

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003057/25
to the Commission**

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(23 July 2025)

Subject: DSA Code of Conduct on Gender Based Violence

In an article published in November 2024, entitled ‘Online Gender-Based Violence in the EU: What Now?’ ⁽¹⁾, the Center for Democracy and Technology reports that the Commission is currently working on a code of conduct on gender-based violence to accompany the Digital Services Act (DSA).

1. What is the scope of this code of conduct, and what specific areas or types of content will it cover?
2. Is the Commission consulting with stakeholders or external actors during its preparation? If so, what types of stakeholders are being included in the consultation process and what is the methodology?
3. What is the planned timeline for implementation, and when is the code expected to enter into force?

Submitted: 23.7.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(18 September 2025)

The EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 ⁽¹⁾ (GES) underpins the Commission’s commitment to end gender-based violence (GBV) and reaffirms that women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, should be safe both offline and online.

An outstanding deliverable under the current GES is the commitment that the Commission will facilitate the development of a new framework for cooperation between platforms to protect women’s safety online ⁽²⁾. Since the presentation of GES, the Digital Services Act ⁽³⁾ (DSA) and the Violence Against Women (VAW) Directive ⁽⁴⁾ have been adopted.

The DSA includes several measures that address GBV. The DSA requires that hosting service providers put in place notice and action mechanisms to notify illegal content ⁽⁵⁾.

Additionally, providers of very large online platforms (VLOPs) and very large online search engines (VLOSEs) are obliged to assess ⁽⁶⁾ and mitigate ⁽⁷⁾ systemic risks, which can include measures to mitigate the risks related to cyber offences provided for in the VAW Directive.

The Commission is continuously monitoring the compliance with the obligations imposed on providers of VLOPs and VLOSEs under the DSA.

The DSA notes the possibility of drawing up voluntary codes of conduct involving VLOPs, VLOSEs and other intermediary services to contribute to the proper application of that regulation.

Codes of conduct may be integrated into the DSA framework after positive assessments by the Commission and the European Board for Digital Services.

Under the VAW Directive, Member States shall encourage self-regulatory cooperation between relevant intermediary service providers. This allows the identification of where further cooperation between online platforms could provide the most added value.

¹ <https://cdt.org/insights/online-gender-based-violence-in-the-eu-what-now/>.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2020) 152 final.

⁽²⁾ The strategy includes the following footnote connected to this deliverable: ‘Based on cooperation under the EU Internet Forum, which led to the adoption of the EU Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online.’

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council Of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market for Digital Services and Amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act).

⁽⁴⁾ Directive 2024/1385 (Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence).

⁽⁵⁾ Article 16 DSA. This clearly includes illegal hate speech, as explained in Recitals 12 and 40 DSA.

⁽⁶⁾ Article 34 DSA.

⁽⁷⁾ Article 35 DSA.