



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

IPU's Empowerment Series for Young Parliamentarians Social media self-defence training for young women MPs and their staff¹

Zoom, 26 November 2025, 9:00 to 11:00 CET (Geneva time)

Register by clicking [here](#)

Gender-based violence remains a significant barrier to women's full and equal participation in politics. Targeted harassment, intimidation and abuse in physical spaces have expanded online where digital platforms amplify the reach and impact of such attacks. This online violence, aimed at silencing women and pushing them out of politics, not only harms those affected but also weakens parliaments and democracy as a whole. The IPU's studies on sexism, harassment, and violence against women in parliament² have consistently confirmed the widespread nature of this problem. In 2024 and 2025, 60% of the surveyed women MPs in the Asia-Pacific region reported having been the target of hate speech, disinformation, image-based abuse or doxing online. This is the highest percentage recorded across all studies to date: 58% of the surveyed women MPs in Europe, 46% of the surveyed women MPs in Africa, and 42% of the surveyed women MPs globally.

Young women MPs under 40 years of age are particularly targeted by sexism, harassment and violence, offline and online. The percentage point rates of online violence against young women MPs are higher than those of the surveyed women MPs from other age categories. For example, in the Asia-Pacific region, they face 11 percentage points higher rates (71% compared to 60%); in Africa, 10 percentage points higher rates (56% compared to 46%), and in Europe, 18 percentage points higher rates (76% compared to 58%).

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, focused this year on "[UNiTE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls](#)", the IPU, in partnership with the Australian eSafety Commissioner, will support young women parliamentarians and their staff by providing a virtual training session on enhancing online safety and digital resilience. The session builds on the social media self-defence training for women in politics of the Australian eSafety Commissioner, a training recommended by the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians.

The training will offer practical guidance, tools and exercises to help women parliamentarians and their staff identify, prevent and respond to online abuse. It will focus on building digital resilience, ensuring safe online engagement, and connecting participants with available resources and support networks. The training aims to:

- Raise awareness about digital gender-based violence and its impact on women parliamentarians and their staff.
- Provide practical tools and guidance for online safety and self-protection.
- Encourage peer learning and exchange among young women parliamentarians and their staff.

Simultaneous interpretation will be available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

A second session of this training will be organized at a later date at a more convenient time for participants in the Americas.

WYDE
Women's Leadership



¹ The session is being organized under the WYDE | Women's Leadership Initiative, a collaborative effort funded by the European Union and implemented by UN Women, together with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), to advance women's full and effective political participation and decision-making at all levels

² IPU, [Sexism, harassment and violence against women parliamentarians](#) (2016); IPU and PACE, [Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Europe](#) (2018); IPU and APU, [Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Africa](#) (2021); and IPU, CPA and ASEAN AIPA, [Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in the Asia-Pacific region](#) (2025).

Annex

eSafety Commissioner self-defence training course

Australia has a government agency dedicated to keeping people safe online called the eSafety Commissioner (eSafety). It is the world's first independent online safety regulator, established in 2015, and has significant powers to educate about online safety risks and protect both adults and children on most online platforms and forums. Through regulatory schemes and investigations under the Online Safety Act 2021, eSafety can investigate and remove harmful content such as cyberbullying of children, adult cyber abuse and intimate images or videos shared without consent. It has a dedicated programme on online risks for women and dealing with domestic and other gender-based violence.

eSafety has also developed a social media self-defense course for women in politics. The Social Media Self-Defense training raises awareness about the gendered and intersectional nature of technology facilitated gender-based violence and its impact on those in the public eye, including politicians, activists and human rights defenders, and supports individuals to develop the skills and confidence to proactively safeguard their online presence, and advocate for systemic reform. This training has been developed by eSafety for international use by governments, parliaments, multilateral bodies, civil society organizations and advocacy groups.

Please check the following web page for more information about the work of eSafety Commissioner of Australia (in English only): www.esafety.gov.au/women.