid social stereotyping. The conspiracy theories may be based for example on professional categories (farmers, teachers), age groups (seniors, teenagers), or even supernatural beings (animals, aliens, elves, etc.).

6. Afterwards the groups may proceed to work on their theories. We continue adding various steps to help them complete the instructions:

- We remind them to not forget to **come up with a story**. We ask what happens during the course of the story.

- Once the group defines their idea, the participants can begin to **implement the components** they chose. The conspiracy theory may also include the aspects we discussed during the initial phase of the activity.

- Based on the previously defined target audience, the groups decide on the **methods of presenting** their conspiracy theories to the public (they choose a social network and a type of presentation media – videos, reports, photos, images, text statements, etc.).

- When a group has their story made up, they need to think of how to present the outcome to the rest of the participants. We can let them use the computer/tablet, the projector, and speakers. They can also use their own tools and additional equipment (flip chart paper, pens, markers, coloured paper, post-it notes). We set a presentation time limit of 5 minutes.

7. Each group presents its output to the rest of the participants. We start a discussion about the invented conspiracy theories. The other participants can assess the presented outcome and describe:

- *What they did/didn't like?*
- *What they would change/improve?*
- *What impressions the other group's conspiracy theories made?*
- *How they would assess their own work?*

8. We summarize the theoretical basis of disinformation, conspiracy theories, and hoaxes. We can also describe the difference between a conspiracy and a conspiracy theory. This description can be found in the (Un)safe in the net handbook. We explain to the participants that the goal of this activity was not to learn how to invent a conspiracy theory but rather to show how easily and quickly it's possible to generate such news. This is because no facts are needed. At the same time, our aim was to highlight the aspects / components possibly included in conspiracy theories.

Final analysis:

- *How did you feel during the activity?*
- *What were the easiest and the hardest parts for you?*
- *What was the group work like?*
- *What did you realise during the activity?*
- *What components can we identify in conspiracy theories?*
- *What is your take-away from this activity?*

Activity variations:

- We can focus the activity not only on conspiracy theories but also for example on hoaxes, misleading information, *memes*, and the like.

- The topics can be defined in advance for the participants to use (e.g. vaccination, aliens, coronavirus, supernatural animals, canceling final high school testing, etc).

- Augmentation of the activity includes publishing the conspiracy theories. The participants choose the social network to create and share the post (a text post for Facebook, a photo or a story for Instagram, a video for YouTube, and a short video for TikTok). This possibility is suitable for multiphase education. The following session's time can be used to discuss the public's reactions to the posts shared by the participants. We conclude the activity with a request to delete the posts or to add a disclaimer explaining the post was a conspiracy theory created for educational purposes and what the goal of posting it was.

Source: *Déconstruire les théories du complot*. BePax, 2016. Available at: <<http://www.bepax.org/files/files/OUTILS/bepax-deconstruire-les-theories-du-complot-fiches-pedagogiques.pdf>>

WIKIPEDIA. *Conspiracy theory*. [sk.wikipedia.org](https://sk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kon%C5%A1pira%C4%8Dn%C3%A1_te%C3%B3ria) [online]. [cit. 2020-12-10]. Available at: <https://sk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kon%C5%A1pira%C4%8Dn%C3%A1_te%C3%B3ria>

VASLIN N., THERER S. A kol. *liaisons – a toolkit for preventing violent extremism through youth information*. ERYICA, 2018. ISBN 978-2-9199519-7-0

ANNEX

(cut)

List of conspiracy theory components:

.....

- Use rhetorical questions,

.....

- Story structure: historical introduction and a piece of shocking information near the conclusion,

.....

- Use stereotypes,

.....

- Use dramatic music, dark colors,

.....

- Use shocking information,

.....

- Use a statement of an anonymous speaker,

.....

- Communicate with aggression and demonstrate a position of authority,

.....

- Use impactful images,

.....

- Use a voice recording and a disturbing tone,

.....

- Use conditionals (e. g. they'd hide it, he would drown).

.....

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



60 MINÚT

25 Journalists in practise

Topics: **media literacy, digital citizenship, critical thinking**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participants count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: role play, group work, exercise, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- develop an understanding of the process of creating media headlines
- realize how headlines affect our emotions
- understand why clickbaits are created and also that the headline may not match the content of the whole article.

Equipment: pens, papers, worksheets for participants, flipchart board and paper, markers

Keywords: headline, news, media, clickbait

Activity process:

1. Divide participants into smaller groups if needed.
2. We will introduce them to the activity with a short motivational story: *"We are in the editorial office of a so far prestigious magazine. The arrival of new online - but also print - media on the market forced us to change the strategy of reaching participants and expand the sections according to the interests of our target groups. We are currently looking for editors for our upcoming sections. At this point, you will be given tasks to work on in teams. We will explain the basic elements that you should focus on and pay attention to in the articles. You have just completed several articles for the various media in which we advertise (magazines, newspapers, news sites, etc.). Read these excerpts from them. Your task will be to come up with a good headline, evaluate the articles and put them in their appropriate sections."*
3. We will distribute the worksheets with the texts and assignments to the participants. To each text there are tasks a)-f)
4. We will give the participants time to finish the tasks. After finishing the tasks in groups, we will present and evaluate them together.
5. We will perform the final analysis of the activity. The lecturer captures the findings and conclusions of the participants on the flipchart.

6. Final summary of the activity: *“The work of a journalist requires a lot of commitment, a lot of knowledge and even more experience. You are on the right track. Before you decide for yourself whether you will take up this profession, we will at least briefly summarize the basic concepts that we encountered and that you will work with.”*

7. We will explain the terms: media (chapter 1.3 of the handbook (Un)safely in the net), cognitive dissonance (chapter 1.2 of the handbook (Un)safely in the net), *clickbait*, netiquette, headline, media categorisation. Further theoretical resources for the activity can be found in chapters 1.5 - 1.7 of the handbook (Un)safely in the net, e.g. 5 key questions of media literacy, technological trends in the creation of media articles, superficial reading, etc.

Final analysis:

- *How are you satisfied with the result of the solution?*
- *How did you proceed when solving the tasks?*
- *What was the most difficult part?*
- *What feelings did the headlines of others evoke in you?*
-
- *Which other headlines caught your attention so much that you would read the whole article?*
- *Were the paragraphs provided sufficient to create the headline?*
- *What was important to mention in the headline in your opinion?*
- *What did you consider when solving other tasks? (categories, target groups, monitored information)*
- *Did you think about how to create a headline so that it would as interesting as possible?*
- *Did you consider to target group while creating the headline?*
- *Did you work with specific data, e.g. name, place, time, etc.? Why yes, why not?*
- *Did you use emotionally coloured words when creating captions? If so, which ones?*
- *Did you notice differences in the style of writing for different types of media?*

- *Will you change anything about your behaviour (attitude) while reading articles in the future?*
- *What can you do and what is good to know in similar situations in life?*
- *What are you taking away from this activity? What did you realize?*

Activity variations:

- Each group can get different article(s) and then share them with other groups.
- The lecturer can choose articles about a specific topic and work with those
- The participants can choose the articles themselves and exchange them in individual groups
- In a small group or with younger participants, the activity can be led in the form of a facilitated work in a group.

Source (Article examples sources):

Article 1: [cit. 2021-03-12]<https://www.idnes.cz/onadnes/moda/vitaminy-pro-zdravi-i-krasu.A200407_120710_jpz-krasa-moda_skld>

Article 2: [cit. 2021-03-12] < https://liberecky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/uprychly-beran-labut-netopyri-archa-liberec.html>

Article 3: [cit. 2021-03-12] <<https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/veda/3081590-chile-zaziva-mega-sucho-nedostatek-vody-je-nejhorsi-za-tisic-let>>

Article 4: [cit. 2021-03-12] <https://www.lidovky.cz/sport/ostatni-sporty/panovani-kralovny-martiny-pokracuje-sablikova-je-dvojnásobnou-mistryni-sveta.A190209_135954_ln-sport-ostatni_rkj>

Article 5: [cit. 2021-03-12] <<https://www.extra.cz/amber-luke-se-zblaznila-do-tetovani-modelka-ukazala-jak-vypadala-jehlou-netknuta>>

Article 6: [cit. 2021-03-12] <<https://www.e15.cz/magazin/vedci-nasli-nejdelsi-zijici-morsky-organismus-1368715>>

Article 7: [cit. 2021-03-12] < https://www.irozhlas.cz/kultura/nominace-ceny-divadelni-kritiky-oceneni_2002111229_aur >

ANNEX

Article examples

1. There is a wide variety of vitamins available, and each of them has specific benefits for the human body. Even if we know it is best to have them all in the body in ideal amounts, alone through daily food intake this is difficult to achieve. We must therefore supply them to our body using our own diligence. If you are consistent, you will soon enjoy energy, vitality and beautiful skin that will be the envy of everyone.

Source: idnes.cz

2. Last year the Ark Rescue Station treated almost 1600 animals. Increasingly, it is dealing with animals which have signs of poisoning. The staff of the Ark in Liberec was busy last year looking after: an escaped ram, a swan with a broken beak, and hundreds of bats..

Source: denik.cz

3. Although we have been talking about drought in the Czech Republic more and more often in recent years, there are areas of the world where drought is much more severe. For example, in central Chile, an area with the same population as in the whole of the Czech Republic. Although long dry periods are not unusual in this part of South America, the current one is quite extraordinary even by their standards. So much so that it bears the label of “mega-drought”.

Source: ct24.ceskatelevize.cz

4. Speed skater Martina Sáblíková won the 5000m race at the World Championships in Inzell and for the fifth time in one championship, she dominated both of the longest distances. In today's competition, Sáblíková avenged her defeat by Esmee Visser of the Netherlands at last year's Pyeongchang Olympics to win her tenth consecutive World Championships title, forcing her to take second place. Together with the all-around title, she has extended her collection of titles to 19, equalling the record holder Gunde Niemann-Stirnemann of Germany in the overall standings.

Source: info.cz/lidovky.cz

5. Instagram model Amber Luke, who has more than 80 thousand followers, is a huge success thanks to her tattooed body. Even the whites of her eyes are blue. She has spent 20,000 pounds, which is the equivalent of over 600,000 Czech crowns, in salons for the adornments to her body. Now she has shown what she looked like before she was touched by a needle.

Source: extra.cz

6. Measuring almost 46 meters long, and living off the west coast of Australia in the underwater canyons of the Ningaloo region is the Apolemia pipefish. It is believed to be the world's longest-living marine organism.

Source: e15.cz

7. On 16 March, the Prague Comedy Theatre will host the 2019 Theatre Critics' Awards, the 28th annual awards ceremony based on a poll by *Svět a Divadlo magazine*. This year, Prague theatre venues have a total of 14 nominations, the second most successful city in terms of the number of nominations is Ostrava with five nominations, followed by Brno with three nominations.

Source: irozhlas.cz

Tasks

a) Create a suitable title for each of the articles.

b) Where might each of the texts appear? Choose the most appropriate classification for each paragraph.

1. Tabloid news
 2. Women's magazine
 3. Regional journal
 4. Culture magazine
 5. Public service media
 6. Economy journal
 7. Sport news
-

c) Which categories would you use to classify the texts? Some paragraphs can be placed in more than one category.

1. Home News
 2. International news
 3. Culture
 4. Health and lifestyle
 5. Science
 6. Sport
 7. Trends
-

d) Return to the article titles you created in task a).

Would the headlines intrigue you so much that you would like to read the articles in full? If not, think about other headlines. Also, consider which media you placed the article in. Would you change the headlines depending on where the articles are published?

e) Who will read the articles? List the different groups of people who may be the target audience of the text (one text may have several target audiences). For example managers, mothers on maternity leave, students, residents of Bratislava, teachers, seniors, etc.

f) Find the answers to the following questions in the article texts. In some paragraphs, only some of them are answered.

- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who are the main subjects?
- What happened?
- How did it happen?
- Why did it happen?

26 Check your facts!

Topics: **safety online, critical thinking, media literacy, digital citizenship**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: simulation, group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- assess accuracy and reliability of available information,
- select and classify information according to the purpose of its use and justify the selection process,
- compile a list of aspects to be considered during an information survey,
- notice signs of manipulation within information processing and dissemination,
- provide feedback concerning how information is processed and handled,
- present the results of an information survey,
- understand the difficulty of the situation that targeted groups face (such as LGBT and others),
- reflect on personal attitudes towards virally spread information.

Equipment:

- Internet access and ICTs (cell phones, tablets, PCs – at least 1 for each group),
- printouts of the tasks for the researchers (1 print cut into pieces) and a sheet for the observers (2 pieces for each group),
- stationery, flip chart paper and markers.

Keywords: information sources, information verification, online campaign, information spreading, hate speech

Activity process:

Preparation before the activity: We find volunteers to play the role of observers. This should be about half of the group. We give them the sheet for the observers (Annex 1), explain the instructions for completing it and make sure they understand and know what information they are supposed to record.

Tips for leading the activity:

- The activity will go more effectively if the observers are briefed before the activity starts. If possible, designate only one observer per group, thus increasing the number of researchers.

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 20

Time



60 minutes

- The researchers should not feel that they are being “tested” by the observers. Explain to them that the role of the observer is to evaluate different methods of working with information, and the task itself is not based on a single correct solution.
- We may or may not show the observer sheet to the researchers. If we do not show it to them, their attention will not be drawn to the areas under observation and the results could prove more interesting. However, this step may create more pressure on the researchers. Conversely, providing the sheet in advance will result in a better working relationship between observers and researchers.
- During the final reflection, we can raise the issue of bias in the survey with results we “wanted to find”. We will use this to discuss attitudes towards information that we may know about but do not want to believe.
- One of the risks of misinformation or strong prejudices spread on the internet is that they can easily be mistaken for fact. We can find out whether participants think that including such a ‘fact’ in a survey may have contributed to the spread of prejudice against groups or individuals.
- We can also use hoax debunking sites in our discussions with participants to show how fake news contributes to fueling hate speech.

1. Explain to the participants that the activity focuses on the use of the internet as an information resource. We ask how often they use the internet for this purpose and which sites they use most often to get information.

2. We put them in the following situation: *Following several homophobic attacks (mainly via websites and videos) against young gay men and subsequent strong lobbying by NGOs to address the situation, a parliamentary debate is being prepared. The government has come up with a legislative proposal to create a fund to provide education in terms of facing homophobic attitudes and acts and to create support mechanisms for young gay men. Opposition parties have declared that they will not support the proposal. You hold the position of research assistant to a Member of Parliament who plans to speak in the debate. You have 30 minutes to compile a preliminary survey of the issue.*

3. Explain to the participants that they are going to work in groups of four (2 research assistants and 2 observers who follow the researchers’ methodology). Explain that all research requires the use of appropriate working methods. Therefore, before starting to work on the assignment, we should try to suggest a list of important considerations when setting up a survey. We record the participants’ suggestions on a flipchart and add essential points where necessary. We choose the observers of the group and divide the rest of the group so that there are approximately equal numbers of representatives from the opposition and the government parties. Give an assignment specification to each group (Annex 2).

4. The participants have 30 minutes to complete the survey. We suggest that they use the first 20 minutes to find relevant information and the remaining 10 minutes to jointly outline the main points they will show to their representatives.

5. When the groups have completed the task, we give them a further 5-10 minutes to receive feedback from the observers who summarise their key findings. They try to assess how objective and useful the information search was.

6. Invite the researchers to present the main discussion points for the speech of their representatives. They can present these in bullet point format as they are only preparing the speech and not delivering it themselves.

7. After each presentation, set aside time for the observers to summarize their findings and take any questions from the other groups.

Final analysis:

Briefing questions for research assistants

- *How did you perceive the difficulty of the task? What was the most difficult part of it?*
- *What made you decide on the particular website you were using to find information? To what extent did you consider the credibility of the information you used?*
- *Did you focus more on finding information supporting the position of your representative's party or did you try to find an objective viewpoint? What do you think a real researcher would do?*
- *Did you search for individual cases of attacks against gay people? If not, would this be relevant?*
- *Do you think real government representatives would be happy with your work? Would the voters of a specific party be satisfied?*

Questions on the use of the internet for research purposes

- *Did you realise anything important when using the internet for research purposes? Would you add anything to the list of recommendations you were given at the beginning of the activity?*
- *Were you surprised by the variety of information that the different groups came up with? How do you explain this?*
- *What methods can you use to check the credibility of the site or the information given? Do you use them routinely?*

Questions about homophobia and online hate speech

- *Did you find examples of discrimination or insults?*
- *Do you think you found information that was false or misleading?*
- *What are the risks of uncontrolled online postings? Can you think of ways to reduce the risk of other people taking these views and treating them as „fact“?*

Activity variations:

- We can choose a different target group about which participants will collect information. It can be women, Roma, ethnic minorities, asylum seekers, etc.
- The activity can be carried out without the use of observers. In this case, everyone would record their activity. Before starting the activity, it is necessary to explain to the whole group how to fill in the observer sheet.
- Participants could revise the list of recommendations for conducting an online survey and create their own guide. They could also compile a checklist for sharing the information with others.

Source: KEEN, E., GEORGESCU, M. *BOOKMARKS - PRÍRUČKA BOJA PROTI NENÁVISTNÝM PREJAVOM PROSTREDNÍCTVOM VZDELÁVANIA K ĽUDSKÝM PRÁVAM*, [Aktivita: Over si fakty! str.48–52]. Rada Európy, 2016. Available at: <https://www.iuventa.sk/files/nove_pdf_bookmarks_okok_final.pdf>

ANNEX

Annex 1 - OBSERVER'S SHEET

Keywords entered into the search engine	
RECORD EACH WEBSITE YOU VISIT:	
Web name	
Number of minutes spent at the site	
„Focus“ of the website (neutral, pro-LGBT, homophobic)	
Why was this site chosen?	
Was the site's authenticity verified? How?	
Was there a source for all information? Was the source verified?	
Additional information	



Annex 2 - Assignment specification

(cut)

REPRESENTATIVE 1:

Your government representative is a member of a coalition party. They have spoken out strongly in favour of the new legislation. Search the internet for information for the speech and make a list of 5 key points that should be addressed in the speech.

REPRESENTATIVE 2:

Your government representative is a member of the opposition party. They are to speak strongly in opposition to the establishment of a fund and the earmarking of funds from the state budget to address this issue. Search the internet for information for the speech and make a list of 5 key points that should be addressed in the speech.

REPRESENTATIVE 3:

Your government representative is a member of a minor party that has not yet decided whether to support the government's proposal. Search the internet for information relevant to their decision and make a list of 5 key points that should be addressed in their speech.

OBSERVERS

Your task is to analyse the researchers' approach to the survey. Try to capture as much information as possible and record it on the observer sheet. You can interact with the researchers to the extent that you do not distract them too much from the research tasks. Ask them what they are doing and why they have chosen a particular course of action.

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 20

Time



60 – 80 minutes

27 True or fake news?

Topics: **critical thinking,**
media literacy

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Activity duration: 60-80 minutes (total time for the activity depends on group size)

Methods of education: group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- identify types of fake reports and define them,
- identify sources and methods of spreading a fake report, (again pl?)
- analyze the causes and effects of fake reports on people and society,
- name the criteria and skills for assessing the credibility of the report,
- assess our own role in spreading fake messages,
- discuss options to limit the spread of rumours.

Equipment:

- computer / tablet with internet connection (at least one for each group),
- various emails containing false information or fake messages that need to be sent to participants (for example, from websites that reveal false information: <http://www.hoax-slayer.net/>, <https://www.hoax.cz / cze />, <https://hoax.sk/>, etc.),
- a copy of the fake report for each member of the group,
- printed Annex 2 as a handout for each participant,
- flipchart board and papers, markers.

Keywords: false report, verification of information, analysis of reports, credibility of the media

Activity process:

Tips for leading the activity: It is advised to select fake reports that have already been discussed in society, so that it is possible to obtain enough material online.

1. At the beginning of the activity, we ask the participants how often they encounter misleading information or fake reports, either by email or on the internet in general. We will ask them to mention some of the fake reports they can remember. We direct a brief discussion on fake reports to name possible types, to determine their characteristics, to identify the objectives of these reports and their impact (typology, objectives and impacts are given in Annex 2 of this activity). If the

discussion starts slowly, the lecturer can name some examples of fake messages he has encountered in internet communication or those published by the media. Types of false reports are recorded by the lecturer or one of the participants on a flipchart. We will return to them at the end of the activity.

2. We will ask the participants to divide themselves into small groups (2-4 people) and we will give each of the groups a copy of the fake message received by email. Their role is to gather as much information as possible about this fake report (especially through internet search engines). They have about 20 minutes to complete the task. We can choose two ways to assign messages:

- a) we use the same message for all groups and compare the search results,
- b) we give each group a different report and during the presentation of their outcome each group explains the content of the solved report to the other participants.

3. Additional instructions - points on which the work should focus:

- *Source - where the email / rumour likely comes from;*
- *Method of dissemination - how the rumor was spread (via the Internet, traditional media) and how each can amplify false information;*
- *The causes and effects of the circulation of the report;*
- *Assessment of the truthfulness - how the information contained in the report can be confirmed or refuted.*

4. At the end of the allocated time, all the participants will meet in a circle to share their findings. During the discussion, the group should classify different types of false reports. They may use the categories suggested by <http://www.hoax-slayer.net/> or the typology in Annex 2. We will ask the group to clarify the definitions of the terms (types of fake messages) we have worked with. If necessary, the definitions will be completed by the lecturer and at the end he will hand out the printed handouts to the participants.

Final analysis:

In the final reflection, we ask the participants how they themselves could be involved in spreading or creating rumours. Questions for reflection:

- *What do you notice when reading the news? What most often tells you that a message could be fake?*
- *What helps you look at reports objectively?*
- *What do you think are reliable sources?*
- *Do you often only read the title of an article? When do you do this the most often?*
- *What tools can be used to limit the spread of false messages?*
- *What would you recommend to your friends if they came across a fake report?*
- *How did the activity benefit you?*
- *What did you realize because of it?*
- *What was the hardest/easiest part of the activity?*
- *Would you do something different now?*

Source: This activity has been adapted using the “Educaunet” tool, an online risk education tool: www.educaunet.be.

VASLIN N., THERER S. A kol., liaisons – a toolkit for preventing violent extremism through youth information. ERYICA, 2018. ISBN 978-2-9199519-7-0

ANNEX

Annex 1

Example of a false report and its resolution (as a task for one group of participants)

Text of the fake report: These are US senators from Arizona and South Carolina with the terrorist leader Osama bin Laden. Although discussing the fight against terrorism, we must not forget that trade always takes precedence over morality.

Resolution (what participants might find out): Although many people mourned the death of United States Senator McCain on 25 August, 2018, a group of social media users used their efforts to destroy the former legislator's legacy. This false information was spread in conspiracy forums and social networks and is an example of manipulated content. Below is the **real photo** of both senators standing next to the President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai. Some possible **reasons** for creating and disseminating the report could be: political discredit, political propaganda, a failed joke based appearance similarities. **Possible effects:** producing public outcry, leading to aversion to politics, inciting hate speech against other nations / foreigners. **Credibility assessment:** The image can be found on different websites with a completely different description of events (type of meeting, place of meeting, etc.), which indicates that the message is not trustworthy. In addition, the image can be found on websites detecting fake reports, therefore indicating that this photo has been falsified.



Source of false report information: *6 nástrojov ako identifikovať falošné správy a konšpirácie*, AKČNÉ ŽENY [online]. [cit. 2021-05-02], Available at: < <https://akcnezeny.sk/6-nastrojov-ako-identifikovat-falosne-spravy-a-konspiracie/> >

Annex 2

Typology of false reports

What are the most common objectives of fake news?

- change someone's opinion or political beliefs,
- have fun, prank people
- try to express one's own opinion or perception of the world, manifestation of ego,
- money (from advertisements),
- power, advancement and manipulation (creating doubt, mistrust, fear).

What are the effects of fake news?

Fake news can result in a loss of public confidence in the media, facts, science and democratic principles. It often leads to the division of society and isolates people into so-called information bubbles. In these bubbles, we read articles, follow news and people, and communicate especially with those who share similar views.

Types of false reports in print and electronic media:

a) **Fabricated content of the message:** *the content is completely untrue and its purpose is to deceive and harm someone.*

b) **Propaganda:** *takes advantage of human passions, fear and hatred. It also tends to give the impression that it is of moral character and defends a higher goal while spreading political conviction or ideology. It is aggressive, does not shy away from personal attacks or fictional content, it tries to change political opinion, for example by looking for various conspiratorial connections.*

c) **Manipulated message content:** *the actual content of the information or image is modified.*

d) **Distorted choice of messages:** *we are attracted to messages that confirm our own convictions. Technology companies (Facebook, Google, etc.) know our taste, political beliefs, what we like and dislike, and therefore show us the news they think we will like. Regardless of whether these reports are true or completely false.*

e) **Clickbait:** *This is a type of online article or website that uses a headline to exaggerate information, creating and spreading various scandals and sensations. A typical clickbait headline tries to arouse the reader's attention and curiosity, but does not provide enough information on the topic, so the reader is motivated to click on a link leading to more content. The creator of such articles then earns revenue from the ads.*

f) **Misleading headlines:** *even messages that are not completely untrue can be distorted - having misleading or sensational headlines. These types of messages often spread quickly on social networks. Most people do not read the whole article, but they will retain the feeling of the title and what they have (often incorrectly) understood from its content.*

g) **Poor journalism:** *the media sometimes publish reports with unreliable information or without sufficient verification of sources and information.*

h) **Parody and satire:** *these are articles that are conceived from the ground up - like April fools. Their goal is to entertain the audience, parody the conspiracy media, and laugh at how some people will believe and share it.*

i) **Hoax** = deception, joke, bluff. On the Internet, this is usually an electronically distributed message that warns recipients of various imaginary dangers, asks for help or tries to entertain. The hoax often includes a call for further dissemination.

j) **Other types of misleading messages:** misleading posts(of celebrities), mass chain emails, lies in discussion forums, misleading videos.

Source of information in the annex:

ZAJAC, L., *Falošné správy a hrozby internetu, Manuál (nielen) pre seniorov*, Transparency international Slovensko, ISBN: 987-80-89791-16-3, Available at: <https://transparency.sk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/TISK_Fake_News_manual_WEB.pdf>

28 Civilized online discussion rules

Topics: **digital citizenship, safely online**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 90 minút

Methods of education: group work, presentation, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- describe human behavior in the online space,
- introduce online community rules for safe communication,
- compare the rules of online communities and to state examples of breaking/disrespecting these rules,
- pick the most important rules of online communication,
- reflect on personal behavior in an online community.

Equipment: a computer, the internet or community standards printed in advance, post-it notes, A3-size paper, markers, sticky tape, (paper, writing tools)

Keywords: online community standards, social networks, communication online

Activity process:

1. We distribute post-it notes to all of the participants and they are supposed to use them to write the answer to the questions: *Which social network do you use the most often? Which one is the second?* After writing the answer they stick the post-it notes to their t-shirts and are divided into groups of four so that each group member has the same answer. The second network choice is for practical purposes in case all of the participants pick the same network. The lecturer creates groups according to the second choice. For the following comparison of the results, it's better for the groups to address various social networks.

The main terms should be clarified as we are to work with them: social network characteristics, what it's used for, types of social networks, types of social networks, etc.

2. The task of the groups is to answer the following questions regarding the social network they use the most often:

a) *How do the people usually behave on this social network? What do they usually do/say in their posts or comments? Why is it that way, in your opinion?*

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 30

Time



90 minutes

b) *What do people not do on your social network or what do they only do rarely? Why is it that way, in your opinion?*

c) *Is it okay to discuss civic issues on your network? How do people do it the most often (what do they discuss)? What do they avoid?*

d) *Do you ever see people who disagree with each other? What does it look like?*

Everyone shares their answers. They can present them written on the flipchart paper. In the case of the same social networks, it can be beneficial to compare answers. Some of the interesting opinions/observations can be written on a flipchart board by the lecturer and used in later discussion.

3. We distribute the links to the online community standards to the groups, each group gets the standards of the network they worked with before. We may also have them find the standards online by themselves. We let them work for 20 – 30 minutes. In the case that we're trying to focus on a certain topic, we guide them to pay attention to a specific part of the rules or to divide the work within the group. For instance, we can choose the standards dedicated to crime, safety, respecting the differences in online communication, etc.

Links for the group work:

Facebook community standards: <<https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/>>

Instagram community standards: <<https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119/>>

Snapchat community standards: <<https://www.snap.com/en-US/community-guidelines>>

YouTube community standards: <<https://www.youtube.com/intl/en-GB/howyoutubeworks/policies/community-guidelines/>>

After reading the given community standards the groups answer the following questions:

a) *Which principles or regulations do you agree with and which are important to you? Why?*

b) *Which regulations do you see as less relevant or less important? Why?*

c) *What rules would you add? Why?*

They also write these answers on their posters and present them to the group.

4. Then, in a discussion with all of the participants, everyone picks 5 rules they consider the most important regarding proper social network behavior and/or 5 rules that should apply to all of the social networks. We discuss the reasons for the choice. We thank the participants for their effort.

Final analysis:

During the reflection, we can review the group work, satisfaction with the results, and the usefulness of the activity for the participants.

Finally, we ask the participants the four following questions they're not supposed to answer out loud, only for themselves as they read them. Up until this point, we were talking about other people and their behavior on social networks. Let the participants think about how they behave within the online forums and honestly answer the following questions now:

- *How do I behave on social networks?*
- *Do I respect the rules of my online community?*
- *How do I react to improper communication/rule-breaking by others?*
- *What can I do to improve my communication online?*

Activity variations:

- The activity can as well be executed without the internet and computers. In that case, it's necessary to prepare the community standards in advance for all of the potential groups according to what we assume to be the most used social networks, (based on the age of the participants).

29 The story of the seven blind mice

Topics: **critical thinking, media literacy**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participants count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 30 minutes

Methods of education: brainstorming, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- to observe various perspectives on certain matters,
- to assess the information needed to create the whole image,
- to perceive the complexity and interconnectedness of information,
- to respect the time aspect of information processing.

Equipment:

- a record of *The seven blind mice* tale (or a print of the story text),
- an opaque pouch and one special object that we place inside
- an A4-sized paper and a pen/pencil for each participant.

Keywords: critical thinking, obtaining information, information assessment, the whole picture

Activity process:

1. We prepare the bag containing the special object in advance. The bag is supposed to be from such a material that the object placed inside isn't visible or distinguishable. The lecturer picks the object, the most suitable object is the one with an unrecognizable shape immediately after touching it.

We randomly select a few participants (according to the size of the group) and ask them to reach into the pouch, grab the object, but not to pull it out of the pocket at the same time. We encourage them to try to name the subject. It is very important that the participants only touch the object for a brief moment. When they say what they think the object they touched was, we do not proceed with the discussion, nor do we compare the individual answers of the participants in any way.

2. After a short introductory activity, we explain to the participants that they are about to hear a story about seven blind mice who - like the participants in the in-

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



30 minutes

troductory activity - have stumbled upon Something strange. Their next task will be to work together with the mice to find out what it is. To help them think better, they need to use paper to draw or record their discoveries. Distribute an A4-sized paper to everyone to divide into six equal parts using a pencil/pen. After each day, as the mice go exploring, their task will be to draw what each of the mice discovers.

3. Play/read the story of the seven blind mice to the participants. After each day, we stop the recording and let the participants draw what each mouse discovers for as long as they need. They don't have to draw/describe the findings in detail, sketches are enough. If they can't draw the objects very quickly, there is an option to only take a note of each discovery and to describe/draw it later.

4. During the story about the last mouse, invite participants to consider what this mouse did differently and what the participants in the introductory activity could also have done differently. When they have named the fact that the mouse has examined the 'Something' from all sides, going through each part in detail, we continue the story where the seventh mouse summarises what she had come across. At this point, participants can share their pictures and noted observations together. Let them discuss the question: what did the mice find at the pond? After the discussion, let the participants come up with the right answer using their sketches and notes. Only then do we play/read the conclusion of the story.

Final analysis:

We discuss the following issues together:

- *What is the moral of the story for the mice?*
- *What is the lesson for our lives?*
- *In what situations should we try to find out all the perspectives of the issue?*
- *How can you apply it in practice? In everyday life?*
- *Have you ever lacked information that led you to make a wrong decision?*
- *How would you deal with such a situation in the future? What else would you check? Where?*

Moral of the story: *It is important to look at issues or topics from different perspectives, to try to understand them from different angles, and sometimes to spend more time on it than just to run up to it, „grab“ it and immediately make judgments, to assess and rate what's going on.*

Source:

ČAJKA, A., BIOLEK, J., a kol. *Komu patrí zem, Metodická príručka globálneho vzdelávania pre učiteľov*. Bratislava: Centrum environmentálnej a etickej výchovy Živica, 2019, ISBN 978-80-972962-5-4

CEEV ŽIVICA, *Sedem slepých myšiek*. Youtube.com [online]. [cit. 2020-12-10]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yze3AMJ2DSc>>

ANNEX

The Seven blind mice by Ed Young (inspired by an ancient Indian fable)

One day, the seven blind mice were surprised to find a strange Something by their pond. „What is it?“ They cried and they all ran home.

On Monday, Red Mouse went first to find out. „It’s a pillar,“ he said. No one believed him.

On Tuesday, Green mouse set out. He was the second to go. „It’s a snake,“ he said.

„No,“ said Yellow mouse on Wednesday. „It’s a spear!“ She was the third in turn.

The fourth was Purple mouse. He went on Thursday. „It’s a great cliff,“ he said.

Orange mouse went on Friday, the fifth to go. „It’s a fan,“ he cried, „I felt it move!“

The sixth to go was Blue mouse. She went on Saturday and said: „It’s nothing but a rope.“ But the others didn’t agree.

They began to argue. „A snake!“ „A rope!“ „A fan!“ „A cliff!“

Until Sunday, when Black mouse went to the pond as the seventh.

When she came upon the Something, she ran up one side, and she ran down the other. She ran across the top and from end to end. „Ah,“ said Black mouse, „now I see. The Something is

...as sturdy as a pillar,

...supple as a snake,

...wide as a cliff,

...sharp as a spear,

...breezy as a fan,

...stringy as a rope,

but altogether the Something is... an elephant!“

And when the other mice ran up one side and down the other, across the Something from end to end, they agreed. Now they saw, too.

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 30

Time



60 minutes

30 Advertising agency

Topics: **media literacy, digital citizenship, critical thinking**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participants count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: simulation, discussion, group work, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- understand the basic processes and tools used in the creation of advertising,
- be able to notice the goals pursued by ad creators,
- describe how advertising affects us in everyday life,
- realise the impact of advertising on one's own consumer behavior.

Equipment: projector, computer, internet connection, suitable advertisements, printed worksheets for participants

Keywords: advertising, advertising analysis

Activity process:

1. We draw participants in with a story. *"Welcome to an advertising agency that creates advertising campaigns for small retailers, but also for large global brands. We are looking for people who have attention to detail, pay attention to advertising and can estimate what to focus on in advertising and what affects people. During our meeting, we will show some ads that we are exposed to every day, analyze them and evaluate their impact, but we will also look at the elements that marketing magicians use to influence us."*

2. We will distribute a worksheet to each of the participants (Annex 1).

3. We will show a sample of the advertisement to the participants (1 to 2 times, it may relate to the product or brand that we focus on or want to point out).

Advertisement examples:

Rohlik.cz: https://youtu.be/dh_qEwMvIBU

Teta drogéria: <https://youtu.be/F0vuCQ7EpaU>

Kofola: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwplq5ci1s>

T-Mobile: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gg1LHXNFbWQ>

Hornbach: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiXewx79yAk>

Absurdné reklamy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jljh4sCHovk>

Possible advertisement search words: best ad, best video ad, ad of the year, ad (product/brand name)

4. Participants will work on a worksheet assignment (Annex n. 1) with the presented advertisement as a reference.

5. Together we go through the completed assignment and motivate the participants to answer in the following questions in a discussion:

1. *What elements did you identify in the ad?*
2. *Would you buy the product / service? If not, why? If yes, why?*
3. *Who is the ad targeted at?*

6. We commend the participants for their effort to analyze the advertisements. As employees of an advertising agency, they could make proper use of these facts.

7. We will perform a final analysis of the first part of the activity using the questions below.

Final analysis of the first part of the activity (Debrief):

- *What do the elements that the ad uses evoke in you?*
- *Why did the creator of the ad choose to work with these elements?*
- *What are all the ways in which can this advertisement reach the recipients (TV, radio, print media, leaflet, billboard, online: social networks, news servers, influencer blogs, ...)?*
- *Does this ad contain misleading claims or unrealistic / deceptive visuals?*
- *Does this ad have a purpose other than to sell a specific product / service? (Often yes, eg increase awareness of the brand, person, company, etc.)*

8. Theoretical basis for the final summary of the first part of the activity, which relates to perception and information processing, can be found in section 1.2 Human Perception of the Handbook (Un) Safely in the Net.

9. We will bridge to the next part of the activity: *“Now we have gone through a specific advertisement. We went through the individual elements that are often used in advertising. In the next section, we’ll look at advertising in greater detail.”*

10. We will hand out worksheets to the participants (Annex 2). Their role will be to share their opinions and attitudes in pairs or small groups and discuss the issues from the worksheet (Annex 2).

11. We will perform the final analysis of the second part of the activity. The lecturer may point to cognitive biases that often occur in our information processing. They are contained in section 1.2 of the Handbook (Un)safely in the net.

Final analysis of the second part of the activity:

- *Which of the questions did you discuss the longest?*
- *What did you realize during the discussion?*
- *Are you influenced by advertising?*

12. We will evaluate the work in groups, appreciate the observations and suggestions of the participants, as well as their involvement during the assignment.

Activity variations:

- The number of ads that the lecturer shows to the participants depends on time allocation and the learning objectives.

- The activity can be divided into two separate activities (1st activity = points 1 - 8 and 2nd activity = points 9 - 12). In this case, it is necessary to reserve a time allocation of approximately 60 minutes for the first part and 30 minutes for the second part of the activity. With a higher number of participants, the final analysis and evaluation of activities is more time-consuming.

ANNEX

Annex 1

Try to analyze your ad and focus on the individual elements that often appear in your ads. Alternatively, find others that aren't mentioned and are often used in ads.

Which of the following elements does the ad contain? Give a specific example.

- joke, humor, exaggeration
- beauty, youth, fun
- children, satisfaction, well-being, health
- wealth, success, free time
- easier trips, saving time - *"You will never have to vacuum for so long! With robulux you can read or take care of your children instead of vacuuming..."*
- music, subliminal stimuli, experience or amazement
- negative emotions - fear, envy, aggression, hatred
- the uniqueness of the product - *"After using our product, your world will change!"*
- inducing the feeling, that all that the customer needs to be happy is to buy the product
- targeting the needs of the person - someone has dandruff, someone has a problem with sweating, etc.
- constant repetition of the product name
- use of superlatives - e.g. the best, the tastiest, the cheapest, etc.
- addressing the viewer - *"Refreshment like you have never experienced before! Get to know the real freshness ..."*
- good looking women / men
- *"scientists have proven"* - support for scientific research (often contrived/distorted)

Annex 2

- How does advertising affect a person's life?
- How does advertising directly affect you?
- When was the last time you purchased a product / service because of an ad?
- Which ad do you like? Why?
- Which ad do you dislike? Why?
- Can ads be helpful?
- Where do you most often see ads targeted to you?
- Ads for which products / services may appear:
 - *on commercial television during children's cartoons?*
 - *on commercial television before the start of a horror?*
 - *in a print magazine for women focusing on a healthy lifestyle?*
 - *in printed newspapers that are distributed free of charge to mailboxes?*
 - *in a car magazine?*
 - *in a magazine in an airplane for 1st class passengers?*
 - *on a commercial radio, where they play mostly folk music?*
 - *on billboards on the highway?*
 - *at a punk music concert?*

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 25

Time



45 minutes

31 It's won't be done by itself – a project for my school/community

Topics: **critical thinking**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 25 participants

Activity duration: 45 minutes

Methods of education: group work, presentation

Aims of the activity:

- explain the reasons supporting our statements,
- assess whether a statement is an objective argument,
- adjust a statement so it becomes an argument,
- differentiate between an argument and a statement,
- visualise argument structure,
- notice the argumentation of others and accept differences in reasoning,
- express disagreement briefly and objectively, and accept constructive criticism.

Equipment: flipchart and flipchart paper, markers, paper, pieces of paper with the role of a CREATOR/an OPPONENT, a projector and a computer (not necessary)

Keywords: argument, argumentation, project, project design

Activity process:

1. We can use this introduction to motivate and engage the participants: „*Everyone has definitely thought about necessary improvements of their school/community. You certainly have many ideas about how to make the lives of the people around you simpler, more beautiful, or more pleasant. However, an idea is only the first step, it's much more difficult to find resources and to carry out the idea. Now you're going to be able to try what it's like to be in the position of those who make decisions not only about what's good for themselves but also for the rest of the people.*“

2. We divide the participants into 2 – 4 groups of the same number of the participants (minimum of 4 participants for a group). Each group member draws the role of CREATOR or OPPONENT. We prepare the pieces of paper with the roles so that each group contains the same number of creators and opponents. In a case of a group consisting of an odd number of participants, there can be fewer opponents.

3. We assign the following tasks to the creators and the opponents:

- *The creators' task is to discuss the most beneficial project for their school/community which requires an initial investment of 10 000 €. On their flip chart they should*

write the title of their project and at least 5 elaborate reasons why it's important.

- The opponents' task is to watch the creators' activity and on their flip chart to write the reasons why they think the proposed project is unnecessary for the school/community.

The creators and the opponents are not supposed to communicate during this phase.

4. 20 minutes later we instruct the creators to introduce their project proposals and the reasons supporting their decisions. Then the opponents provide their opposing arguments. We supervise the presentation to prevent direct confrontation between the creators and the opponents.

5. We thank the creators and the opponents for their suggestions and we reflect on the activity using the questions below. We try to use the questions in a way that leads to clarification of the terms argument, argumentation, argument structure. The participants should grasp the difference between what is and what isn't an argument. During the phase of the final analysis, we revise the arguments mentioned by the creators and the opponents and we discuss them. We explain that their reasons are/could be classified as arguments and together we assess whether they are defined correctly or not. We could write the theoretical basis on the flip chart or distribute it to the participants in the form of printed handouts. These can be found in the (Un)safe in the net handbook, section 2.3: The power of arguments.

Final analysis

- What do the reasons/arguments you stated have in common?
- What is the structure of the arguments you used?
- What influenced your argumentation?
- In everyday life, when do we use the art of argumentation the most often?
- What do you consider as powerful aspects of arguments?
- What skills does a person who is able to argue need, in your opinion?
- Who do you consider to be a person who's able to argue (famous in media/someone you know)
- How would you rate the cooperation of your group?
- Was it difficult to pick only one project proposal from all of the ideas? Why?
- How different are the proposals of the various groups?
- The creators – how did you deal with the objections from the opponents?

Activity variations:

- This activity can also be conducted as a role-play using various props (a suit and a tie, glasses,...) and by adjusting the room accordingly. We can adjust the space to create the impression of attending a real tender event or being at a school economy committee meeting, etc.

- We prepare suggestions for project proposals in advance and let the participants pick or draw one of them. This version of the task might include defending a project the participants might not be so enthusiastic about. The variation where we assign the given task is especially suitable when the participants don't come from the same environment.

- Instead of explaining the theory we may let the participants formulate the definitions: *Based on the previous activity, try to formulate definitions of the terms argument (what is and what isn't an argument), argumentation, and argument structure.*

- This activity may be followed by another activity that allows the participants to experience argumentation as a part of a discussion. Another activity extension may include watching and analysing argumentation from a talk show discussion.

Source: MARKOŠ J., GAŽOVIČ O. *N Magazín, Kritické myslenie*. Bratislava: N Press, s.r.o, Október 2017. [online]. Available at: <<https://dennikn.sk/941774/stiahnite-si-prirucku-o-kritickom-mysleni/>>

ANNEX

Materials for the lecturer / participants

Argument

- a series of statements („premises“), serving to justify another statement („conclusion“),
- serves to justify or confirm an opinion,
- a set of statements where one of the statements is called a conclusion,
- can be true or untrue,
- uses the informational structure, does not verify the truthfulness,
- even an argument built on an untrue and illogical basis is considered an argument (if it meets the structure criteria).

Argument structure

The statements that lead to the conclusion of the argument are called **premises**. An argument can contain an infinite number of premises. (1) premise + (2) premise +... = (3) conclusion

Conclusion – a statement resulting from the premises that provide the conclusion with a logical reason. If we want to get the correct conclusion, we need to work with correct and verified premises.

Argumentation

- a form of communication, in which attitudes, opinions, and acts are clarified
- argumentation is mostly used when providing evidence, persuading someone, or enforcing an opinion, or an idea.

32 Freedom of speech or censorship?

Topics: **digital citizenship, critical thinking, media literacy**

Recommended age group: 15+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 90 minutes

Methods of education: exercise, group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- express own attitude towards internet regulation,
- describe ways to restrict freedom of speech on the internet,
- state the reasons why restriction of freedom of speech is necessary for human rights protection,
- acknowledge the importance of freedom of speech for individuals and society.

Equipment:

- a computer, a projector, internet for the lecturer,
- a computer/tablet/cellphone, internet for each group,
- paper, pens, flipchart board and paper, markers.

Keywords: internet content blocking, censorship on the internet, online control, dangerous and harmful internet content, freedom of speech

Activity process:

1. Introduction: *For many people, the internet is a synonym with freedom. A medium, through which they can publish anything and spread their ideas freely from their own country to the other end of the world. However, along with the power that the internet gives to the information, there are rising efforts to restrict „the net of nets“ and to censor information and users.*

We ask the participants of the workshop to work individually. They have to write an essay on the topic: “Should the internet be regulated - yes or no?” in the next 15 minutes. It is essential that the participants have enough time to think. Alternatively, we may set aside another 15 minutes during which the participants can discuss, research necessary sources or search for information about internet regulation.

2. We present the participants with a video about censorship on the Internet (2 minutes). We then ask them to write a list of countries that are the largest censors on the internet (5-10 states). They can also write about other countries that

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 30

Time



90 minutes

were not mentioned in the video. In each case, they should state the reason why they think the country has decided to proceed with censorship. In the discussion, we let the participants state their views and the reasons why the country restricts freedom of speech. The lecturer or one of the participants writes them down on the board. The written reasons can be used as a basis for further discussion.

3. We divide the participants into groups. There will be two opinion clusters in each group - supporters of free speech on the internet and supporters of internet censorship. The groups have about 15 minutes to prepare. During the given time, they are supposed to gather arguments in favour of their assigned opinion. Several groups with a maximum of 5 members holding one opinion and the same number of groups taking the opposite view will probably emerge. After the specified time, we ask one of the groups to present their views. Members of the other groups with the same assigned opinion can add arguments that have not yet been made. Then it's the opposite side's turn. After hearing both sides we can give the representatives of both a short time period to respond to the arguments of the other party. We continue discussing for as long as it's necessary. The goal is not the victory of one or the other party, but making space for presenting as many arguments as possible to help form the participants' opinion. The role of the lecturer is to guide the discussion in a way that brings as many ideas as possible, but also in a way that doesn't allow sharp confrontation or argument escalation.

Final analysis:

We dedicate the final reflection to real life experience with the restriction of freedom of speech on the internet, the situation in our own country, and efforts to create rules within the EU. Examples of questions to reflect on:

- *Do you personally, have any experience with freedom of speech restriction on the internet (maybe also through friends living abroad)?*
- *Do you think that our country is also one of the countries where freedom of speech on the internet is affected in some way? How is the internet censored in our country?*
- *Do you know what the Digital Service Act is and what it contains?*

Another part of the reflection can be devoted to working in groups and discussing how the participants handled the task of searching for and presenting arguments if they were in a position they do not personally agree with.

We thank the participants for joining the discussion and sharing their views with others.

Source:

Internet censorship maps, the most censored countries ranking:

<<https://www.vpnmentor.com/blog/online-censorship-country-rank/>>

Video about internet censorship: <<https://youtu.be/YZbfTiZNswl>>

Theoretical basis and information: <<https://www.jaknainterneta.cz/page/2540/cenzura-internetu/>>

Digital Service Act: <<https://slovaksecurity.org/aktualne/legislativa-o-digitalnych-sluzbach/>>

33 Embarrassing photo

Topics: **safety online,**
digital citizenship

- Recommended age group:** 10+
- Participant count:** up to 20 participants
- Activity duration:** 60 minutes
- Methods of education:** discussion, reflection
- Aims of the activity:**
- understand the connection between bullying online and offline,
 - recognise forms of bullying in a certain context,
 - describe the consequences of cyberbullying,
 - name different possible ways to react to bullying,
 - state how to stop or discourage cyberbullying,
 - express personal opinions and reactions to cyberbullying,
 - be aware of the consequences of cyberbullying on people's lives.
- Equipment:** a whole printed story for the lecturer and fragments of the story - each on a small page for each participant, paper, writing tools.
- Keywords:** cyberbullying, empathy, freedom of speech, perceptiveness to others

Activity process:

1. This activity is based on a story that we either read or distribute to the participants on pieces of paper, which they read themselves. This story about Peter and Tibor is divided into sections, followed by questions for the participants. We always read one part together and then discuss the questions. The participants write the answers on a piece of paper. Then we proceed with further discussion about the questions. We continue like this until the end of the story. Especially for younger participants, it is more suitable if they write their answer first and then the discussion follows. That way they receive the necessary time to think and will be able to compare their own reactions with the answers of other participants.

Story: *Tibor and Peter argued during the school break. Peter was angry and threw Tibor's pencil case on the floor. Tibor threw Peter's pen into the trash can. When Peter tried to reach for the pen in the rubbish bin, Tibor quickly took a photo). During the next break, Tibor looked at the photos on his mobile phone and he found it incredibly funny that Peter had his hand in the bin in one photo. He picked up his phone and showed the picture of Peter to the boys in the classroom, declaring that Peter was a bin man.*

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 20

Time



60 minutes

Questions to elaborate on in the discussion:

- *Have you ever experienced a similar situation?*
- *Do you think that this kind of situation could happen?*
- *What do you like/dislike about this story?*
- *What do you think, how does Peter feel, and how does Tibor feel?*
- *If you were in Tibor's place, would it also seem funny to you?*
- *If you were in Peter's place, would you consider it a joke?*

It is important to accept and not evaluate the reactions of the participants during the discussion so they can relax and to know that they can express their opinion.

2. We read/distribute the next part of the story to the participants and give them the necessary time to work out the questions.

Another part of the story: *Tibor came home from school, added the photo of Peter to Facebook, and named it "class garbage man". When Peter returned from football training that evening, he logged onto Facebook. He found his photo there and noticed that 20 classmates had "liked" it and 7 of them had even added their comments. Peter wondered why so many classmates liked the photo and why some of his friends were among them and also why some were also classmates to whom he doesn't talk much.*

Questions:

- *How would you feel if you were in Peter's shoes?*
- *What do you think about Tibor posting such a photo on Facebook?*

It should be emphasized that even basic likes or comments can become part of cyberbullying. With the participants, we discuss how they'd feel in the position of a cyberbullying victim.

3. **Another part of the story:** *The next day, when Peter came to school, almost the whole class laughed at him and called him the "class garbage man."*

Questions:

- *How would you feel in Peter's place?*
- *What do you think about how Peter's classmates behaved?*

Again, it is not appropriate to evaluate and judge the reactions that are heard during the discussion.

4. **Another part of the story:** *After class, Peter went for lunch and noticed that students from other classes were whispering and pointing at him. When he came into the dining hall, one of the boys across the room shouted at him, "Look, there's the class garbage man!"*

Questions:

- *Do you think there is a difference between Peter being mocked and laughed at by classmates and laughed at by students from other classes?*
- *What would you do in Peter's place?*

If the participants have not yet expressed opinions in Peter's defence, it's good to ask these questions:

- *Which of you would stand up for Peter?*
- *Which of you would help Peter?*
- *How could Peter be helped?*
- *Do you remember or know about something similar that has happened? How did you react then?*

With these questions, we try to envisage how to fight against cyberbullying. We encourage participants to name strategies such as not supporting or stopping bullying/cyberbullying.

Final analysis:

- *Was it difficult for you to empathise with Peter's feelings? Why?*
- *How did the observations of others affect your opinion?*
- *How would your view be different if this case happened in your group (class, group of friends)?*
- *What new information did you get from the activity?*
- *Has the activity helped you to better understand cyberbullying?*
- *How did you feel during the activity? What did you like about it and what didn't you like?*

Summary: Face-to-face and online bullying often happen concurrently, and it's a fact that aggressors who hurt other children have simply gained new ways for harming others- digital tools on the internet. This story, which was quite ordinary and common at the beginning, later developed into a dangerous problem. Before the final reflection, we can explain in the specific story of Peter and Tibor what bullying and cyberbullying are and what their characteristics are. We talk to the participants about what cyberbullying involves and we name the effects that cyberbullying has on the victims, and also about how the aggressor could be punished. In this way we summarize some of the opinions and observations of the participants that were already voiced during the activity. The lecturer also adds some important information that was not mentioned in the discussion (section 3.2 Cyberbullying of the handbook (Un)safe in the net).

Source: *Cvičenie – trápna fotka*, detinanete.sk [online]. Available at: <<https://www.detinanete.sk/2015/09/09/cvicenie-trapna-fotka/>>

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



60 MINÚT

34 Ad development

Topics: **media literacy, critical thinking, digital citizenship**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participants count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 60 minutes

Methods of education: role play, group work, presentation, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- create and display an ad for a specific product,

- perceive advertising production from the perspective of advertising creators,

- pay attention to the content of the ads and the information used in them,

- evaluate one's own arguments,

- identify misinformation, manipulation, tabloid advertising,

- describe one of the models of psychological effects of advertising on respondents.

Equipment:

- the products for which the participants will create an advertisement (as specified by the lecturer),

- flipchart papers and board, markers, colored papers, writing utensils, paper duct tape, self-adhesive cards (not necessary: PPT, projector, computer).

Keywords: advertising, misleading advertising, tabloidization, clickbait, disinformation, manipulation

Activity process:

1. At the beginning of the activity, we will introduce the participants to the world of advertising and its creation with a short speech: *"We practically cannot escape advertising. It's on the products we buy, on posters and billboards, on buses, on the radio, on television and on social networks. It is the main source of income for both traditional and digital media, it is also very important for youtubers or instagrammers - and it is especially difficult with them to recognize what is or isn't advertising in their work."* We can create an atmosphere of a department store or a business company by decorating the room, choosing a costume (e.g manager of the department or a company).

2. We continue by explaining the task: *"I As of this moment, you are an employee of the advertising department and your job is to come up with a strategy to promote a particular product and create an ad that you will present to the management. You have 20 - 30 minutes to prepare, and max. 5 minutes for presentation. The form of promotion and which channel you choose is up to you. It is important that you attract the at-*

tention of our target group and increase the sales of our product.” We divide the participants into groups (max. 5 people each) and we try to encourage them to take on the role of an advertising employee. We can also prepare props advise them not to forget about suitable costumes for a more significant effect during the presentation.

3. We will provide detailed information - according to the needs of education. The lecturer chooses:
- a) the promoted product / service is the same for all groups,
 - b) specific product / service different for each group,
 - c) allow groups to choose the product / service themselves.

We will offer suitable material for the preparation of advertising:

- colored papers, markers, flipchart papers, adhesive tapes etc.,
- computer, projector for presentation (if available).

Participants can also creatively use their own materials and tools.

If necessary, the lecturer will provide some examples of how to present the advertisement: creation of posters, videos, newspaper articles, blogs, scenes (TV commercials), audio recordings and the like. Due to the time allocation, the groups will be choosing simpler forms, but they can also see the task as a challenge and show their creativity.

4. We monitor the work in groups and sometimes remind the participants of the remaining time. After the time for preparation has elapsed, the presentation of the created ads will begin. Whether the lecturer decides to evaluate the ads and in what way is up to them. One option is to vote on the success of the sale of the product - who would buy which product and why. We may or may not notify the participants in advance that the voting on the success of the ad will take place. We thank the participants for their effort and participation, end the role play and move on to the final analysis of the activity.

Final analysis:

We devote part of the reflection to working in groups and satisfaction with the created ads, the part is directed to the analysis of the content of the ads = choice of information, means used, credibility of the ad, the stated reason for purchase (argument). We will introduce the terms: *advertising, misleading advertising, tabloid, misinformation, clickbait, argument, manipulation* (Glossary of the terms is in the guide (Un) securely in the net). A suitable theoretical basis for a better understanding of the effect of advertising is the presentation of one of the models of the psychological effect of advertising on the consumer (listed below).

Questions for the final reflection:

- *How did you like the collaboration on the ad?*
- *Are you satisfied with the result you have achieved?*
- *Now, after all the ads have been presented, would you do something different?*
- *Why did you choose the given target group, channel, form / genre?*
- *Did you use false information / misinformation?*
- *Did you use manipulative techniques to achieve the goal?*
- *Would you recommend buying “your” product to your family?*
- *Do you focus on the credibility of your ads when watching content? What do you notice most often?*
- *What are our options (as a recipient) in the case of misleading advertising, misinformation in advertising, tabloids, manipulation, ...?*

Activity variations:

- If we implement multi-day or multi-phase training (training courses), the task can be assigned as an individual work, on which the participants will work during the week/several days. At the next meeting, the result of the work will be presented to the other participants. More time can be devoted to the presentation and analysis of the created ads.

Source: *Reklama a marketing*. Vzdělávací program JSNS, Člověk v tísni, o. p. [online] [cit. 08.03.2021]. Available at: <<https://www.jsns.cz/lekce/15268-reklama-a-zabava>>

ANNEX

Materials for the lecturer / participants

Model hierarchy of effects of advertising AIDA

Since investing in advertising does not tend to be a cheap affair, a key aspect is its effectiveness. Over the years, marketers have developed a number of models that explain the psychological effects of advertising on consumers. One of the oldest and most famous models called The hierarchy of the effects of advertising is the AIDA model, which originated at the turn of the 19th and 20th century in the USA. The name is an acronym (a name composed of initial letters) of the English words attention, desire, interest, action. It describes the functioning of an ideal advertisement in four phases:

1. Attention

Also referred to as awareness. Imagine a situation where a company needs to sell a product. In order to achieve this, it must first and foremost let people know about its existence, attract their attention, so that they want to know more about their offer. Distinctive graphic elements, photographs and eye-catching headlines are often used to attract attention in order to attract the views of the target group.

2. Interest

The moment we get interested in the headline and decide to pay more attention to advertising, the marketer will provide us with more information. We will learn how its product will make our lives easier, what its uniqueness is and why we should actually want to invest in it.

3. Desire

There is a difference between someone wanting to know more and actively wanting to buy something. Advertising must therefore evoke a strong motivation to buy the product. These include well-known clichés such as: “the offer ends May 30” or “limited edition.” Similar techniques are used so that we want to buy the product as soon as possible and not miss the chance.

4. Action

If we are so interested in the ad that we want to buy the product, the marketer often only needs to “make it easier for us” to purchase it. For this purpose, the so-called call-to-action (CTA) is used. These are phrases like, “Call now.” In Internet advertising, we encounter various phrases such as: “I want to sign in” or “Click for more information.”

Source: HUDEC, M. *Reklama a marketing*. PSYCHOLOGIE pro každého [online]. [cit. 8. 3. 2021]. Available at: <<https://psychologieprokazdeho.cz/jak-pusobi-reklama/>>

35 Cheerfully, sorrowfully

Topics: **safety online,
digital citizenship**

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 20 participants

Duration of activity: 45 minutes

Methods of education: discussion, group activity

Aims of the activity:

- describe the impact (benefits and risks) of internet communication on its participants,
- demonstrate the principles of polite behavior on the internet (netiquette),
- consider one's own personal online communication,
- discuss one's own personal emotional experience of various situations on the internet,
- be interested in the emotional experience of others regarding online communication,
- observe the reactions of people caused by the specific actions of others in the online space.

Equipment: post-it notes, flipchart paper/ A2-size paper for each group, markers, writing tools, glue

Keywords: empathy, emotional experience, online communication, benefits and risks of internet, netiquette

Activity process:

1. We give each participant several post-it notes to write on. The task is to write as many situations, experiences, cases of internet communication that would either delight a close person (friend, family member, classmate), or make them sad or angry. We encourage the participants to try to write as many positive and negative stimuli as they can.

2. We then divide the participants into smaller groups of four to five members. We offer working material (flipchart paper/A2-size paper and markers) for each group. Ask the groups to draw a scale on the paper: the left side represents sadness (a crying face), the right area of the paper represents happiness (a smiling face), or they can use a different creative representation of the positive-negative emotional dimension. The task of the group is to place the prepared post-it notes on the scale according to the emotional character of the certain experience: would it bring the person great joy? Which experience would be less pleasant? How annoying or painful would the experience be?

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 20

Time



45 minutes

3. We place flipchart pages in the room so that the individual groups can see them, read them and discuss them for a while. Then we invite the participants to share their views and observations in a joint discussion.

Discussion questions:

- *In your opinion, what internet experiences can make people sad, unhappy, angry?*
- *What experiences do people enjoy on the internet?*
- *As a group, what did you rank as the most left (worst) and the most right (best) situation you can experience on the Internet?*
- *Which situations have you experienced yourself? Which happened to your loved ones?*
- *Are there more good or bad internet communication experiences on your flipchart? And what about your own personal experience?*
- *What internet experiences do you wish for your loved ones?*
- *What could be done to make people experience better situations and emotions online?*
- *How can you contribute to this?*
- *Have you ever contributed to someone else's bad experience on the internet? How did you feel then? In the future, what would you change about your behavior?*
- *Could people around you (friends, adults, organizations, schools) help your loved ones have more positive and less negative experiences on the internet? If so, how?*
- *How can you help your loved ones feel better when communicating with you online?*

4. We thank the participants for their creative work in groups and personal contribution to the discussion. We can review the group work and state our satisfaction with the result of the work.

5. We ask the participants to try to describe whether the implemented activity was beneficial for them and if so why? What were their feelings at the end of the activity, what information did they learn, and what kind of experience did they have?

6. In conclusion, we summarize or name the risks and opportunities associated with internet use. In internet communication, we remain human and as humans, we can both please and harm others, and we can also get hurt or be “embraced” by others. Under certain circumstances, even the benefits of digital technology can be harmful.

Source: GREGUSSOVÁ, M., DROBNÝ, M.: *KYBERŠIKANOVANIE.sk – pracovný zošit [Aktivita: 17. Veselo, smutno]*, (C)eSlovensko o.z., 2015, ISBN: 978-80-89774-00-5, Available at: <zodpovedne.sk/index.php/component/jdownloads/finish/1-knihy-a-prirucky/102-pracovny-zosit-kybersikanovanie-sk?Itemid=0>

- Section 5.1 of the handbook: KEEN, E., GEORGESCU, M.: *BOOKMARKS - PRÍRUČKA BOJA PROTI NENÁVISTNÝM PREJAVOM PROSTREDNÍCTVOM VZDELÁVANIA K ĽUDSKÝM PRÁVAM*, [kapitola: 5.1 NENÁVISTNÉ PREJAVY NA INTERNETE], Rada Európy, 2016, Available at: <https://www.iuventa.sk/files/nove_pdf_bookmarks_okok_final.pdf>

36 Creating my own infographic

Topics: **digital citizenship, media literacy**

Recommended age group: 15 +

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 120 minutes

Methods of education: group work, discussion, presentation

Aims of the activity:

- design own infographic and present it,
- evaluate online data,
- analyse an infographic,
- explain the four-point principle,
- choose basic communication and graphic blocks,
- render the information, data, and the relationships between them visually.

Equipment: the internet, a computer, a data projector, alternatively A3-size paper, markers/pens, sticky gum/paper tape

Keywords: infographic, data, communication, graphic tools

Lecturer preparation:

1. We get acquainted with a suitable graphic tool for creating infographics. It is necessary for the lecturer to know how it works and to be able to help the participants if necessary.

Examples of graphic tools: [canva.com](https://www.canva.com), [infogram.com](https://www.infogram.com), [venngage.com](https://www.venngage.com), [dailyinfographic.com](https://www.dailyinfographic.com), www.coolinfographics.com, www.infographicsarchive.com, www.visual.ly, [infographicjournal.com](https://www.infographicjournal.com), www.infographicsshowcase.com, submitinfographics.com

2. We select and print a suitable infographic for the participants, using which they should identify the basic pillars of infographics.

3. We choose a suitable topic to work with. Basic facts, data, and statistics about the topic should be available. For example: EU helping with the fight against the coronavirus, study destinations with the Erasmus + program, the budget of your town, etc.

Activity process:

1. We distribute a copy of the infographics to each participant and ask them the following questions:

Topics



Age category



15+

Group size



up to 30

Time



120 minutes

- a) Where have you come across such a picture?
- b) What part of the text did you notice first?
- c) Who do you think this text was made for?

We let the participants answer the questions individually for a few minutes (they can write the answers down). Then we start a discussion about these issues together as a group.

2. We explain the concept of infographics and the four-point principle to the participants. We encourage them to try to answer the questions in the table below and to analyse the infographics they received at the beginning of the activity.

<p>The first impression What did you notice first?</p>	<p>Story What is the main subject of the infographic? (This can generally be found in the title) What are the main points of the infographic?</p>
<p>Data What data supports the main objectives? How is it presented (numbers, images, text, combination of them)?</p>	<p>Strategy How is the information presented? How was colour used? How were the images used? How was the text used? Who was it designed for?</p>

Examples of infographics for the analysis:

- <<https://euractiv.sk/section/ekonomika-a-euro/infographic/od-obezity-po-pesticidy-nova-strategia-eu-riesi-problemy-celeho-potravinoveho-cyklu-infografika/>>
- <<https://euractiv.sk/infographic/>>
- <<https://blog.martinus.sk/2012/06/infografika-anketa-kniha-roka>>
- <<https://infografiky.pravda.sk/uzitocne-rady/clanok/258322-infografika-ako-a-kedy-podat-prihlas-ku-na-vysoku-skolu/>>

3. Divide the participants into pairs and assign a topic to them. Their task is to create an infographic about the given topic. Choosing the same topic for everyone is intentional. That way it will be possible to compare various graphic outcomes. We provide some relevant documentation to the participants = data, statistics, comparisons, etc. They can find more information on the internet. We suggest using an online tool and we encourage the participants to create a free account and choose a suitable format. We let the pairs work individually for 45-60 minutes. Then the groups present their infographics and explain why they chose the pictures/graphs/font/colors they used, what first impression they wanted to leave, and what message they wanted to bring to their target group.

4. We thank the participants for the effort they put into creating the graphics. During the reflection we ask about how they worked, difficulties they encountered, satisfaction with the results of their work, what the pairs would add/change if they had a chance.

Final analysis:

- *How is the information presented to us online?*
- *What methods have you used to be as interesting as possible?*

- *To what extent is the information you provided sufficient to understand the issue?*
- *What do you think the activity was focused on? What did you like/dislike about it?*
- *What made the activity interesting/beneficial for you? What did you learn from it?*

Activity variations:

- Instead of creating an infographic, we ask the participants to find an infographic online and to identify the four main points. This variation is useful because it's less time-consuming.

- If it's not possible for all of the participants to work with a computer, the computer with the internet can be used by the lecturer only and in pairs they can use the materials from the lecturer to create an infographic on an A3-sized paper. We supply the participants with appropriate equipment: coloured paper, glue, magazines, and markers.

- We print the final infographics and let the participants evaluate what they consider to be the strength of each infographic. The authors of the most appreciated work can receive a small reward.

Source: ČAKLOŠ, JÁN. *Čo je infografika a ako si ju vytvoríš online?* [online]. [cit. 2021-03-10]. Available at: <<https://www.texto.sk/blog/co-je-infografika-a-ako-si-ju-vytvorit-online/>>

Lesson 1 – The Key Parts of an Infographic, Educating for Democracy in the Digital Age [online]. [cit. 2021-03-10]. Available at: <<http://eddaoakland.org/lesson-1-the-key-parts-of-an-infographic/>>

ANNEX

Materials for the lecturer / participants

What is an infographic?

Infographics are a form of visual communication, which makes important but often complicated data and analyses easily understood in the form of graphic content.

While creating an infographic, we work with relevant information, geometric shapes, illustrations, statistics, and graphs. Colour is an important factor that affects not only the design of the entire document but also the emotions of the audience. To a large extent, they also influence conversions (activity of a visitor to a website - purchasing, filling out a contact form, subscription to the newsletter, downloading e-books, etc.)

Infographics are an effective way to interpret data briefly and COMPREHENSIBLY. In addition, this method helps to create a coherent and clear unit from diverse facts and scattered statistics. Chaotic or monotonous content thus takes an eye-catching, attention deserving, and imaginative look.

Topics



Age category



10+

Group size



up to 30

Time



45 minutes

37 Responsibility online

Topics: **safety online,**
digital citizenship

Recommended age group: 10+

Participant count: up to 30 participants

Activity duration: 45 minutes

Methods of education: group work, discussion, reflection

Aims of the activity:

- explain selected concepts related to the safe use of the internet,
- classify the concepts into categories of online threat/misconduct,
- give examples of unsafe or irresponsible behaviour online,
- discuss free access to the internet and its possible limitations,
- name the benefits and risks associated with the use of the internet,
- assess the level of personal safety when communicating/using the internet online.

Equipment:

- printed and cute cards of pexeso for each group (Annex 2),
- a printed list of categories for each group (Annex 1).

Keywords: safe internet use, online communication risks, virtual world responsibility

Activity process:

1. We introduce the participants to the topic of the activity - internet safety. We mainly focus on concepts related to the risks of internet communication, hate speech online and responsible internet behaviour.

2. We divide the participants into groups of 4 or 5 members, for example by drawing coloured pieces of paper. Those who draw the pieces of the same color are to work together in a group. Then give each group a memory game and ask its members to find a suitable place to play. We check that the principles of the game are clear to all participants. If not, we ask one of the participants who is familiar with the game to explain. During the game, the participants look for the same symbols/pictograms on the pexeso cards and thus at the same time connect concepts and their characteristics to each other. We set a time limit of 10-15 minutes for the game.

3. When all the groups have finished the game, we give them further instructions: *“Try to sort the concepts into the predefined categories.”* The lecturer distributes a table to each group with the names of the categories (Annex 1). The names of the categories can also be prepared in advance on a flip-chart and used to check the accuracy of the solution to the problem. It is possible that for some categories the participants may not find a suitable example in the pexeso and, on the other hand - for some they may find several. The groups can write the corresponding terms in the table for each category. Let the groups work for 10-15 minutes to complete the task.

4. After the allocated time has elapsed, invite all the participants back to join one circle. We continue with the theme of the activity: *„Many opportunities of the internet are beneficial but are slightly risky at the same time. Restricting children and young people’s use of the internet too much may temporarily protect them, but it deprives them of both the benefits and the opportunity to learn how to use the internet responsibly. Even younger children may already have technical skills and be skilled multitaskers (people who can do multiple things at once), but they lack emotional and social maturity, resilience, critical thinking and life experience and therefore face risks.“* In the pexeso, participants found several terms that denote the risks associated with internet use. We open the discussion about safety in the online space: *„Have you encountered any of these threats personally? What inappropriate or dangerous behaviours do you encounter most often on the Internet?“* Invite participants to describe their experience.

Final analysis:

- *Did you manage to match all the terms? Which ones didn’t you manage to work out? Why?*
- *Have you come across these concepts before? Do you know what they all mean?*
- *Were any of the cells of the table left blank? If so which ones?*
- *In your opinion, are the benefits associated with using the internet greater or lesser than the risks that the online world brings? Why?*
- *Do your parents, family members, teachers at school/employers restrict you from using the internet? How do they try to protect you in virtual space?*
- *Do you feel safe online? If so, why? If not, why?*
- *What would help you to feel safer? How can you protect yourself in the online space? What tools are you familiar with? To what extent do you use them?*
- *What did you realise during this activity? What did you like/dislike about it?*

ANNEX

Annex 1. List of categories

Unsecured and uncritical publication of content on the internet
Disclosure and possible misuse of personal data
Geolocation and camera abuse
Security and password cracking
Hacking and misuse of email accounts and social media profiles
Cyberbullying and its various forms
Hate speech in communication
Information overload, misinformation, fake and alarmist news
Excessive use of online activities and online addiction
Neutral concepts

Annex 2. Pexeso


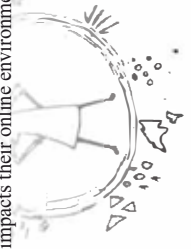




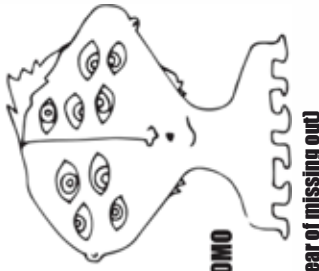

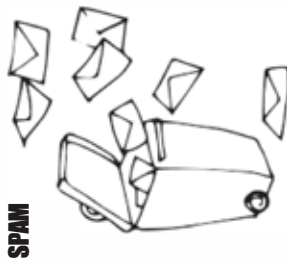








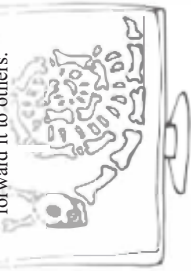



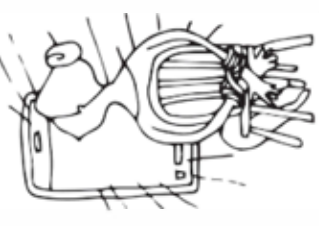

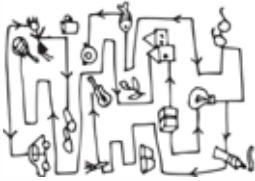




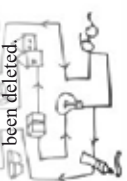

<p>ONLINE RESILIENCE</p> 	<p>A person's ability to cope with difficulties and negative situations online. The strength of an individual to function reliably no matter what impacts their online environment.</p> 	<p>INTERNET TROLL</p> 	<p>A participant in online discussion, who initiates conflict, provokes other internet users (especially via social media)... and publishes intentionally offensive, irritating, false or irrelevant posts about various topics.</p> 	<p>DEEP FAKE (fake video)</p> 	<p>A fake video in which a face, a whole body or a voice is replaced with another. The intention is to deceive the viewer, therefore creating a plausible other reality.</p> 	<p>FOMO (fear of missing out)</p> 	<p>A form of a non-substantial addiction. Being scared of being left out. If a person feels ignored on social net work, they can develop depression and psychosis.</p> 	<p>SPAM</p> 	<p>Unsolicited and mass-circulated message. An example of electronic communication abuse (especially e-mail). It is mostly used as advertising.</p> 	<p>CYBERGROOMING</p> 	<p>INFOTAINMENT</p> 	<p>HOAX</p> 	<p>HAPPY SLAPPING (slaps just for fun)</p> 	<p>CYBERSTALKING</p> 
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Illustration: Júlia Čuchtová Madzriková

<p>Intentionally approaching persons, especially children and adolescents, for the purpose of sexual contact. Perpetrators use a false identity to inspire confidence in children, then attempt contact.</p> 	<p>A combination of the words information and entertainment. It is a label for media content that pretends to be news, but has the primary goal of entertaining and evoking emotions, which is also the reason for the choice of topics.</p> 	<p>A message disseminated primarily via the internet, which despite its absurdity encourages the receiver to forward it to others.</p> 	<p>A combination of face-to-face bullying with cyberbullying. The aggressor physically attacks the victim and records the whole incident on a mobile phone and then posts the recording on the internet.</p> 	<p>Systematic harassment of the victim through unwanted and unsolicited attention. It may or may not be a part of cyberbullying.</p> 
<p>NET-AHOLISM</p> 	<p>CYBERBULLYING</p> 	<p>CLICKBAIT lclicking trap!</p> 	<p>DIGITAL FOOTPRINT</p> 	<p>IP ADDRESS</p> 
<p>Internet addiction - behaviour that involves an excessive use of the internet. A person is not addicted to the technology but to the certain type of behaviour/activity.</p> 	<p>Misuse of information and communication technologies for the purpose of deliberately harming others, through phones, smartphones and the internet. It makes the victim feel distressed and they are unable to defend themselves.</p> 	<p>Click bait for online content that traditionally comes in the form of a deceptive, catchy, shocking, or amusing headline. The goal is to arouse curiosity in order to spread the site visits.</p> 	<p>A collection of data (images, clickable online content, documents, text and videos) that a user creates through their online activities. All of this remains on the Internet and can be retrieved even after the visible content has been deleted.</p> 	<p>The identification number of each device connected to the internet network. It helps to locate the approximate geographical location of the user and the Internet provider.</p> 

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