

GBTDV – How to Prevent and To Fight It

Developing Media Literacy to debunk gender-related media manipulation and fake news

No. 2024-1-LV01-KA210-ADU-000243248

Ieva Brence
Zonta Club of Jelgava





The forms of violence

Psychological

Digital (cyber violence)

Other

We all can suffer from violence (including gender-based technology-driven violence)

We cannot influence what is done is short-term but we can influence on what WE DO and HOW WE REACT to these issues



MEDEA

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) refers to any form of gender-based violence enabled by digital technologies

According to a **2023 report by Amnesty International**, over **40% of women** globally experience online abuse, including cyberstalking, doxxing, and deepfake pornography.



Co-funded by
the European Union

GBTDV manifests in various forms, including:

- **Cyberstalking:** Persistent and unwanted surveillance or contact through digital means
- **Online Harassment:** Sending offensive, threatening, or abusive messages via digital platforms
- **Doxxing:** Publicly sharing private or identifying information without consent
- **Non-consensual Sharing of Intimate Images (Revenge Porn):**
 - Distributing explicit content without the subject's consent
- **Gender-based Hate Speech:** Spreading derogatory or violent content targeting individuals based on gender
These behaviors are often motivated by the victim's gender or societal gender norms (ICRW, 2025)

Statistics about Latvia – 1.8 mlj. people and more than 250 000 IP addresses attacked per MONTH

	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1
5	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	235	16	-	-	-	2
3	4 368	146	19	26	26	35
2	117 299	6 164	851	448	943	768
1	131 601	8 744	683	304	652	619
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Skarto iedzīvotāju, institūciju vai uzņēmumu skaits un / vai nozīmība

Ethical and responsible reporting on **GBTDV** using victim-centered techniques:



Consent and Anonymity

Studies show that **over 70% of survivors** prefer anonymity when speaking to the media to avoid retaliation or stigma (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2023).

Best practice: Obtain **informed consent** before publishing personal details or images. Use **pseudonyms** or initials when necessary.



Avoiding Victim-Blaming

A study by the **International Journal of Communication (2022)** found that **media reports often imply victim culpability**, which discourages reporting violence.

Use **neutral language** and focus on **perpetrators' actions** rather than questioning a survivor's choices.

Ethical and responsible reporting on **GBTDV** using victim-centered techniques:

Contextualizing the Issue

- **UN Women** states that **1 in 3 women worldwide** experiences gender-based violence. Including such statistics helps frame individual cases within systemic issues.
- Report on **laws, policies, and available support systems** rather than just isolated incidents.

Trauma-Informed Interviewing

- The **Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma** recommends **allowing survivors control over the interview process**—letting them **choose the time, location, and topics** they are comfortable discussing.

**Differentiating
Sensationalist vs.
Responsible
Journalism in Digital
Violence Cases**

Rise of Digital Violence Cases

- **UNESCO reports that 73% of women journalists** have experienced online harassment, doxxing, or cyberstalking

Ethical Use of Social Media Evidence

- The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) 2022 report warns that republishing screenshots of abuse without context can amplify harm

Understanding the Risks of Re- Traumatization & Conducting Sensitive Interviews

Impact of Media on Trauma Survivors

- A **2019 study by the Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma** found that survivors interviewed insensitively **had worsened PTSD symptoms** and were less likely to trust journalists in the future.
- **Best Practice:** Use **open-ended questions** like *“What do you want to share about your experience?”* rather than *“Why didn’t you leave sooner?”*

Confidentiality and Security Risks

- According to **UN Women (2021)**, survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) face **an increased risk of harm** if their identity is exposed, especially in communities where honor-based violence is prevalent.

Avoiding Gendered Language, Bias, and Victim- Blaming

Harmful Language & Bias in Reporting

- A **2020 study by the International Federation of Journalists** found that **63% of crime reports on GBV used passive language**, making violence seem less intentional (e.g., “*She was assaulted*” instead of “*The perpetrator assaulted her*”).
- **Best Practice:** Use **active voice** to hold perpetrators accountable (“*The attacker was arrested*” instead of “*The victim was involved in an incident*”).

Examples of Gendered & Victim-Blaming Language

- **Harmful:** “*She was drinking and dressed provocatively before the attack.*”
- **Responsible:** “*The perpetrator assaulted her. Experts highlight the need for better legal protections.*”
- **Best Practice:** Remove **irrelevant details** that shift blame to the survivor.



Recognizing AI-Generated Abusive Content (Deepfakes, Voice Cloning, & Manipulated Images)

Fact: A 2023 report by the Brookings Institution revealed that **96% of deepfake videos online target women**, mainly through non-consensual pornography and revenge porn.



AI-Abuse Detection Tools:

Deepware Scanner & Deepfake Detector – To check if a video is AI-generated.

Resemble AI's Deepfake Detection – To analyze synthetic voice cloning and voice deepfakes.

Microsoft's Video Authenticator – To detect manipulated media using AI.



Case Example: In India (2022), police used AI forensics to confirm that viral **leaked nude photos of a politician** were deepfakes, disproving the disinformation campaign against her.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Importance of the topic

1. Fake News Travels Faster Than Truth

A 2018 MIT study found that **false news spreads six times faster** than real news, especially on social media. Gender-based misinformation, including fake stories about feminist movements, LGBTQ+ rights, or prominent women, gains traction due to emotional appeal and biases

2. Deepfake Technology Targets Women Disproportionately

According to Deeptech Labs, **90% of deepfake videos involve non-consensual explicit content, and nearly all target women**

Importance of the topic

3. Gender Bias in AI and Algorithms

Many social media algorithms amplify **and disseminate controversial and misleading content related to gender**. Studies show that AI-driven platforms prioritize engagement over truth, often **favoring sensationalized or biased narratives** about women and gender issues

4. The Power of Media Literacy: Fact-Checking Can Reduce Misinformation by 50%

Research indicates that when people are trained to fact-check sources and analyze media critically, they **reduce their susceptibility to misinformation by nearly half**. Teaching gender-focused media literacy can counter fake news about women and marginalized groups



Importance of the topic

5. Misinformation and Online Harassment Are Connected

Fake news and gendered misinformation **fuel online harassment**, with studies showing that **women journalists and activists receive 20 % more hate messages** than their male counterparts. This intimidation discourages women's participation in public discourse.

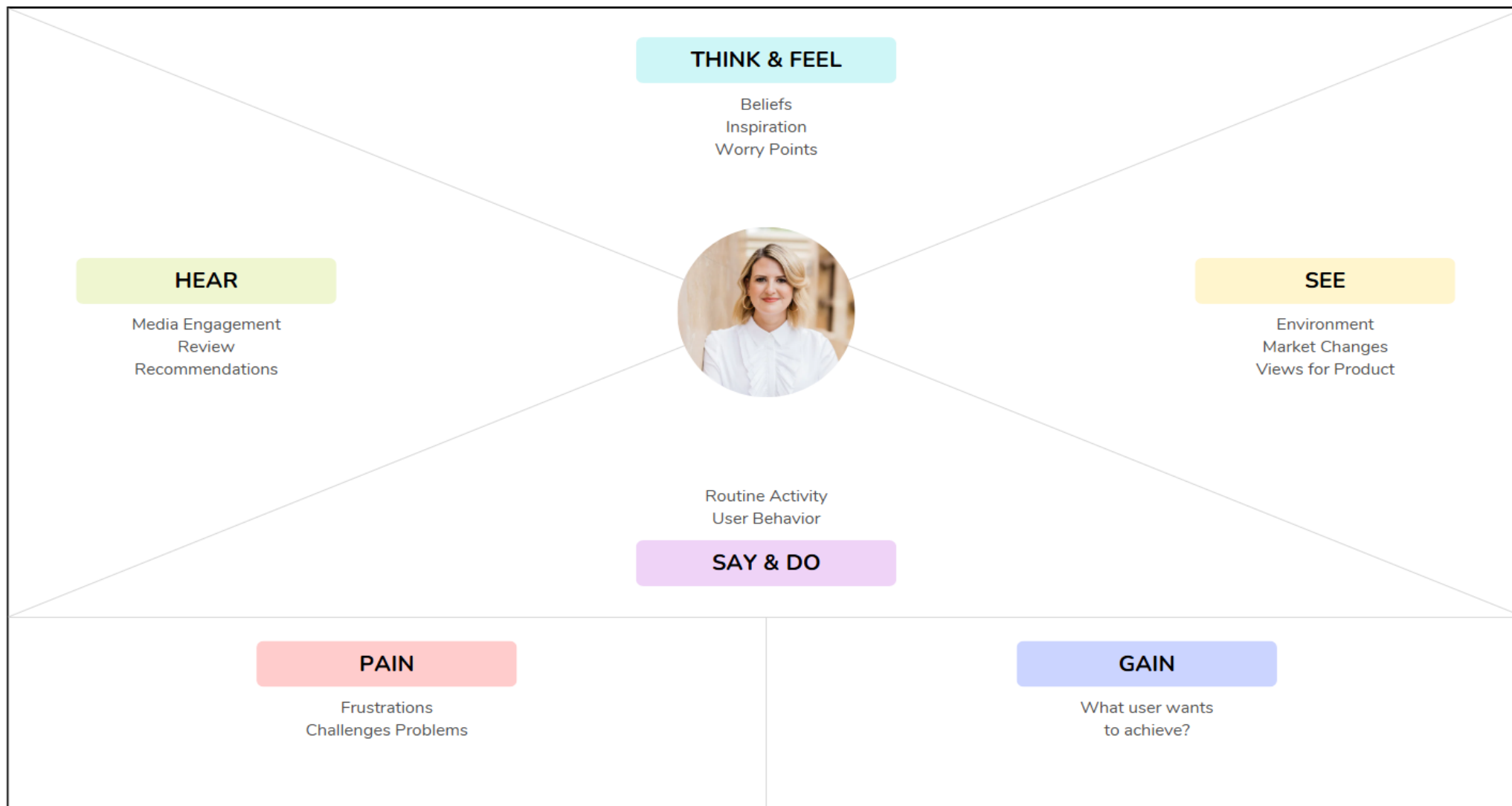
6. Media Literacy Programs Are Effective in Fighting Gender-Based Fake News

Countries that have introduced media literacy into their **school curricula**, such as Finland, show significantly **lower susceptibility to misinformation**. Implementing gender-sensitive media education can help combat gender-related media manipulation.



What do the Customers Want from Media

- Time to Create a Persona Map (Canva)





MEDEA

Instructions

- Please Use Canva (Persona Empathy Map template)
- Please think about the name and choose a photo of the person (please don't use real photo, you can use «This person does not exist» or similar sites)
- Please write a short demographic characteristics about the person
- Please think of her daily life – when and for what reason she consumes media



Co-funded by
the European Union

Definition of Media Literacy

Media Literacy is the ability to **access, analyze, evaluate, create, and communicate** information across various media platforms. It involves understanding how media messages are constructed, identifying biases, recognizing misinformation, and developing critical thinking skills to navigate the digital and media landscape effectively

Key Aspects of Media Literacy:

- 1. Access** – Knowing how to find and utilize various forms of media
- 2. Analyze & Evaluate** – Assessing the credibility, purpose, and biases in media content
- 3. Create** – Producing responsible and ethical media content
- 4. Reflect** – Understanding the impact of media on society and individual perceptions
- 5. Act** – Engaging with media in a responsible and informed way

Impact of TFGBV on Women



- **Psychological & Emotional Trauma:** Victims often suffer from anxiety, depression, and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) due to online abuse
- **Silencing Effect:** Women, particularly activists, journalists, and politicians, may withdraw from public spaces out of fear
- **Career & Reputation Damage:** Disinformation, deepfake content, and harassment can severely damage professional reputations
- **Physical Threats & Real-World Violence:** Online threats often escalate into real-life stalking or violence

 **Fact:** A UN Women report states that **73% of women worldwide have experienced some form of online violence**

What are the Differences between Women and Men

Social Cognition and Emotional Recognition:



Research indicates that women often excel in social cognition and emotional **recognition**. A **2012 review published in Neuropsychologia** found that **"women are better at recognizing facial effects, expression processing and emotions in general,"** whereas **"men were only better at recognizing specific behavior which includes anger, aggression, and threatening cues."**



This heightened sensitivity may enable women to more readily identify subtle forms of GBTDV, such as online harassment or emotional manipulation.

How to Prevent and Fight TFGBV

A. Individual Actions

- ◆ **Strengthen Digital Security:** Use strong passwords, enable two-factor authentication, and manage privacy settings
 - ◆ **Be Critical of Online Content:** Verify sources before sharing information that may target women
 - ◆ **Report and Block Abusers:** Use platform tools to report gender-based harassment
 - ◆ **Support Victims:** Believe and amplify the voices of those affected

<https://drossinternets.lv/lv/questions/listall/atbildiba-un-parkapumi-interneta>





Tools & Resources

✂ Fact-Checking Tools:

Snopes (www.snopes.com) –
Debunks viral misinformation

FactCheck.org (www.factcheck.org)
– Verifies political claims

Google Reverse Image Search –
Helps detect fake or edited images

Research from Europe

1. Over 85% of EU Citizens See Fake News as a Threat

A **2022 European Commission survey** found that **85% of Europeans** believe fake news poses a threat to democracy.

Many citizens struggle to distinguish between true and false content, leading to confusion and misinformation

2. Gender-Based Fake News and Online Attacks

- **Deepfake technology** has been used to create fake explicit videos of prominent women in politics, such as in France and Germany.
- A **European Parliament study** found that gender-related fake news is often used to **discourage women from running for office**





MEDEA

Research from Europe



3. The Rise of AI-Generated Misinformation

AI tools, such as deepfakes and chatbots, are increasingly used to **generate misleading content**

The EU is pushing for **stronger AI regulations** to combat AI-generated fake news that could manipulate elections and public debates



4. EU's Fight Against Fake News

Fact-checking networks, such as EUvsDisinfo and EDMO, track and debunk fake stories


Media literacy programs have been introduced in schools to teach young people how to identify and counter misinformation

Big tech regulations (Digital Services Act, AI Act) are forcing platforms to be more transparent about content moderation



Co-funded by
the European Union

What Can You Do?

- ◆ Think before you share – verify information from multiple sources
- Educate your community about media literacy
- Support policies that protect against online gender-based violence
- If you receive or see any suspicious information, send it to the respective authorities, don't spread it further (even to your family members, etc.)
-  **Final Thought:**
Misinformation isn't just an online issue—it has real-world consequences
- Strengthening media literacy can empower individuals to push back against false narratives and gender-based harm

Encouraging Gender-Sensitive Digital Policies in Companies

01

Examples of Platform Changes & Advocacy Wins:

02

Facebook/Meta: Introduced AI-powered automated detection for hate speech and abuse targeting women

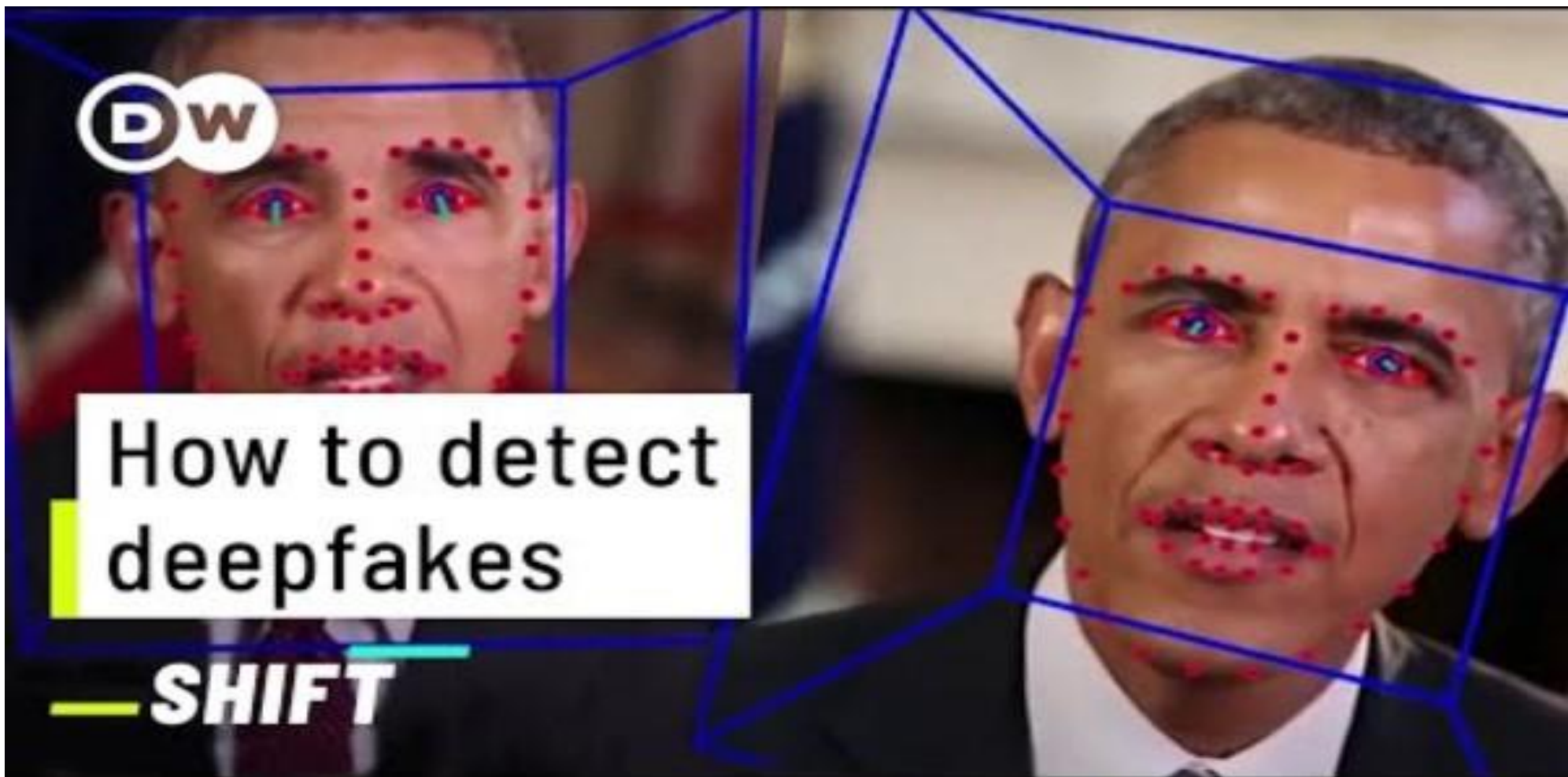
03

Twitter/X: Following backlash over online abuse, Block Party (a third-party app) was launched to filter out harassment

04

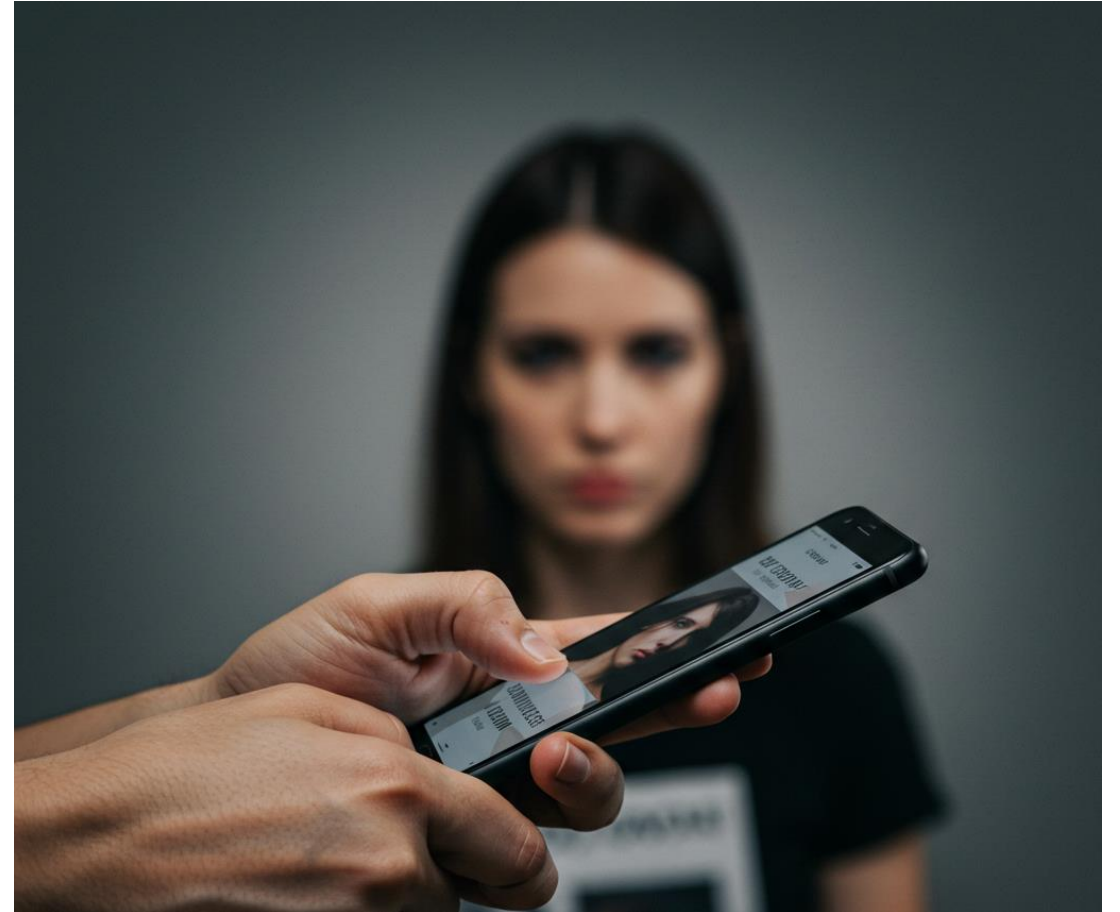
Instagram: In 2022, the platform improved comment filtering to automatically hide abusive language

How to Detect a Deepfake Video



Sarah (name changed, and the picture is not of a real person), once bright and bubbly, shared her art online. However, trolls targeted her with harsh comments, mocking her talent and looks. This led to shame and fear, making her stop creating. Sleep became restless, filled with replayed insults. Although friends noticed her withdrawal, she shrugged it off, saying, "It's nothing." The internet, once a platform for her dreams, turned into a cage. Her confidence shattered, and she began to question her worth, haunted by silent torment online.

- *Sarah, wounded by online hate, sought solace in a support group for cyberbullying victims. Online forums, initially intimidating, became a lifeline, where people shared stories and strategies. A therapist specializing in trauma helped her rebuild her self-esteem. She learned to curate her online space, blocking negativity. Slowly, her artistic spark rekindled, though with a cautious glow. Eventually, she shared her art again, this time with a shield of self-compassion.*



Group work

What would be the media Sarah would check during the period when she was wounded by online hate?

Does her «media consumption» can change in comparison to the days when she was happy and confident?

How can one help Sarah if it becoming obvious that Sarah is suffering?

How can Sarah help herself?

Thank you!
ieva.brence3@gmail.com

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or State Education Development Agency Republic of Latvia (VIAA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority VIAA can be held responsible for them.

