

# Press kit

## Press Seminar

### International Women Day: Digital violence against women

#### Programme

#### Wednesday 4 March

16:30	-Accreditation (meeting point accreditation desk European Parliament, Esplanade)
17:00	Tour at the European Parliament
18:00	Cocktail at The Pullman (Place Luxembourg, 12)

#### Thursday 5 March

8:15	Accreditation for those not coming on Wednesday
9:00-12:30	Interparliamentary Committee
12:30	Free time for lunch
14:00	Press Seminar – Brussels Room: SPAAK 7C50
17:00	End of the press seminar

# SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.

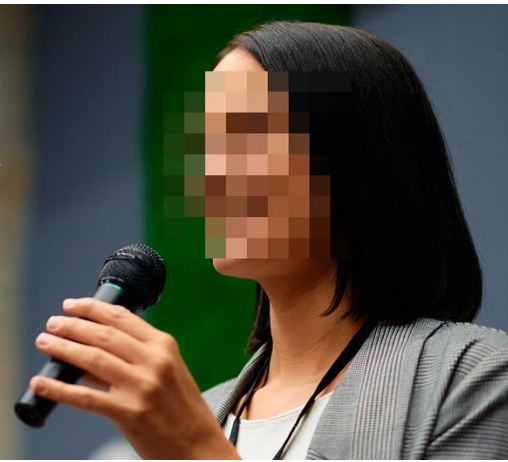


## Content

Background.....	3
Cyberviolence Survey.....	4
Useful links.....	6
Biographies of speakers.....	7
Annex-Survey Infographic.....	10

# SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.



## Background

The European Parliament plays a critical role in promoting gender equality across many areas of public life, including the digital sphere. Digital transformation has significantly shaped the landscape of women's rights. Online spaces have enabled women to connect, spread awareness about the abuse they suffer, as seen in movements such as #MeToo. At the same time, the digital sphere has created new channels for abuse, allowing misogynistic actors to disseminate harmful content rapidly and at a large scale.

The evolution of digital technologies has been accompanied by a worrying increase in cyberviolence against women. Online platforms and digital tools are increasingly being misused to harass, intimidate, and exploit, and abusers and misogynistic have new means to create and distribute harmful content.

In response, the European Union has adopted several pieces of legislation that aim to make a difference in this respect. The directive on combating violence against women, to be implemented at the latest by June 2027, sets minimum EU standards for criminalising several serious forms of cyberviolence and enhances the protection of and access to justice for victims.

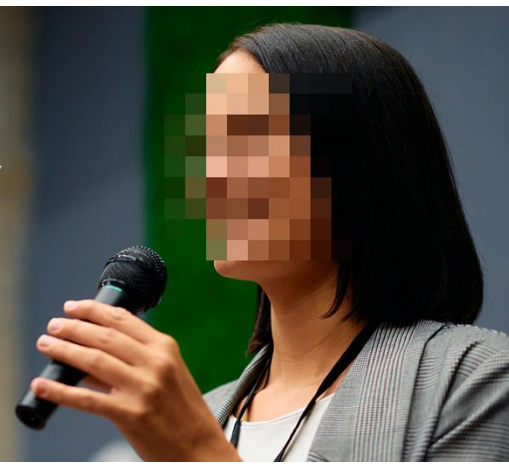
EU legislation on the protection of privacy is also having an impact on cyberviolence. For example, the new Digital Services Act imposes an obligation on big digital platforms in the EU to remove harmful content from their websites. This is instrumental in removing intimate or manipulated images that are disseminated on the internet without the person's consent; almost all such images portray women, according to existing data.

Although increasing political polarisation has led to a rise in attacks against individuals in public life, violence targeting women in politics is distinct in that it is directed at them because of their gender and aims to discourage women more broadly from engaging in political processes. Surveyed women report significant impacts, including reduced willingness to defend certain positions or continue their political careers.

At EU level, safeguarding women's safe participation in political life is a priority within gender equality policies. The European Parliament has repeatedly addressed the issue through resolutions and adjustments to its internal rules, countering sexist and hate speech in debates, and establishing systems to deal with harassment.

# SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.

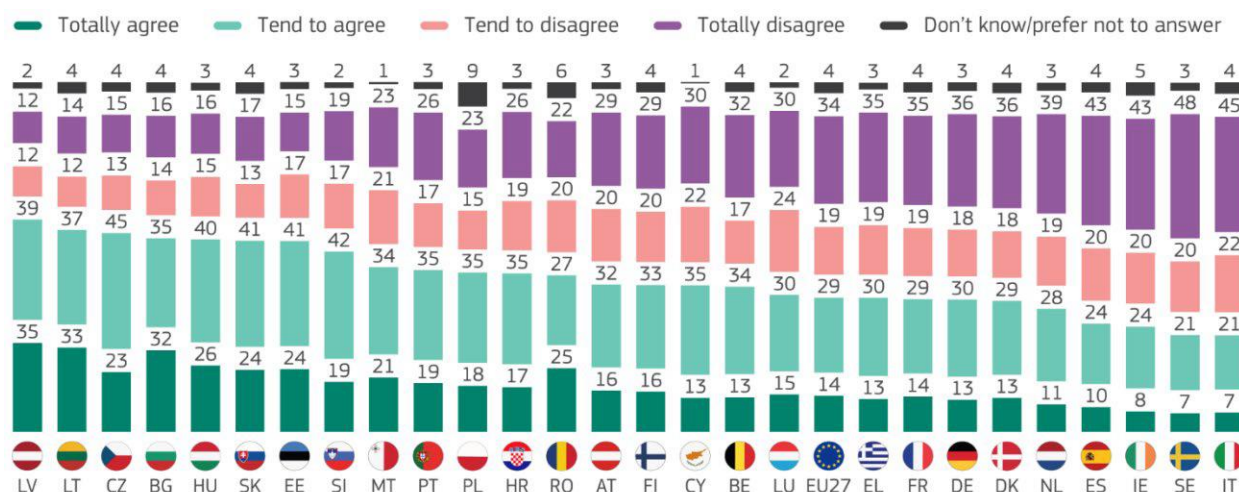


## Cyberviolence Surveys

### [Gender stereotypes – Violence against women](#) (fieldwork: February 2024)

43% of citizens think that 'if women share intimate pictures of themselves with someone, they are at least partially responsible if the image is shared online without their consent', but 53% disagree. In 13 Member States, respondents are more likely to agree than to disagree with that – highest values are registered in Latvia (74%), followed by Lithuania (70%) and Czechia (68%).

**Q3:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
 If women share intimate pictures of themselves with someone, they are at least partially responsible if the image is shared online without their consent

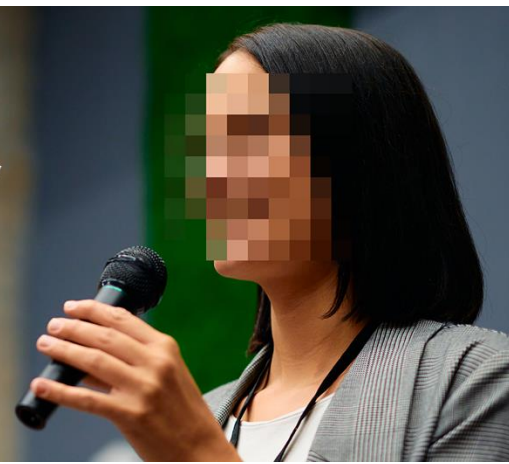


For more detailed information: [Gender stereotypes – Violence against women](#) (fieldwork: February 2024)

Socioeconomic data tells us that **among those aged 18-24**, shows that the proportion disagreeing that, if women share their opinion on social media, they should accept that they elicit sexist, demeaning and / or abusive replies, is **17 percentage points higher for women than for men**, while among those aged 54 and over, the proportion disagreeing is nearly identical for men and women (72%-73%).

# SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.



Those who disagree that partial fault lies with the woman following the non-consensual sharing of her online without their consent, decreases with age (from 62% for 18–24-year-olds to 47% for over 54-year-olds). The proportion disagreeing that, if women share their opinion on social media, they should accept that they elicit sexist, demeaning and / or abusive replies also decreases with age, albeit only among women (from 83% for 18–24 year-old women to 73% for over 54 year-old women), while among men, the proportion disagreeing increases with age (from 66% for 18-24 yearold men to 72%–73% for over 40 year-old men). For both statements, the total share disagreeing increases again with level of education. For example, 68% of respondents with a low level of education disagree that, if women share their opinion on social media, they should accept that they elicit sexist, demeaning and / or abusive replies; this figure increases to 80% for those with a high level of education.

# SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.



## Useful links

- EPRS Study: [Cyberviolence against women in the EU](#)
- EPRS Study: [Violence against women active in politics in the EU: A serious obstacle to political participation](#)
- EPRS Study: [Women in the age of AI-enabled information manipulation](#)
- EPRS Study: [Elimination of violence against women: Two years since the EU ratified the Istanbul Convention 'At a glance' note, November 2025](#)
- Press room: [For vote in March I: Copyright and generative AI INI. Please read Press release January 2026](#)
- Legislative observatory: [For vote in March II: Importance of consent-based rape legislation INI.](#)
- Press room: [Consent based legislation after the vote on committee February 2026](#)
- Legislative observatory: [For vote in March II: Gender pay and pension gap in the EU INI. Please read Press release on committee vote January 2026](#)

### Further links indirectly related

- EPRS Study: [Information manipulation in the age of generative artificial intelligence.](#)
- EPRS Study: [Women in politics](#)

# SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.



## Biographies of speakers



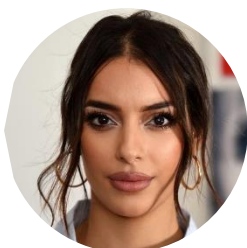
### **Lina GÁLVEZ**

Spanish MEP for the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament. She is Chair of Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) Committee, as well as member of the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC), Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) and of the Delegation for relations with the United States (D-US).



### **Sirpa PIETIKÄINEN**

Finish MEP for the group of the European Popular Party in the European Parliament. She is member of the Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) Committee, as well as member of Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) and of the Delegation for relations with the Pan-African Parliament (DPAP).

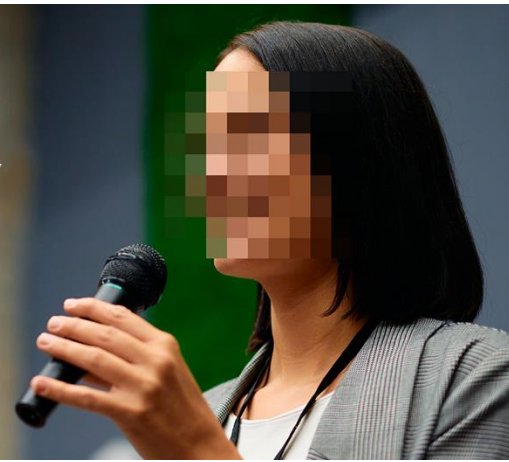


### **Imane RAISSALI**

Known as Miss Raisa, she is a psychologist, communicator, and content creator. Her work addresses issues such as identity, freedom, mental health, intercultural coexistence, and social inequalities, always from an honest, sensitive, and accessible perspective. She has been recognized with the "Voice of the Year 2023" Award at the Premis Drac; the "Culture Award 2022" at RTVE's Premios Continuará; and the "Diversity and Inclusion Award 2022" granted by TikTok.

# SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.





### **Carlos FARINHA**

He is serving as president of the Commission for the Protection of Victims of Crimes in Portugal, as of January 1, 2026, for a three-year term. Throughout his career, he also directed the Scientific Police Laboratory and coordinated, by delegation of powers, the Sexual Crime Observatory and has been Deputy National Director of the Judicial Police in Portugal.



### **Alexandra GEESE**

German MEP of Group of the Greens /European Free Alliance of the European Parliament. She is a member of the Committee of Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) as well as of the Industry, Research and Energy Committee (ITRE), Special Committee on the European Democracy Shield(EUDS) and of the Delegation for relations with the United States (D-US).

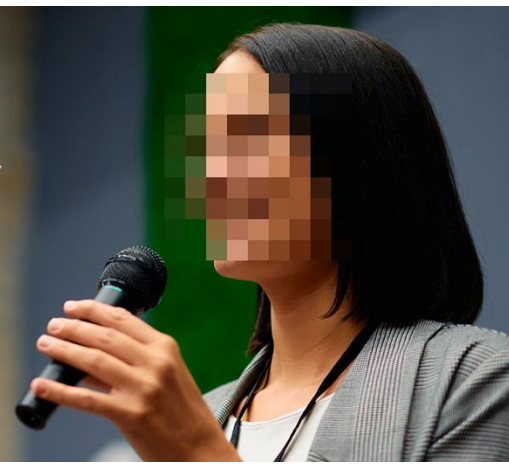


### **Asha ALLEN**

Director and Secretary General of the Centre for Democracy and Technology (CDT) - Europe. She coordinated the #HerNetHerRights II campaign which aimed to increase women's safety and participation online during the European elections. As a lead advocate for the European Women's Lobby (EWL), she has been instrumental in ensuring that survivors' voices were heard during the drafting of the Digital Services Act (DSA). She focuses on the accountability of tech platforms for gender-based hate speech.

# **SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY**

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.





### **Alejandra MARISCAL**

Director of Point de Contact, a non-profit organisation committed to the fight against cyberviolence and the protection of fundamental rights in the digital space. As the French representative within the INHOPE network, we play a key role in safeguarding children from online sexual exploitation.



### **Martyna WYRZYKOWSKA**

Vice-President of the Polish NGO *sexed.pl* which aims to address the lack of comprehensive sex education in Poland, where the subject is often taboo and fraught with misinformation.



### **Ingrid BRODNIG**

Journalist and expert on online hate and author of the book: *"Women as the Enemy. How female politicians are threatened, insulted and marginalised online and what can we do about it"*.

# **SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY**

Stereotypes, disinformation and online violence against women are not private issues. They are a threat to democracy. The European Parliament is fighting them.



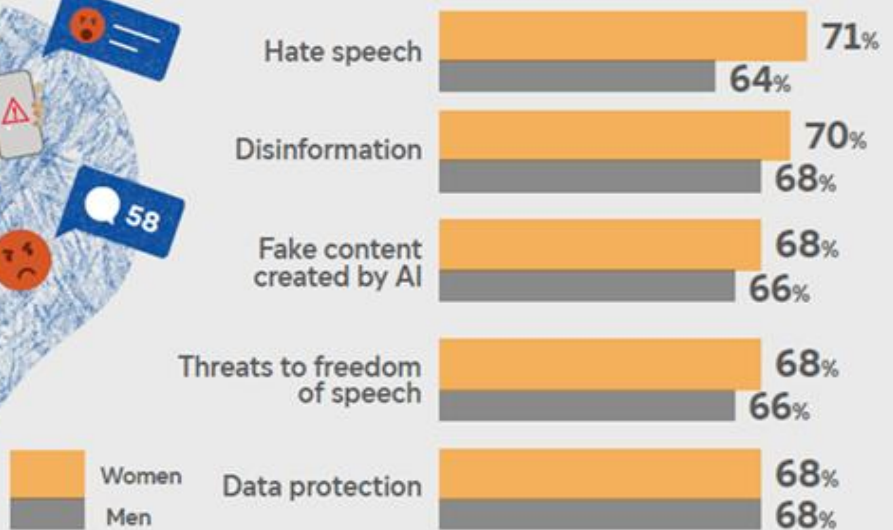
# SILENCING WOMEN IS SILENCING DEMOCRACY

## Women in digital spaces

Source: EP Autumn Eurobarometer (2025)



Women are more worried about the dangers they face online than men



## Cyberviolence

Source: EC Gender stereotypes - Violence against women Eurobarometer (2024)

**43%**

think women share some responsibility if intimate pictures are leaked without consent

**21%**

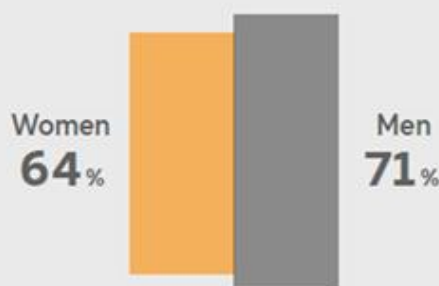
think women should accept sexist or abusive replies when sharing opinions on social media



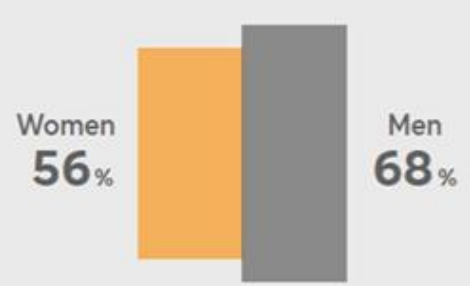
## Exposure and response to disinformation

Source: EP Social media survey (2025)

Women think they encounter disinformation less often than men ...



... but feel less confident in recognising it

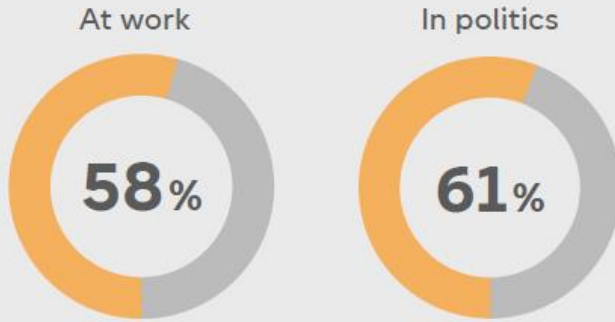


# STRENGTHENING WOMEN IS STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

## Unfair treatment

Source: EC Gender stereotypes Eurobarometer (2024)

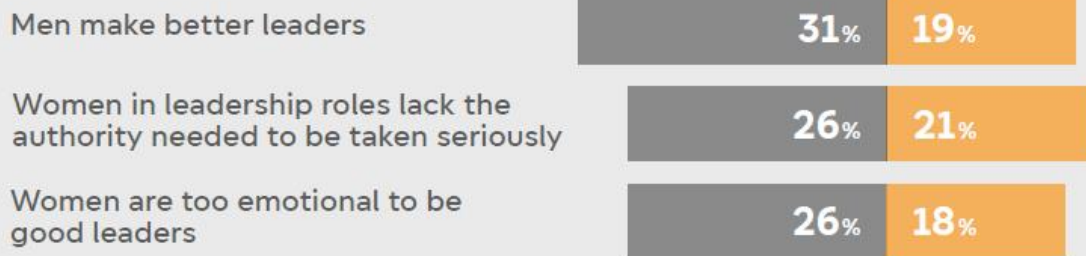
A majority of women say that men are better treated:



## Stereotypes on women in leadership roles

Source: EC Gender stereotypes Eurobarometer (2024)

Share of men who agree:      Share of women who agree:



## Advancing gender equality in politics and leadership roles

Source: EC Gender stereotypes Eurobarometer (2024)



Most Europeans think that measures are needed to improve women's representation in politics



**73%**  
(77% women - 68% men)  
think that gender-balanced leadership teams are more successful

**63%**  
(66% women - 61% men)  
say that soft skills often attributed to women are important to be a good leader

**60%**  
(68% women - 52% men)  
agree that more women in politics leads to better policy decisions