

Script Video Three: Yousuf tells his story

The training of the volunteers takes place on a Saturday afternoon with several workshops. One of them is about security in collecting, storing, and sending data online.

This is definitely a boring topic for Alice. She is passionate to help people and all the red tape sounds as complete waste of time and resources. In the coffee break she talks with Yousuf about how paper pushing is annoying, while she would prefer to do something more helpful.

Yousuf disagrees with her and tells her a story how important information security is. Couple of years back he was volunteering for a citizen scientist project counting the critically endangered European eel. By now very rare and it is found in areas with concentration of fish stocks. One of the actual results of the citizen science project was to map the concentration of fishes near the coast.

The information was not stored securely. It got stolen by someone and sold to the local fishermen, who used it for commercial purposes. The whole story made Yousuf feel very angry. His efforts were intended to help the wildlife, not make it easier for the fisherman. Information can be used with many purposes, said Yousuf, and that scientists have the noble intention doesn't mean they are the only one motive out there.

This got Alice thinking how can the data she will be collecting be misused. And it took her few seconds to start thinking different scenarios how the personal information of recovered Covid patients may be exploited - from people with political agenda, to snake oil salesman.

She knew information security was important. And she decided to talk with Nora. Her lawyer friend was the best person she knows to talk about these things. And in the next coffee break she called her to arrange a branch the next day.