From adoption to action: implementing the directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence

ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Wednesday, 18 November 2026, 13:30-17:45

European Parliament, Brussels, Room SPAAK 1A2

Draft Programme

13:30 – 13:50 | Opening remarks

- **Ewa Kopacz**, Vice-President, Chair of the High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity, European Parliament
- **Maria Byrne**, Leas-Cathaoirleach of Seanad Éireann (Deputy Speaker of the Irish Senate)
- **Esteban Gonzáles Pons** and **Katarina Barley**, Vice-Presidents responsible of Relations with National Parliaments (video message)

13:50 – 14:00 | Keynote address

- **Milton Dick**, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Speaker of the Australian House of Representatives (TBC)

14:00 – 15:40 | Panel I: Turning the Directive into national law: challenges and opportunities

This session will assess progress in transposing Directive (EU) 2024/1385 across Member States and explore the role of parliaments in ensuring effective oversight and enforcement. It will provide an overview of implementation efforts and remaining challenges, while examining how cooperation between European, national and regional institutions can support the effective delivery of the Directive's objectives. The discussion will address key pillars of the Directive, including prevention, victim protection, access to justice and support services, with a view to identifying good practices and areas requiring further action.

Moderated by

- **Leticia Zuleta de Reales Ansaldo,** Director-General for Citizens' Rights, Justice and Institutional Affairs, European Parliament

Survivor testimony

- **Patricia Lefranc,** Survivor of an acid attack and Author of *"Vitriolée"*

Speakers:

- **Evin Incir,** Member of the European Parliament, Co-Rapporteur on the EU Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence
- **Rosa Estarás,** Member of the European Parliament, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights Committee and Gender Equality
- **Véronique Riotton,** Chair of the Delegation for Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, National Assembly of France
- **Ana-Cynthia-Ioana Paun,** Vice-Chair of the Joint Special Committee of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate on Legislation for the Prevention, Combating and Punishment of Domestic Violence, Senate of Romania

15:40 – 16:00| Coffee break

16:00 – 17:35 | Panel II: Tackling violence against women in politics and public life: towards a lasting societal change

Drawing on experiences from across Europe and beyond, this session will explore practical measures and promising approaches to creating safer political environments across all levels of governance. Particular attention will be given to initiatives aimed at preventing gender-based violence in political life, both online and offline; improving access to justice and support services; fostering women's full and equal participation in decision-making and promoting lasting societal change. The discussion will also look ahead to future challenges and opportunities for strengthening inclusive and resilient democracies.

Moderated by

- **Sanna Lepola,** Director-General for Parliamentary Democracy Partnerships, European Parliament

Speakers:

- **Dainius Žalimas,** Vice-Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights, European Parliament
- **Maria Ohisalo,** Member of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, European Parliament
- **Valeria Valente,** Member of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Member of the Committee of Inquiry into Femicide and All Forms of Gender-Based Violence, Senate of the Republic of Italy

17:35– 17:45 | Closing remarks

- **Javier Zarzalejos**, Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affair, European Parliament

17:45 – 20:00 | Networking cocktail reception, Multifunctional Area (former Members' Bar)