



Press Release HateAid gGmbH

Milestone: Victims of revenge porn and image abuse finally recognized in DSA

IMCO goes strong on protection of victims of image based sexual abuse – welcome victim organisations HateAid and Anna Nackt. However, the Committee turns a blind eye to the most vulnerable affected by cyberviolence. Predominantly women, people of color and other marginalized groups will be left powerless in front of large social media platforms, when affected by hate speech, HateAid warns.

Berlin, 14 December 2021

The European Parliament (EP) Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) has made a big leap forward to fight image-based sexual abuse online. The respective report on the Digital Services Act (DSA) was adopted on Tuesday morning.

Good news for victim-survivors of image-based sexual abuse: the Committee adopted an [Amendment creating new obligations for pornography platforms to fight image-based sexual abuse](#). The initiative was championed by MEP Alexandra Geese (Greens/EFA), the shadow rapporteur on the DSA, and [backed](#) by a group of survivors and NGOs. The adoption of the Amendment comes as a hope for victim-survivors of image-based sexual abuse, to crack down on non-consensually shared intimate images on pornography platforms. The so-called revenge porn has been an increasing phenomenon over the years, with 30% women across the EU fearing that their pictures could be stolen and leaked online, according to [HateAid survey](#).

Anna Nackt, co-founder of Anna Nackt project for victim-survivors of image-based sexual abuse:

“Women often have to watch how porn platforms continue to spread their intimate images and how their perpetrators can never be identified. The DSA can finally change that and give victims a chance to find justice. We are relieved to see that the EU Parliament is serious about protecting women, girls and members of the LGBTQI+ community from image-based sexual abuse.”

However, on other aspects of the report, the EP is on the track to leave millions of victims of racism, antisemitism or misogyny unprotected against online violence. Members of the EP in charge of drafting the report have effectively proposed to set up a double standard: Predominantly marginalized groups who notify illegal content to online platforms are excluded from DSA complaint and dispute settlement mechanisms. These mechanisms are exclusively reserved for users who get their content wrongfully removed.

Anna-Lena von Hodenberg, CEO of HateAid:

“The double standard in the DSA is scandalous and cannot be justified: Victims of digital violence, who are predominantly marginalized groups and women and who lack resources in the first place, are left even more powerless. The European Parliament is consciously failing to ensure that they have access to the most basic complaint mechanisms while it is granting these same rights to others. Platforms like Twitter and Facebook have won with this vote - the EP has made their lives easier. Sadly, the only option left for the victims is now to go to court against the platforms, and this option in reality is reserved only for a privileged few, who can afford high costs and wait through long proceedings.”

Also, HateAid has advocated for improved and accessible contact point obligations in all languages of the EU Member States for very large online platforms. Unfortunately, IMCO also rejected an Amendment that would make the delivery of legal correspondence easier, and adopted provisions, that allow platforms to use tools like chatbots for communication with users.

The report is expected to be voted in the EP Plenary in January. HateAid will work with allies and MEPs to table amendments that were rejected by IMCO committee and aim to strengthen victims' rights in the DSA.

HateAid gGmbH

The non-profit organisation HateAid gGmbH was founded in 2018 and has its headquarters in Berlin. HateAid offers support for victims of digital violence: legal cost funding, emotionally stabilising initial, safety, and communication counselling. HateAid is part of the Landecker Digital Justice Movement that finances strategic litigation and landmark cases against online platforms in order to clarify the rights of users.

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