

Press Release HateAid gGmbH

Hatred against women in politics: Insults online acceptable to every third person

One third of respondents show understanding when people insult female politicians online out of dissatisfaction, even if they would not do so themselves. This is the result of a new survey conducted by YouGov on behalf of HateAid and the Alfred Landecker Foundation. In order to counteract the normalisation of hatred against politically active women, both partners are now launching the new joint project "Close the gap: Securing women's voices in politics". With research projects, specialised counselling and awareness campaigns, they tackle digital violence against women in politics in the long term and sustainably. Hatred has far-reaching consequences: more and more women are withdrawing from political involvement. This endangers representation and participation for more than half of the population – and is therefore not only a problem for those affected, but concerns our society as a whole.

Berlin, 7 March 2024

The [representative survey](#) draws a shocking picture. While an overwhelming majority (86 percent) wishes for a respectful interaction with each other – also online, when it comes to respect towards women in politics, reality looks completely different.

- **43 percent think that women in politics have to endure attacks online because it is part of their job.**
- **45 percent agree that women in politics themselves contribute to attacks on social media when they make certain statements.**
- **One in three people (34 percent) shows understanding when people insult female politicians online out of dissatisfaction, even if they themselves would not be hostile to them.**

Anna-Lena von Hodenberg, CEO of HateAid, comments:

"Rape threats and sexualising deepfakes: female politicians are increasingly telling us that they are considering leaving politics because of this. They can no longer subject themselves and their families to endure these hostilities. As a result, we are not only losing important voices in politics, but also the fundamental right of all people to be able to engage in politics freely and without fear. "

HateAid and the Alfred Landecker Foundation are countering this democracy-endangering development with the project "Close the gap: Securing women's voices in politics". It includes the following components:

- **Generating new insights:** research into the extent and impact of digital violence against female politicians and developing possible policy approaches with the research partners [Technical University of Munich](#) and the [Blavatnik School of Government](#) at the University of Oxford;
- **Empowering women:** enabling politically active women through specialised counseling and tailored training;
- **Raising awareness:** campaigns to inform decision-makers and empower women politicians;
- **Improving the conditions:** changes in legislation, law enforcement, platforms and civil society at EU and federal levels.

The special feature of the project is that civil society and science work closely together. Today, the research report commissioned by HateAid from the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford is published. The [report "Strengthening democracy by reducing threats to women in politics"](#) presents existing



laws and solutions for the protection of female politicians for civil society, research and politics. This will provide the basis for further policy recommendations.

Silke Mülherr, Co-CEO of the Alfred Landecker Foundation, comments:

"Our democracy is at stake if we allow women to be systematically pushed out of politics and public debate. This is about an impairment of participation and a restriction of civil rights and less about feminism. The window of opportunity to act is now. In the upcoming European elections, state elections and finally the 2025 federal elections in Germany, we should change the framework conditions so that our sisters, mothers, daughters or grandmothers do not have to think twice about whether they want to expect themselves or their family to the trouble of aspiring to public office."

About the survey

The data used is based on an online survey conducted by YouGov Deutschland GmbH, in which 2,151 people took part between 16 February and 20 February 2024. The results were weighted and are representative of eligible voters in Germany. All of the results mentioned are from a five-point scale. The results for "strongly agree" and "somewhat agree" were combined here. The exact results can be viewed [here](#).

HateAid gGmbH

The nonprofit organisation HateAid was founded in 2018 and has its headquarters in Berlin. It advocates for human rights in the digital space and stands up against digital violence and its consequences at both social and political levels. HateAid provides support to people affected by online violence in the form of counselling and litigation financing.

With their joint project "Close the Gap: Securing women's voices in politics", HateAid and the Alfred Landecker Foundation will lead the way to an improvement of women's access to political decision-making and, in the face of increasing digital violence and misogynistic narratives, provide solutions to empower and encourage current and future generations of women to join politics.

For more information about HateAid gGmbH please visit our website: hateaid.org/en

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Alfred Landecker Foundation

The Alfred Landecker Foundation was founded in Berlin in 2019. Their goal is to commemorate the Holocaust, fight against anti-Semitism and fight for democracy. This task is all the more challenging given the tectonic shifts brought about by the digital revolution. In order to protect our institutions, strengthen critical judgement and promote a culture of remembrance, the Alfred Landecker Foundation brings together and promotes a global network of academia and active civil society.