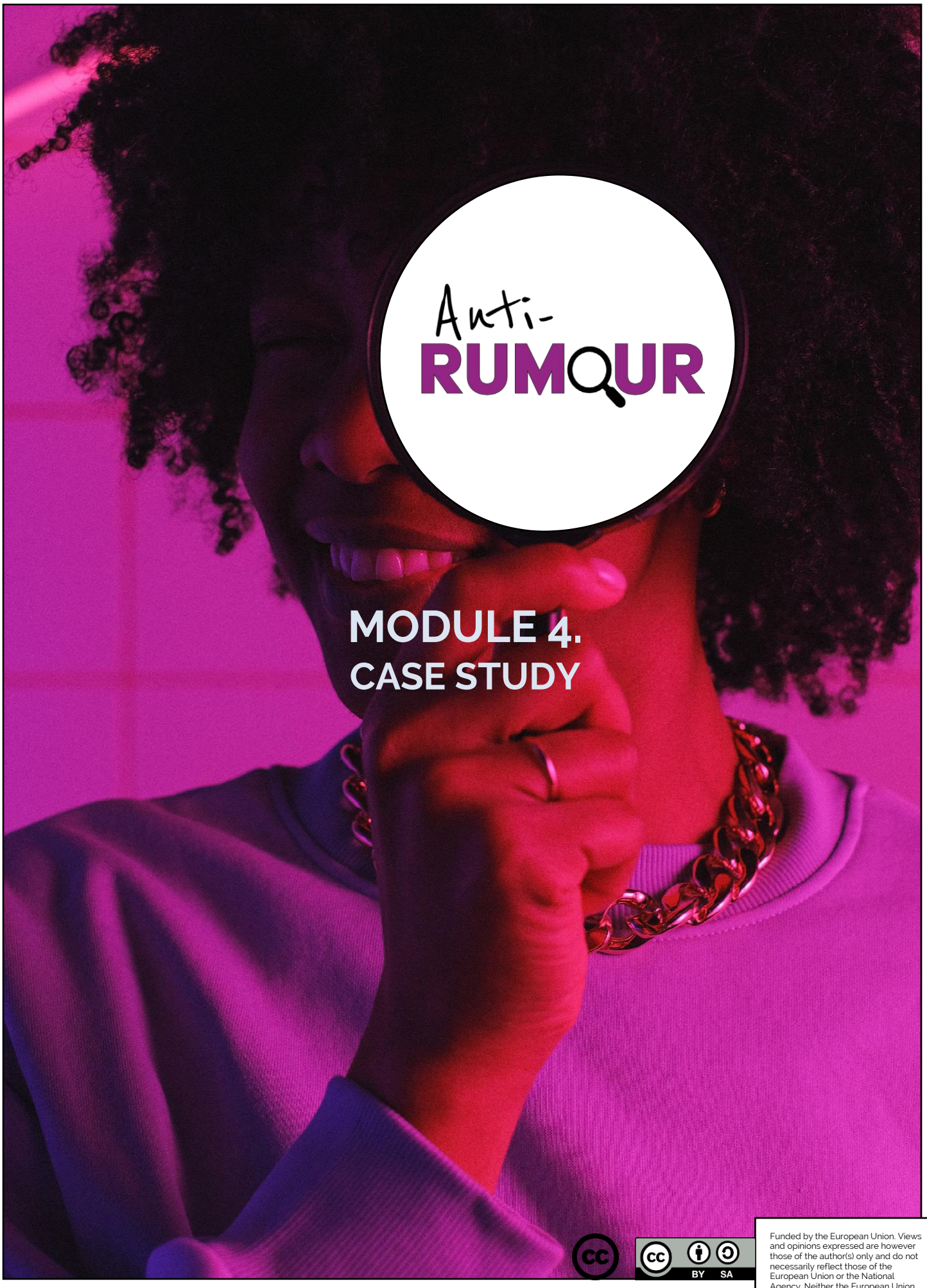

Anti-
RUMQUR

MODULE 4.
CASE STUDY

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Module 4. Case study

4. 1 Case study 1 – The Venetian Dolphins

Duration: 25 min.

Learning outcomes/ Key message. To identify fake news and learn how to combat them.

Materials/Resources needed. Copies of Annex 4

Estimated number of participants: 10 maximum.

Participant instructions: Divide the group in pairs. Hand them over copies of Annex 4 (1 per pair). Annex 4 represent a fake new, but do not tell participants if its fake or not. Their job is to use every tool possible to determine if it is a fake new or not. Annex 4 is fake, but based on a true fact: dolphins and swans did appear in the Venice Canals, but they did not stay long. At the beginning, there were some fake news circulating because some dolphins were seen in the port of Cagliari, in Sardinia, claiming they were in Venice. However, two weeks after this event, some dolphins were also seen in the port of Venice, although not entering in the canals. However, they did not stay long, the Cetacean strandings Emergency Response Team reported that the dolphins were scare and completely disorientated. They were stuck for two hours until the CERT brought them back to the open sea. Although it is a true fact that dolphins were seen in Venice, these does not mean that they stayed and became part of the Venice maritime ecosystem, nor swans. It represents a unique event, caused by the lack of sea traffic and tourism during Covid lockdown, which allowed some animals, in this case dolphins and swans, to explore further in the city.
When explaining the activity, make clear that it can be true or fake, leave the door open for possible interpretations and tell them to apply the knowledge previously acquired. Participants have 20 minutes to determine if the article is providing false information or not.

Possible alterations.

Debrief. Was it difficult for you to determine the veracity of the news? What were your initial thoughts on the information? Did you change your final veredict about it? What were the elements you identified typical of a fake new?

Background / External resources. https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/venice-canal-dolphins/index.html

4. 2. Case Study 2. Under Scrutiny Report

Duration: 25 min.

Learning outcomes/ Key message. To identify fake news and learn how to combat them.

Materials/Resources needed. Copies of Annex 5

Estimated number of participants: 10 maximum

Participant instructions: Divide the group in pairs. Hand them over copies of Annex 5 (1 per pair). Annex 5 is supposed to represent a specialized magazine that talks and publishes about climate change. Out of the two news, one is a true fact (the ice melting fact) and another one is fake (the mustard solution). It represents a typical case of a fake new that is intended to be believed, because is placed beside a true fact. The aim of this is to attract readers, merging scientific data and exact facts with sensationalist headlines. Thus, the magazine will attract readers, avoiding initial scepticism. It is a more sophisticated way of increase views: the reader will receive a concrete scientific and precise input and an original/curious input. Both inputs would be read together and since they are published on the same page, would be given similar legitimacy.
When explaining the activity, tell participants to identify if these are fake news or not, and explain why they have arrived at their conclusions.

Possible alterations. The facilitator should evaluate how much input regarding the activity should give. For example, to give more hints, the facilitator could mention that one of them is a true fact and the other one is fake, leaving participants with the task of identifying which is which.

Debrief. Was it difficult for you to determine the veracity of the news? What were your initial thoughts on the information? Did you change your final verdict about it? What were the elements you identified typical of a fake new?

Background / External resources. https://phys.org/news/2021-10-climate-misinformation-people-ways-combat.html