

Legal responses to gender-based hate speech in the EU

Legal approaches to gender-based hate speech vary across Member States. Some countries criminalise sexist hate speech explicitly, while others rely on general harassment or hate crime laws.

At EU level, proposals to extend the list of EU crimes to include hate speech and hate crime have sparked debate. Advocates argue that harmonisation would strengthen victim protection and cross-border enforcement.

Complementary measures—such as victim support services and legal literacy campaigns—remain essential, as many victims do not report online abuse.

Legal frameworks must evolve alongside digital realities to remain effective.