



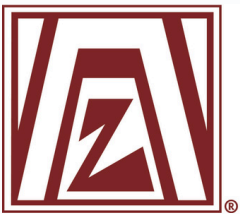
Co-funded by
the European Union

MEDEA

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY TO DEBUNK GENDER-RELATED MEDIA
MANIPULATION AND FAKE NEWS



PROJECT N. 2024-1-LV01-KA210-ADU-000243248



ZONTA
CLUB OF
JELGAVA



NOVOSADSKA
NOVINARSKA
ŠKOLA





Co-funded by
the European Union



SUMMARY

1. Module 1 - Understanding Meta-Level Critical Thinking
 2. Module 2 - Fact-Checking techniques and Information Verification
 3. Module 3 - Gender-Based Technology Driven Violence
 4. Module 4 - GBTDV - How to Prevent and Fight It
 5. Module 5 - Understanding media construction
 6. Module 6 - Media consumption and its impact on perception
-

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Authors

© MARCH 2025 – Skill Up srl

This publication was carried out with the financial support of the European Commission under Erasmus + Project “Medea. Developing Media Literacy to debunk gender-related media manipulation and fake news”, n. 2024-1-LV01-KA210-ADU-00024324

Attribution, share in the same condition



CC BY-SA: You are free to Share- copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and Adapt – remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms under the following terms:

Attribution – you must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggest the licensor endorses you or your use

ShareAlike- If you remix, transform or build upon the material, you must distribute your contribution under the same license as the original

No additional restrictions – you may not apply legal terms.

Module 2

Fact-Checking techniques and Information Verification

Skill Up



PROJECT N. 2024-1-LV01-KA210-ADU-000243248



Co-funded by
the European Union



SUMMARY

1.INTRODUCTION TO Fake news and Fact-Checking Techniques

2.LET'S LOOK AT THE NEWS

3.TRAINING MODULE

4.CONCLUSIONS

5.EVALUATION SURVEY





MEDEA

Fake news and Fact-Checking Techniques

We live in an era where misinformation spreads rapidly, fueled by social media, websites and messaging platforms. Fake news and information manipulation influence public perceptions of gender-based violence, often minimizing its severity or blaming the victims.

The concept of media literacy is fundamental to combating disinformation. A media literate individual is able to understand media messages and critique them in an informed manner, thus reducing the impact of fake news. Authoritative sources and information verification are two essential components of this process. Source verification is based on the theory of credibility of information, which states that information from recognized sources is more likely to be accurate than information that is unverified or from unknown sources (Lazer et al., 2018). This approach reduces the possibility of incurring errors of assessment, a crucial aspect when dealing with sensitive issues such as gender-based violence.

Practical tools:

- **Google Reverse Image Search:** This tool allows you to trace the origin of an image to understand if it has been modified or if it comes from a manipulated source.
- **InVID-WeVerify:** A useful platform for verifying the veracity of videos. InVID allows you to analyze the metadata of a video to confirm its authenticity.
- **Media Bias/Fact Check:** A site that provides a ranking of news sources, identifying the most reliable ones and those with a politicized visibility.
- **Fact-Checking Sites:** Snopes and PolitiFact are useful platforms for fact-checking information. These sites are among the leading ones in the field and provide detailed analysis of the most widespread fake news.
- **Fake News Detector:** Some online tools, such as Fake News Detector, allow you to enter a news story or URL and check whether it has been flagged as false by other fact-checking platforms.

Verifying information and countering misinformation are key tools in the fight against gender-based violence. Distorted news can fuel violence, maintain a culture of victim blaming, and reduce the seriousness of crime in the eyes of the public. A practical approach to fact-checking, based on critical source analysis tools, information comparison, and awareness of cognitive biases, helps unmask manipulations and promote a more accurate and responsible understanding of gender-based violence. Educating on fact-checking not only increases social awareness, but is also an important step in building a culture that rejects violence and promotes respect and gender equality.



Fake News Analysis

Fake news is a form of misinformation that spreads rapidly through social media and online platforms. According to media persuasion theory, false news is designed to evoke strong emotions, such as fear or outrage, to prompt audiences to share it without verifying it (Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018). This phenomenon is fueled by the virality of content on social media, which rewards strong emotions and impulsive reactions.

Disinformation about gender violence has specific characteristics and is dangerous because:

- ✓ Minimize the problem → If people believe that violence is exaggerated by the media, it will be more difficult to recognize the phenomenon.
- ✓ Victim-Blame → Headlines like “The Victim Had a Troubled Past” shift the focus from the violence she suffered to the woman’s behavior.
- ✓ Creates distrust in the legal system → Spreading the false idea that “men are always penalized in divorce cases” fuels denialism of gender-based violence.

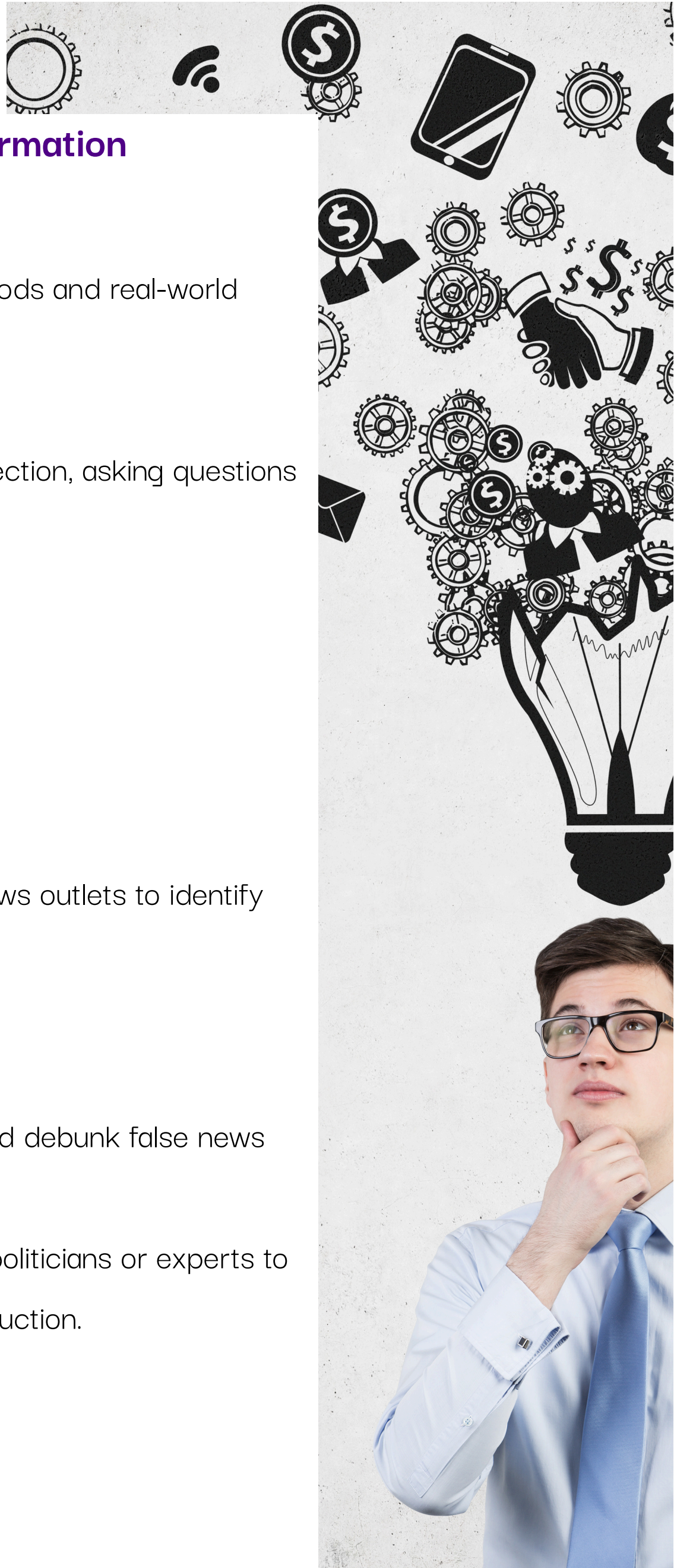
Theories on Disinformation and Its Impact on Gender-Based Violence

According to Lazer et al. (2018), one of the main obstacles to the fight against fake news is the growing polarization of information. People tend to believe more easily information that confirms their pre-existing beliefs. In particular, fake news related to gender violence spreads rapidly, often fueling misleading narratives that justify violence or blame victims. This phenomenon is exacerbated by social media, where algorithms amplify the most emotional or controversial content, without adequately assessing its veracity.

Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral (2018) studied the viral spread of fake news and found that false information spreads faster than verified news, especially when it arouses strong emotions such as fear or outrage. This is particularly relevant in the context of gender-based violence, as sensational news, which minimize or distort violent events, are more shared and discussed, increasing the risk of public manipulation and justification of violence. These theories can be used to explain how and why fake news related to gender-based violence are more easily shared and believed by the public, fueling prejudices and stereotypes.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Practical Strategies for Teaching Information

Verification

Teaching critical thinking requires interactive methods and real-world situations. Some effective strategies include:

Socratic Question Technique

A dialogue-based method to stimulate critical reflection, asking questions such as:

- What is the source of this information?
- What evidence supports this claim?
- Are there alternative points of view?

Comparative analysis of sources

Compare the same story reported by different news outlets to identify differences in tone, details, and omissions.

Simulations and practical exercises

- **Debunking Fake News:** Students analyze and debunk false news using fact-checking tools.
- **Role-playing:** Playing the role of journalists, politicians or experts to understand the dynamics of information production.

LET'S LOOK AT THE NEWS

Type of media- Topic



FAKE NEWS

Meghan Markle's true face revealed



 **TikTok**



Module 2 -

Fake news and Fact-Checking Techniques TRAINING MODULE

Objectives

Developing the critical thinking of young people, helping them to evaluate information objectively.
Teaching them fact-checking techniques to recognise and expose false and manipulated news.
Promoting an awareness of gender-based violence in the media, making young people sensitive to distorted representation and bias in media content.

Group

10-12 people

Introduction to the topic

Start the session with an open discussion about what disinformation is and why it is important to verify information, particularly that related to sensitive topics such as gender-based violence. Explain how fake news can distort reality and undermine understanding of the facts.

Disinformation about gender-based violence is dangerous because:

- It minimises the problem, leading to an incorrect perception of reality (e.g. 'False accusations are very common').
- It blames the victim, suggesting that the woman's behaviour contributed to the violence.
- It influences public opinion and political decisions, hindering the adoption of effective measures.
- It feeds gender stereotypes, perpetuating harmful narratives in society and the media.

The objective of this exercise is to analyse a news item about gender-based violence, verify its reliability and correct any distortions.

Materials and Tools

A viral article or post about gender-based violence (provided in the toolkit or available online).
Fact-checking tools, including:
Google Reverse Image Search : to check if an image has been reused in different contexts
WeVerify to analyse video metadata.
Fact-checking sites such as **Snopes**

What you need

Computer or smartphone with internet connection

Time

40 minutes

Tips

During the discussion, the trainer can use concrete examples of fake news (also using real news, if possible) to stimulate critical reflection among the students. It can also be useful to propose scenarios or case studies that deal with situations of gender-based violence, helping young people to understand how the framing and manipulation of information can distort the perception of such events. Come to a final conclusion together.



Module 2 - Fake news and Fact-Checking Techniques

- Training Module

Questions and Answers

1. What is fake news?

Fake news is false or misleading news that is spread with the intent of manipulating public opinion, causing confusion or arousing strong emotions. This news may seem true, but it is often designed to deceive the reader. It can be created with the aim of getting attention, selling products or influencing political events.

2. Why is news manipulated?

News is manipulated for various reasons, including the intention to influence public opinion, generate more revenue or fuel conflicts. Those who create fake news often try to arouse strong emotions, such as fear, indignation or surprise, to get people to share information without verifying its truthfulness. The main motivations include economic, political or social interests.

3. How can fake news influence our view of gender-based violence?

Gender-based violence is a phenomenon that involves acts of violence or discrimination based on a person's sex or gender, particularly against women. When fake news concerns gender-based violence, it can distort reality and negatively influence how we see and deal with this social problem. Fake news can minimise the severity of the problem, blame the victims or reinforce harmful stereotypes.

Extra questions

Reflections on misinformation, gender-based violence and combatting fake news:

'Have you ever read news that seemed too sensational or hard to believe? How did you react?'

'Why do you think some media or people spread false news?'

'How do you think misinformation can influence people's approach to gender-based violence?'

'How can we recognise gender-based violence when it is not physical, but psychological or emotional?'

'How can we help others recognise and expose fake news about gender-based violence?'

'How can we use social media to counter disinformation, rather than contribute to its spread?'

Important!

1. Create a safe and respectful environment: welcome different opinions and manage conflicts with respect

2. Stimulate critical thinking: use open questions and ask to expand or explain the thought

3. Provide continuous feedback: it is useful for progress, stimulating reflection and improvement

4. Use concrete examples and case studies: this makes the concept of fake news more tangible and understandable

4. Encourage group work: this allows for more intimate discussion and the opportunity to express one's opinions more freely.

Teamwork

Improves social skills: develops important skills such as communication, collaboration, negotiation and conflict resolution.

'Mutual learning' effect: stimulates critical thinking and collaboration.

'Collective intelligence': working in a group allows problems to be solved in a more creative and innovative way, drawing on the knowledge of all group members.



TO SUM IT UP

Fake news and Fact-Checking Techniques

TOPIC OVERVIEW

Module 2 focuses on the importance of media literacy and information verification strategies to combat misinformation, particularly regarding gender-based violence. In an era dominated by digital media and social networks, it is essential to develop skills that enable the analysis, interpretation and critique of media messages to ensure an accurate and informed understanding of gender-based violence.

The module is designed to help participants develop the skills needed to critically analyse media content, with a particular focus on gender-based violence.

KEY POINT 1

Fake news is false or misleading information that is spread with the intent of manipulating public opinion, causing confusion or arousing strong emotions. This news may seem true, but it is often fabricated to deceive the reader. It can be created with the aim of gaining attention, selling products or influencing political events.

KEY POINT 2

Fact-checking tools are essential for verifying the authenticity of information, especially in the context of gender-based violence. These tools help to expose fake news and manipulated news, ensuring that the content consumed is accurate and comes from reliable sources.

KEY POINT 3

Misinformation has a significant impact on the public perception of gender-based violence, often minimising it or justifying the aggressors.

KEY POINT 4

Interactive methods such as Socratic questioning, comparative source analysis and fake news debunking exercises stimulate critical thinking, encouraging participants to reflect on media content, compare different sources of information and expose fake news through verification.



Co-funded by
the European Union

Project n. 2024-1-LV01-KA210-ADU-000243248





ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

NOTES

For further information, you can consult the documents we used:

Soroush Vosoughi, Deb Roy, and Sinan Aral, *THE SPREAD OF TRUE AND FALSE NEWS ONLINE, MIT INITIATIVE ON THE DIGITAL ECONOMY RESEARCH BRIEF*, 2017.
<https://ide.mit.edu/>

Use the tools, such as Google Reverse Image Search and InVID-WeVerify, suggested to analyze examples of misinformation on gender violence, fake news found on social media and debunk them!

ADDITIONAL MULTIMEDIA



The European Union has established the **European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO)**, which brings together fact-checkers and researchers to analyse and counter disinformation online.

<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/european-digital-media-observatory>

BRAINSTORM

‘Hunting down Fake News’

20 minutes

Introduce the tools that the students will use to ‘debunk’ fake news, such as Google Reverse Image Search, Snopes, and FactCheck.org.

Each group will have the task of ‘investigating’ a news item, image or video that you will provide them with.

Each group must analyse the news or content they have been given and apply the following verification techniques: verification of the source, comparison with other sources, verification of images and videos, data checking.

Each group presents the results of their ‘investigation’

OR

Each child can be a ‘detective’ and be given the task of investigating a case of fake news, concluding with a mini-presentation to the class as if they were an investigator solving a mystery.





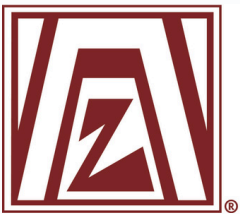
Co-funded by
the European Union

MEDEA

DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY TO DEBUNK GENDER-RELATED MEDIA
MANIPULATION AND FAKE NEWS



PROJECT N. 2024-1-LV01-KA210-ADU-000243248



ZONTA
CLUB OF
JELGAVA



NOVOSADSKA
NOVINARSKA
SKOLA

