



THROUGH YOUR EYES

ERASMUS+ YOUTH EXCHANGE

17. – 26. 7. 2017 CZECH REPUBLIC



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

FRÝDEK \approx MÍSTEK

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In this small booklet, the participants and leaders of the Erasmus+ youth exchange with the title “Through your eyes” would like to share the results of the project. As the main aim of the project was to promote tolerance and help young people to develop their critical thinking skills by introducing the topic of fake news, the booklet will focus on these topics.

This booklet has two main aims – to share the information about the fake news and disinformation on the Internet and to motivate other young people to take part in the projects of the European Union by spreading the information about this project and the views of participants.

Enjoy reading!



Babylonie, project coordinator

BIG THANKS GOES TO:

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City of Frydek-Mistek

for cofounding the project

FRÝDEK≈MÍSTEK

**People in need (One
World on School)**

for providing us with
educational material



Zvolši.info

for publishing materials
about fake news

DISINFORMATION ON THE INTERNET:

HOW TO FIND THEM AND RECOGNIZE THEM

Nowadays, most people find information and news on the Internet in online newspapers or magazines. The speed of sharing information has been growing constantly and the news is delivered to its readers via social networks, where it is also possible to read through comments and share the specific news easily.

Media has always been a tool influencing the population and this feature has not changed in years. What has changed is the way how the news is created. Nowadays, the news does not go through proper edition work and actually, anybody can create the news and spread their worldviews to the world since anybody can write online. It is naturally hard for any person to find out how to orient within this amount of information. It is very hard to spot, which information is correct and which is trying to shape the reality for some other purpose or which is just making up the facts.

In this document, we would like to present some basic rules which could help young people better orient in the media world and can help them further develop their critical thinking skills.

How to define fake news?

It is very important to say that with Facebook, the structure of the news has changed dramatically. As said in the article *Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election*, the new feature of the social media news is the fact that the created content can be spread within the public without fact-checking or editorial judgment. One individual can have as many readers as some of the respected news servers, such as New York Times, CNN or Fox News (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017, 211).

There are various definitions of the term “fake news”:

- ☞ Fake news is news articles that are intentionally and verifiably false and could mislead readers. (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017, 212).

BBC: Fake news is news or stories on the internet that are not true.

There are two kinds of fake news:

- ☞ False stories that are deliberately published or sent around, in order to make people believe something untrue or to get lots of people to visit a website. These are deliberate lies that are put online, even though the person writing them knows that they are made up.
- ☞ Stories that may have some truth to them, but they're not completely accurate. This is because of the people writing them - for example, journalists or bloggers - don't check all of the facts before publishing the story, or they might exaggerate some of it.

(Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/38906931>)

Together with the popularity on social media of some individuals, the fake news is very easy to spread, because the author needs to persuade his readers to his view of the situation and the reader himself will assure that the news is spread.





Why is the fake news created?

One very simple answer can be said – because of money. The articles bringing some extra shocking news are created as so-called “click-bait”, attracting you to follow the article from Facebook to the original webpage. By clicking, the owners of the website can earn a lot of money.

The second reason relates to personal sympathies. When there were created fake news in the US during the presidential campaign, some said they created them because of their sympathies with Donald Trump, in a direct aim to harm the opposing candidate.

The next reason can be also the aim to discredit the second opinion or ideological side. So you spread the fake news about them so that they are affected by it (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017, 217).

The fake news can be also used by some foreign states or power, which are trying to influence the situation in the country they have chosen. Mainly during elections or other important decision.



Why is it important and why we are even speaking about it?

Because some of the fake news are just lies or the news are based on partly true information, which is then somehow switched to be the base of some sensation news.

This news can also cause people to believe less in the old traditional media and they are bringing doubts into the mind of the reader.

It is not true, but it might be.

This feature of the fake news can be used also by the propaganda of other states, which are trying to influence some important decisions in the state (it is discussed that the 2016 presidential election in the USA was manipulated by Russia – e.g.: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/07/us/politics/russia-facebook-twitter-election.html>)

The fake news becomes a problem in the politics because without giving any facts, the news can very easily discredit the opponent because the doubt in the mind of its readers and voters has been started.

Especially strong was this kind of news in the US elections, but you can see a big rise of this phenomenon also for example in the Czech Republic. As so, it is very important to at least know about this and to be aware that not everything I read is true.



METHODS OF FIGHTING THE DISINFORMATION:



SOURCE

If somebody is sharing some shocking story – check from which source it comes. Is it a page of some publishing house? Is it a private blog page with comments of current events?

Who is the author? Put his name into Google – can you find more articles written by this person? Is this person writing for some specific newspaper or magazine? Do they specialize in some field?

Are there any sources in the article? Can you find them? Can you find the official science study to which the article is referring? Are the references not just from one site?

Check carefully the webpage on which the news is published. It might seem that the article is published on the website of some respected newspapers, but it might be also fake!

Examples:

Real website	Fake news site
Washingtonpost.com	Washingtonpost.com.co
USAToday.com	USAToday.com.co
Theguardian.com	denverguardian.com

The author of last mentioned page has been discovered in the investigation and now is called as the “King of the Fake News”. He is now spreading his experience with fake news, how and why it was created and how should the journalist react to this phenomenon.



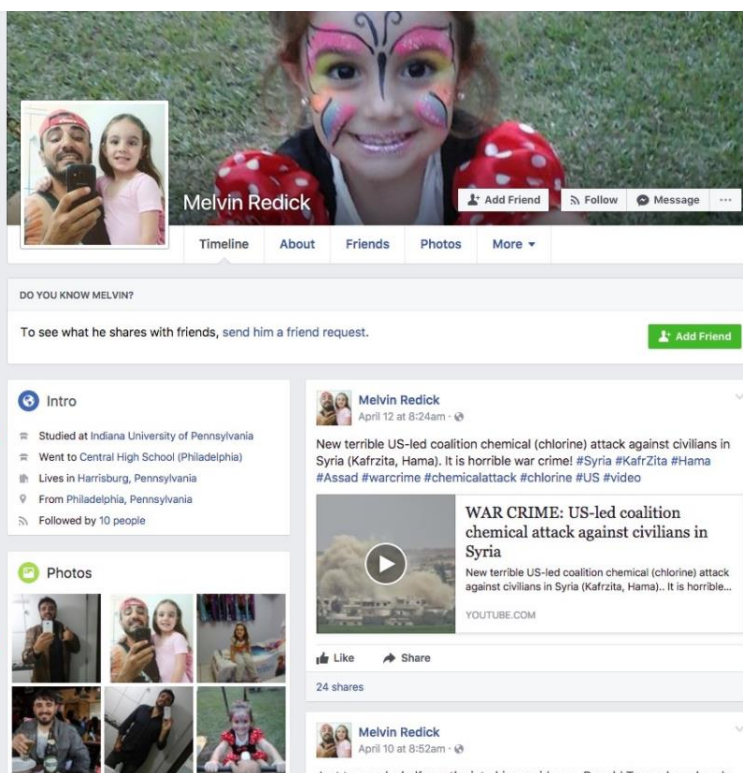


FAKE PROFILES

You should be also aware that profiles posting on Facebook do not have to be real persons, but it could be so-called internet trolls or just fake profiles. You can see one example from the New York Times article (Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/07/us/politics/russia-facebook-twitter-election.html>)

- 1 Neither Central High School nor Indiana University of Pennsylvania has any record of Mr. Redick attending.
- 2 According to his profile, Mr. Redick was born and raised in Pennsylvania, but one image shows him seated in a restaurant in Brazil, and another shows a Brazilian-style electrical outlet in his daughter's bedroom.
- 3 Mr. Redick's posts were never of a personal nature. He shared only news articles reflecting a pro-Russian worldview.

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LABELS

It is very easy to call the opposite side opinion group with labels, which are applying some groups characteristics and your mind immediately connects the label with some feelings or image. These labels are used to manipulate with your opinions and provoke specific emotions.



HOW TO FIGHT THEM?

Look at every situation with fresh eyes. If you remove the labels from the text how does it make you feel? Is the text trying to stir your emotions? Try to combine more sources of information so that you are able to get more views of the situations, preferably from both sides. It is also a great opportunity to use your language knowledge! Find what they say about it in foreign media!



Babylonie,project coordinator



MANIPULATION WITH PICTURES OR EVEN VIDEOS

The news is usually connected with a picture or a video, which should somehow illustrate or explain the news. Same as with the labels, the pictures are trying to give you a view of the situation and try to make you feel somehow. The picture can be also used to catch your attention and together with the text try to make you get angry, irritated so that you would share the news with your circle of internet friends.

It has been the case that some news has chosen pictures not relevant to the topic, not being connected to the topic or even attach old pictures to current news.



HOW TO FIGHT IT?

With pictures, it is quite easy, and the Google can be a great help. If you want to search the original source of the image you have 2 ways how to do it:

If you are using the Google Chrome browser

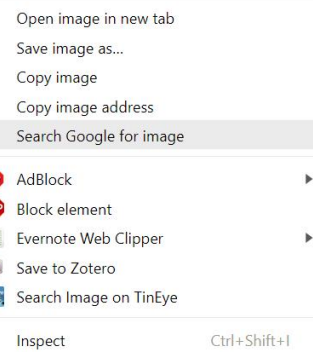
- ☞ you just right-click on the picture and choose “Search with Google Image” and Google will find for you more information about the photo.

By Lucie Bednářová | EURACTIV.cz

12 Dec 2014 (updated: 12 Dec 2014)



Anti-immigration hysteria satire. [Tjebbe van Tijen/Flickr]



THE SEARCH RESULTS:

Six graphs to understand the migration phenomenon - SWI swissinfo.ch



<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/...crisis.../41560118> ▼ Přeložit tuto stránku

305 × 203 - 14. 9. 2015 - Asylum lottery Six graphs to understand the migration phenomenon
.... the country that first receives an **asylum seeker** – most often Greece and ...

Bishop slams calls to shut refugees out - SWI swissinfo.ch



<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/border.../41569056> ▼ Přeložit tuto stránku

305 × 203 - 26. 7. 2015 - Refugees Asylum requests increase by almost half. Requests for ...
Society. Morad Essa, a 24-year-old Eritrean, is the first **asylum seeker** ...

Asylum requests increase by almost half - SWI swissinfo.ch



<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/...the.../41557892> ▼ Přeložit tuto stránku

305 × 203 - 20. 7. 2015 - Requests for refugee status rose sharply in Switzerland during the
second quarter of 2015, with a 47% increase in numbers compared with the ...

Research proposal on asylum seekers || BOATPULLING.GQ



boatpulling.gq/.../research-proposal-on-asylum-seeker... ▼ Přeložit tuto stránku

675 × 380 - Obligations come into effect after an **asylum seeker** has entered a signatory
country, and fall squarely ... Austria Set to Stop Supporting Rejected Asylum Seekers.

Asylum requests increase by almost half - SWI swissinfo.ch



<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/refugees.../41557892> ▼ Přeložit tuto stránku

305 × 203 - 20. 7. 2015 - The State Secretariat for Migration reported on Tuesday that this was
due "above all to the increase in the number of **asylum** requests by ...



If you do this procedure, you can find out where else was this picture used, if it does (not) belong to a picture gallery (such as: Flickr or Shutterstock) and maybe you would be even able to find the author.

You should be looking for the date the picture was published and in which context to find out if the news article is not trying to use the picture to stir some negative emotions.

If you are using another browser,

☞ you can still check the image. You right-click on the picture, choose “copy image address”.

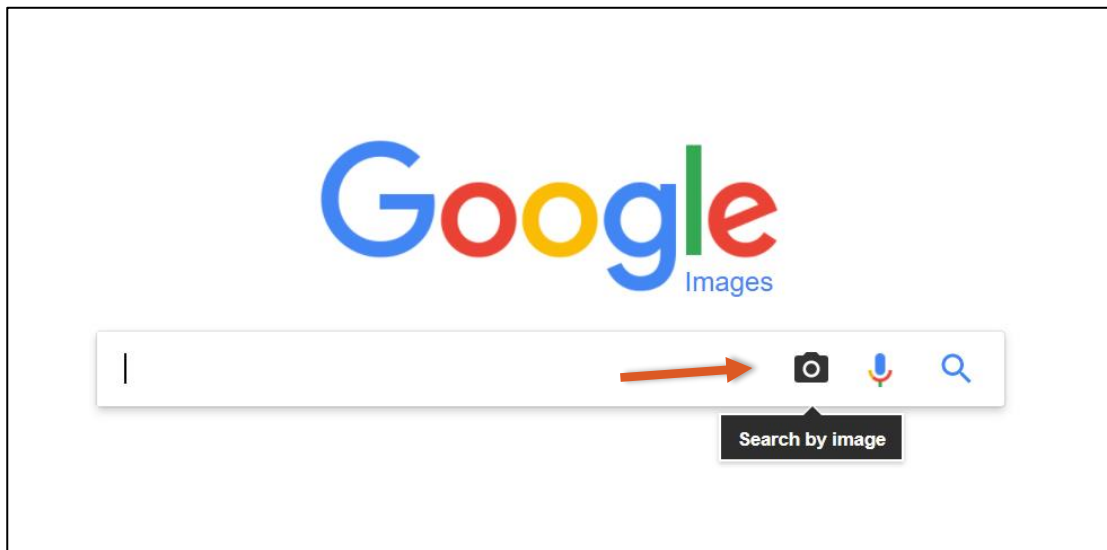
Czech Republic told it must share the migration burden

By Lucie Bednářová | EURACTIV.cz

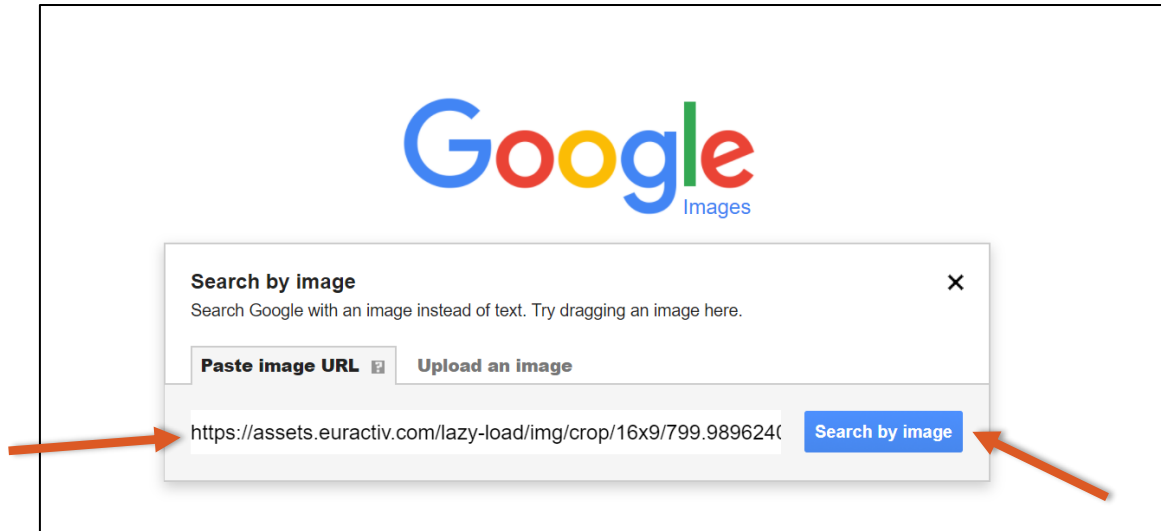
📅 12 Dec 2014 (updated: 📅 10 Nov 2016)



☞ Then you open Google Images (<https://images.google.com/>) and you choose to search the web with Image.



☞ You then add the image URL address and the Google will search for you the picture again.



FACTS PRODUCTION

Sometimes the articles might seem very professional with specific links to other articles, news or studies, which should bring on more reliability. The problem is that sometimes the author is just referring to his older articles or to articles, which were posted on not reliable websites. Sometimes even happens that by clicking on the references in articles you might get back to the source article where you started your fact-checking. This tells us to be very careful also by the articles which look very professional.



HOW TO FIGHT IT?

If the article is referring to some pages, try to click on the links. It is possible that the link even does not exist.

On the next webpage try to search for the name of the author and google it. Is he a professional? Has he published any relevant studies?

You can again check other sources for reference if the numbers in the text are correct. You can try to google the main message of the article, google the names and see if you can see the same news also in some other newspapers.





TOOLS TO HELP YOU FIGHT THE FAKE NEWS:

All of these tools are extensions for Google Chrome and can help you to identify the fake news you might meet while browsing the Facebook:

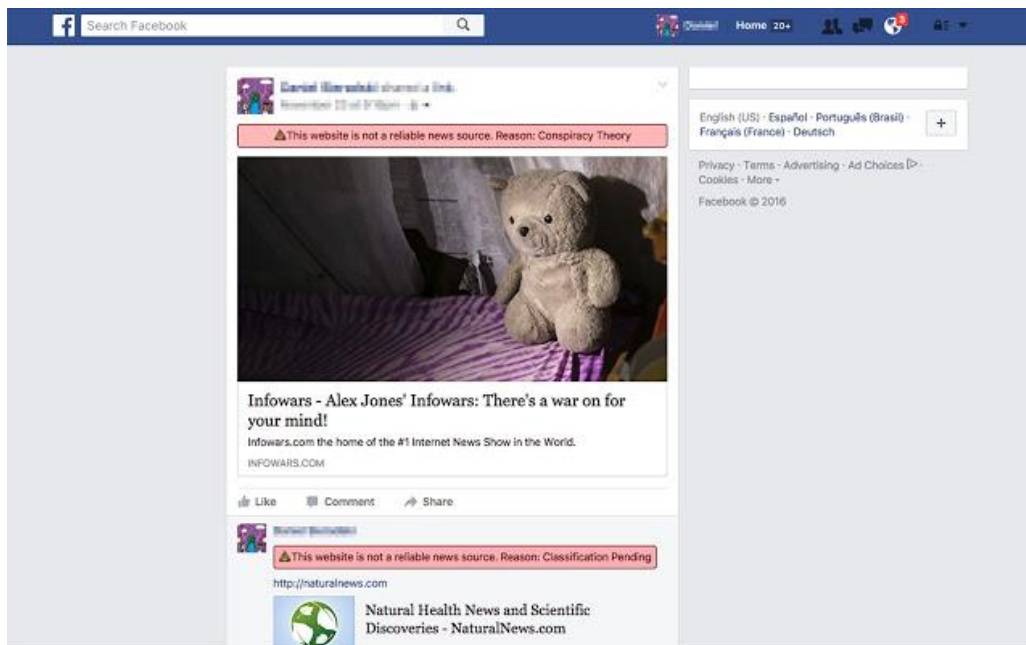
[FiB: Stop living a lie](#)

This chrome-extension goes through your Facebook feed in real time as you browse it and verifies the authenticity of posts. These posts can be status updates, images or links. Our backend AI checks the facts within these posts and verifies them using image recognition, keyword extraction, and source verification and a twitter search to verify if a screenshot of a Twitter update posted is authentic. The posts then are visually tagged on the top right corner in accordance with their trust score. If a post is found to be false, the AI tries to find the truth and shows it to you.

[B.S. Detector](#)

This extension works not only on Facebook but also Twitter and any news sites.

The extension would inform you that the news or the news site is not a reliable source and let you decide for yourself. It doesn't provide the browsing of the images.



You must not forget that these tools are just helpers, but the total control of the situation and evaluation of the information is just your responsibility.



CONCLUSION

When reading news, articles or even studies, try to always use your brain, your critical thinking and ask questions and try to find answers for them before you let the article to influence your opinion about some issue.

There are 5 key questions to ask when reading as defined in the project of People in need:



Who?	Who is the author? What information can you find about him?
	Who has the control of publishing the article? Just the author himself or some publishing house?
What?	What is the main message of the news?
	What opinions or values are included in the news?
	What sources are used in the news?
	What are other media saying about the issue?
To whom?	On whom is the information focused?
	How is the information delivered to them?
	How can the information change the opinions/views?
How?	How is the news trying to catch your attention?
	What is the language like and the style and why?
	What emotions can the news bring and why?
Why?	Why was the news created?
	Who can gain benefits from this information?



USED SOURCES:

- ☞ **Concept of 5 key questions to ask when reading news taken from People in need:**

https://www.jsns.cz/nove/projekty/medialni-vzdelavani/tmv/materialy/brozura_medialni_vzdelavani_150dpi.pdf

- ☞ **Concept of how to recognize manipulation at the internet was taken from Zvolši.info and their *Guide for surfing the internet* for the Czech youngsters:**

<http://zvolši.info/manual/>

- ☞ **Definition of fake news according to BBC:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/38906931>

- ☞ **Scientific article about the topic of fake news during the US Presidential elections:**

Allcott, Hunt, and Matthew Gentzkow. 2017. "Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31 (2):211–36. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.31.2.211>.

Available at: <https://web.stanford.edu/~gentzkow/research/fakenews.pdf>

- ☞ **New York Times article about the fake news and US Presidential elections:**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/07/us/politics/russia-facebook-twitter-election.html>



ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project "Through your eyes" took place 17.7. - 26.7. 2017, nearby Kružberk dam in the Moravian Silesian region. There were 7 countries taking part in this project: Czech Republic, Italy, Malta, Germany, Portugal, Romania and Spain. Together there were 52 participants, including 11 leaders and 4 mentally disabled people. The main coordinator of the project was organization Babylonie from the Czech Republic.

It was an international youth exchange, which focused on the topic of diversity and the problem of disinformation on the Internet. The main aims of this project were following:

The project helped young people to understand the differences in the society and it helped to lead them towards more tolerance.

The second aim was to introduce the problem of the disinformation at the Internet and teach participants how to fight it in their lives. We will do a lot of practical tasks so that participants can improve their skills in recognizing fake news.

During the project, we worked with a wide spectrum of methods: with methods of non-formal learning, self-reflection, different kinds of workshops where we discussed and used also the method of brainstorming. There were also visits of Frydek-Mistek and Opava, we used also outdoor activities (climbing, activities connected to water, canoeing, hiking, etc.) We worked also with energizers and ice-breaking games which were organized by other participating nations. We have used a method of "cultural evenings" as well, during which participants with the help of informal learning learned more about other European cultures.

The influence of this project aimed not only to participants, organizers and partner organizations but also on local community and lead young people to think more critically towards news they read, to think more openly about other people, to do not rely on single stories about people. It has lead participants to be more open, more tolerant and to improve their communication skills, their group-working skills, and their language skills. The influence was huge also for our disabled participants, who gained more social competences and became more confident and the exchange has brought to their lives many good memories.

FEEDBACK

It was really an exceptional week for me because when you meet such a nice and kind people from other countries, it's just awesome. Different culture, different speech, but one of the best experience of my life. I would definitely recommend this to my friends. Thank you :-)

Peter, Czech Republic



Babylonie, project coordinator

A FEW WORDS ABOUT INCLUSION OF THE HANDICAP PEOPLE

For me and my colleague was the exchange a totally new experience because we have never taken our students into the international environment and our fear was quite huge because we were not sure what to expect and if the students will be able to handle the project.

With the time, my fears started to go away. The international young people were able to accept our students, the language barrier was overgone with the signs and hand gestures. During the Czech evening one of our students, Zuzka, played the violin and the applause which followed was overwhelming. During the workshop which was focusing on the topic of the mental handicap, all the participants were listening and after the workshop, they started to come to me saying that they have a brother with Down syndrome, that they have autism in the family. The overall enthusiasm about the topic really surprised me.

During the project I have learned many things, about how to lead our students, how to proceed with their education and it also showed me that the today's generation is not bad, but the opposite – very empathic and kind and is able to get to know the problem if it is formed in the very natural environment.

Our students were enthusiastic about the project, they kept talking about it to anybody they saw and we have received the feedback also from their parents who are very happy that their children were included in the project with healthy young people. I am myself amazed what they have said to their parents and family members and mainly by the fact that they kept repeating that they have found new friends.

Apart from another thing, this project has shown me a way that the integration of disabled people is possible and that project like this are definitely the direction, in which the inclusion should proceed.

Mgr. Dagmar Mazáková, director of special school, which is working with disabled students



Babylonie, project coordinator

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION?

If you would like to know more about the project, you can visit the project website where you can also find a gallery from the project:

<https://eurocamps.wixsite.com/throughyoureyes>

You can also watch the video which we have made:

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EeNoivXG-E>



ABOUT THE COORDINATOR:

Babylonie is a young NGO focusing on youth work in the Moravian-Silesian region in the Czech Republic. The main aims of the organization: try to improve language learning of youngsters in our region, promote tolerance, fight against xenophobia and racism. We are active mainly during summer when we organize youth exchanges and we send youngsters from our region to the projects abroad. We also take part in conference and seminars and we actively build our partner network. For more info, you can visit our website: www.eurocampy.eu.



Babylonie, project coordinator

A FEW WORDS AT THE END

The project was a great experience for all the participants, as well as the leaders. It has broadened the horizons of young people in term of fake news and culture, but it was more the practical experience the participants got that they will use in their further life.

It was amazing to see the cooperation between the handicap group of participants with the whole group. The youngsters have excepted the handicap group without any problems, they were cooperating and even the lack of knowledge of English was not the problem. The main aim of the project was to bring more tolerance among young people and to be able to see the world also from other perspective. The stay within the international group together with handicap participants have been a challenge for both, the participants and the leaders. But the project has overcome our expectations because youngsters were very active, they were communicating together, and they were forming new friendships. They were working in international groups on parts of the project and during the sporting activities and therefore improving their language skills, work in groups and intercultural skills.

Every such a project is a great opportunity for young European people to get to know more about Europe, about the European Union and about themselves. We encourage all the young people who have not decided yet to take part in such a project to definitely join one. After all, it could be a life changer!

Thank you for reading.

Babylonie



Babylonie, project coordinator