OPEN DAY

Visual Models For Complex Social Issues

Hate speech, datafication, addictions, food economics, migrations, and climate change adaptation.

In the 2018/2019 edition of DensityDesign Final Synthesis Studio students learn to observe, describe and represent controversial phenomena from different perspectives. Starting from six macro-topics – datafication, climate change adaptation, addictions, food economics, hate speech, migrations – students chose one controversial issue, performed (data-driven) analyses and visually communicated the results.

In this context, Communication Design is used to access and understand the increasingly complex amount of data and information shaping our world. Students are invited to use visualisation techniques across multiple phases of the research process: to describe and understand the observed phenomena; to share methods and results; as a strategy to move from understanding to action. The contribution of Communication Design is even more important as the research object is complex: multiple actors, multiple relationships, multiple ways to express one's position.

The phases:
Exploring — Diving — Visualizing

In the First Phase - Exploring official data - students find, collect and visualize structured data from official sources, relevant to their topic. The result is a series of visualizations that provide a first overview of the depth and complexity of the issue under study, as described by official sources.

In the Second Phase - Diving into the web - students map a controversial issue by collecting and analyzing online data. Using Digital Methods, students locate a controversy on the web, identify actors, and map their stances and alignments. The result is a visual report that presents the issue under study, its main actors, and their positions.

In the Third Phase - Visualization for advocacy - students are asked to choose a position among the ones represented by the different actors identified in the previous phases. From (and with) that point of view students develop a public engagement strategy designing data experiences and communicating them through the Web.

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