



**Committee on Public Health  
Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

**PROGRAMME**

**JOINT PUBLIC HEARING  
on**

**Digital Violence and Women's Mental Health**

**11 December 2025, 9:00 - 11:00**

**Meeting room: ANTALL 2Q2  
Brussels**

**From Screen to Scars: Digital Gender-Based Violence (DGBV)**

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**Key Policy Recommendations for the European Union**

**Purpose**

This set of recommendations briefly provides evidence-informed recommendations for European Union institutions and EU Member States to prevent and respond to digital gender-based violence (DGBV), in line with EU fundamental rights, gender equality commitments, and digital regulation, including the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the EU Gender Equality Strategy.

**Why this matters for the EU**

Digital gender-based violence is a cross-border phenomenon that undermines gender equality, freedom of expression, political participation, and trust in digital

spaces across the Union. Women politicians, journalists, activists, and young people are disproportionately affected. Evidence shows that online abuse frequently leads to offline harm, self-censorship, withdrawal from public life, and democratic disengagement.

Addressing DGBV is therefore not only a gender-equality issue, but also a matter of democratic resilience and rule of law in the EU.

## **Key Recommendations**

### **1. Invest in survivor-centred digital safety services**

Priority: Immediate

EU institutions and Member States should allocate sustained funding to accessible, survivor-centred services, including:

- Digital safety tools and web-based safety decision aids
- Multilingual helplines and online counseling
- Legal assistance and rapid support for content takedown

Evidence indicates that such interventions improve safety planning, knowledge, and wellbeing, while remaining scalable and cost-effective.

*EU added value:* it can be supported through EU funds (e.g. CERV, ESF+) and coordinated across borders.

### **2. Enforce and strengthen platform accountability under EU law**

Priority: Immediate to short term

Ensure full and consistent implementation of the Digital Services Act, including:

- Rapid takedown of non-consensual intimate images, doxxing, and credible threats
- Mandatory transparency reporting on moderation and response times
- Effective notice-and-action and appeal mechanisms
- Independent oversight with safeguards for freedom of expression

*EU added value:* The DSA provides a unique regulatory lever to address DGBV at scale across the internal market.

### **3. Strengthen justice and law-enforcement capacity across Member States**

Priority: Medium term

Support harmonised EU-level training for police, prosecutors, and judges on:

- Digital evidence and online investigations
- Survivor-centred and trauma-informed approaches
- Privacy and data-protection standards
- Cross-border cooperation

Specialised units and clear protocols are essential to reduce under-reporting, impunity, and re-traumatisation.

### **4. Scale prevention through education and gender-transformative approaches**

Priority: Medium to long term

Integrate media literacy, online safety, and gender equality into:

- EU-supported education programmes
- Youth and citizenship initiatives
- Public awareness campaigns

Effective prevention must address harmful social norms, power dynamics, and bystander behaviour, not only technical skills.

### **5. Close evidence gaps and ensure monitoring and accountability**

Priority: Cross-cutting

The EU should:

- Fund rigorous evaluations of DGBV interventions, including in marginalised and under-researched groups

- Establish common EU indicators to track prevalence, platform responsiveness, survivor wellbeing, and repeat offending
- Ensure ethical data practices, including informed consent and survivor control over personal data

## **Core message for EU policymakers**

Digital gender-based violence is a European human-rights, democracy, and rule-of-law issue. Coordinated EU action—combining survivor support, platform regulation, justice-system capacity, and prevention—can deliver measurable impact within a single EU policy cycle.

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