

FACEBOOK MAY ENGAGE INTO FIGHT WITH ANTI-VACCINE GROUPS

Even though it is a well-proved, scientific fact that vaccines helped to eliminate some deadly diseases entirely, the number of people who **perceive** vaccines as a threat rather than remedy is growing. One of the ways such conviction spreads are Facebook groups and that's why American politicians and experts push the company to engage into fight with such untrue information. To limit the impact of anti-vaccine groups Facebook is considering two solutions. In the first one anti-vaccine groups will not appear as recommended to other users. In the second one they will not appear on the list of search results on the top - instead, groups sharing true, verified info about vaccines will show first. The problem is really serious as measles cases, for example, were much more common in 2018 than in the previous years. In Europe 41,000 people got infected (21,000 in Ukraine alone), in the USA 349. Compared to Europe the statistics from America may look modest but the vaccine programme has worked there since 1963 and the disease was believed to be entirely eliminated.

NEW YORK DOES NOT WANT AMAZON

When Amazon announced they want to build their second **headquarters** (HQ2) many cities and state authorities fought for 14 months to lure the giant. Finally, Jeff Bezos decided there would be two locations - Arlington, Virginia and Queens, New York. The company wanted to create 25,000 workplaces in each of the places and did not select one just because it could have problems finding enough qualified workers. After the decision had been made the most unlikely scenario happened: protests. Citizens of Queens complained HQ2 would make the already terrible traffic worse and rent prices higher while politicians did not understand why Amazon should get billions of dollars in **tax reliefs** which the governor promised them. All in all, the company officially announced they would not build their second seat in New York and will proceed only with the plans concerning Virginia. The question of tax reliefs for giant companies remains controversial but it is very interesting to note there are places which can afford to reject an offer of many thousands of new workplaces.

GUCCI SELLS "DIRTY" SHOES FOR PLN 3,500

Gucci, a fashion giant is recently ridiculed online because of the shoes which appeared in their offer. The model of shoes in question are white, classic sneakers with yellow and red elements which cost almost PLN 3,500. Given the brand's reputation there could be nearly nothing surprising about the pricing policy but the shoes do look... unusual. The vivid colours were covered with "designer dirt" and the shoes look nothing like a new pair of look-how-expensive-shoes-I-bought. The product is advertised as inspired with classic models of the 70's but bloggers almost unanimously say the final effect is one of shoes worn for 20 years. According to Noizz.pl that is not the only controversial product which they company has recently launched. Previously they had to remove from their offer a sweater that resembled "blackface", a racist motive.

GLASSES WITH FACE RECOGNITION FOR POLICE IN MOSCOW

At the moment in Moscow there are over 170,000 cameras in public places which observe the city at all times. Some time ago Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs came to a conclusion such amount of data could effectively help to catch criminals and decided to connect some cameras to a face recognition system. As a result 1,500 cameras can already identify a person the police are looking for based just on the characteristic features of their face. Now the Ministry wants to go a step further and has ordered a big number of special glasses with face recognition function for policemen. There are many concerns about this plan. Critics say the database which the system uses contains not only information about actual criminals but also about opponents of Putin. What is more people are afraid that a combination of so many cameras and glasses able to tell who a person is will lead to a system of total invigilation.



FOR&AGAINST

Avoiding vaccines should be punished.

(Do you think vaccines can be dangerous? Why should one not have a choice if they want to be vaccinated?)

It is always a mistake not to accept an offer of new workplaces being created in your area.

(Why could authorities not want a business to invest in their area? What businesses can bring more harm than good?)

Designer products rarely are value for money. .

(Why could it pay off to buy designer products? Do designer products really offer much better quality? Do people buy designer products only to "show off"?)

Face recognition offers more dangers than opportunities.

(Can such technology prevent crimes? Would such technology help to find a missing person?)

VOCABULARY:

to perceive as - postrzegać jako

headquarters - siedziba główna

tax relief - ulga podatkowa

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Why should Facebook fight anti-vaccine groups?
2. How many workplaces did Amazon want to create in its HQ2?
3. Why did Amazon decide not to build their HQ2 in New York?
4. Why did a model of Gucci shoes become controversial?
5. What kind of glasses for policemen were ordered in Moscow?
6. Why could a system of face recognition become a danger in Russia?

SOURCES BOX

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