

## **Series «Gender-based Violence on Social Media»**

### **Session 1: «Social Media: a Participatory Public Space»**

**Rapporteur: Jenn Díaz, member of the Working Group on Gender Equity of the Parliament of Catalonia during the 14th legislative term**

## **Conclusions**

Gender-based violence has adapted to the online world, as acknowledged by Act 17/2020 of 22 December, amending Act 5/2008 on the right of women to eradicate gender-based violence, passed during the 12th legislative term. Digital violence has become pervasive in our hyperconnected society. To tackle this complex issue, which from an intersectional perspective has varying impacts, we must create strong legislative frameworks and ensure effective enforcement of existing laws. This brief report, resulting from the series of talks against gender-based violence on social media organised by the Parliament of Catalonia, seeks to identify the key elements to fight against online gender-based violence from an intersectional perspective, and to bring out the challenges, opportunities and future action required.

### **Legislative framework and compliance**

In their contributions, the speakers, who are experts in digital violence, highlighted the importance of robust legislative frameworks to address online violence. The European Union directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence is a significant step forward. However, it is essential to have proper enforcement of such laws through independent audit mechanisms and effective oversight.

### **Complexity of digital violence**

Digital violence comes in many forms, from online harassment to the non-consensual disclosure of intimate material. It demands a comprehensive approach that takes full account of the manifold dimensions of digital violence.

### **Intersectional perspective**

It is crucial to acknowledge that digital violence affects different groups in society in different ways, depending on factors such as gender, race and socioeconomic status. This intersectional perspective is fundamental to understanding and effectively addressing digital violence in an inclusive way.

### **Cultural and educational war**

Combating digital violence requires us to wage a cultural and educational war to promote values of respect, equality and non-violence across all sectors of society.

That includes awareness-raising campaigns, educational programmes and actions to change the attitudes of society.

### **Collaboration and dialogue**

The fight against digital violence requires a range of stakeholders, including governments, digital platforms, civil society and academic communities, to work closely together. Spaces for dialogue and coordination to develop effective strategies must be created.

### **Legislation and protection of rights**

Striking the balance between regulation to stop digital violence and the protection of human rights is essential. Policies must be proportionate and not unduly restrict the rights of individuals whilst at the same time offering protection against digital violence.

### **Future challenges**

Despite the progress seen in the fight against online gender-based violence, significant challenges remain. It is crucial to continue to work for effective regulation of digital platforms, protect the rights of individuals, and approach the issues from an intersectional perspective to ensure that the fight against digital violence in all its forms is inclusive and equitable.

### **Final conclusion**

The Working Group on Gender Equity, composed of members from the Office for Equality, parliamentary groups, workers and other stakeholders, has oversight of initiatives under the Equality Plan. Our priority is to contribute to the development of knowledge and expertise in the field. We are particularly grateful for the participation of the speakers in this session. Their contributions have been key to enriching our understanding of the behaviour of digital violence and its impact on our lives. Our work involves not only legislating to address the needs of today's society but also creating spaces for dialogue within the Parliament, to provide valuable contributions to debate and to generate synergies and meeting spaces between the Parliament of Catalonia and civil society organisations.

We understand that we are in the midst of a cultural war in which social media have significant influence. It is essential to develop strategies to ensure that social media do not become hostile spaces, but rather safe environments for all. Cyber gender-based violence, as highlighted, is closely related to other forms of hate speech, such as racism and fascism, and calls for a comprehensive yet differentiated approach.

To conclude, we want to highlight the importance of this series of activities, whose aim is to generate knowledge and proposals to address digital violence, in both the public and the private sphere. This space for dialogue is fundamental to allow us to arm ourselves and defend our rights against all forms of violence. Despite the challenges, we will continue to advance towards an online world that is safe and respectful for all.