# Report on the International Spring School on Visualization 2025

*"Seeing Through Lies – Mapping Trust in the Age of Misinformation"*

*Syeda Noor ul Saba Bukhari (s1109450)*

## Introduction

In an era increasingly shaped by the influence of digital media, information overload, and the proliferation of misinformation, the 2025 edition of the International Spring School on Visualization, titled **"Seeing Through Lies: Mapping Trust in the Age of Misinformation,"** proved both timely and impactful. Held at Palacký University Olomouc, this interdisciplinary event brought together students, researchers, and professionals from diverse backgrounds to explore how visualization can be a powerful tool to uncover truths, counter disinformation, and foster societal resilience.

As a participant in this year's Spring School, I had the opportunity to engage in an intellectually stimulating environment where theory met practice. Through lectures, workshops, group discussions, and hands-on projects, we navigated the complex interplay between truth, trust, and visualization in today's digital landscape. This report summarizes the key themes, activities, and insights gained during this intensive academic experience.

## Objectives and Theme

The overarching theme of the Spring School **"Mapping Trust in the Age of Misinformation"** tackled one of the most pressing issues of our time: the weaponization of information. The aim was to equip participants with the theoretical knowledge and practical skills to critically analyze and visually represent complex data in a way that promotes transparency, combats manipulation, and builds trust.
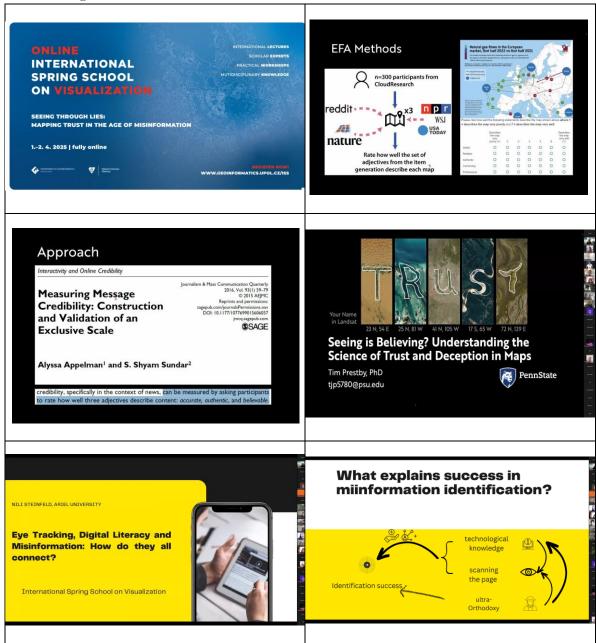
The school emphasized approaches, combining insights from geography and design. A recurring message throughout the event was that truth is not just about factual accuracy, but also about context, clarity, and the ethical responsibility of the communicator.

## Structure and Format

The Spring School was structured for 2 days, blending academic lectures, interactive workshops, and collaborative project work. Each day began with keynote presentations from leading scholars and practitioners, followed by hands-on sessions where participants

applied concepts using real-world data. Discussions were encouraged throughout, fostering an open and supportive learning environment.

## Some Insights



## Program Schedule

| Day | Time (CEST) | Speaker(s) | Session Title |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Tuesday, 1st April** | 11:30 – 12:00 | Organizers | Welcome and Introduction |

| | 12:00 – 13:00 | Georg Gartner | Trust in Maps |
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| | 13:00 – 14:00 | Nili Steinfeld | Eye-Tracking and Digital Literacy |
| | 14:00 – 16:00 | Jakub Lysek | Mapping Manipulation: The Art of Electoral Data Distortion |
| | 16:00 – 17:00 | Ian Muehlenhaus | Populist Maps and Hegemonic Cycles: The Geopolitics of Pulp Cartography |
| | 17:00 – 18:00 | Petra Hypsova | Truth, Lies and Eye Fixations: How Personality Influences Ocular Behaviour |
| | 18:00 – 19:00 | Timothy Prestby | Seeing is Believing? Understanding the Science of Trust and Deception in Maps |
| **Wednesday, 2nd April** | 11:30 – 12:00 | Organizers | Start of a New Day |
| | 12:00 – 13:00 | Eric Losang / Francis Harvey | Ethics in Maps |
| | 13:00 – 14:00 | Gabriela Godišková | Tricks with Graphs |
| | 14:00 – 16:00 | Alena Vondráková | Tricks with Maps – Practical |
| | 16:00 – 17:00 | Robert Moro | The Role of AI in Disinformation Production and Its Mitigation |
| | 17:00 – 19:00 | Team Work | Guided Practical |
| | 19:00 – 20:00 | Organizers | Concluding Remarks |