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## Annual Report 2015



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## Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

Mehr Information über die Stopline, österreichische Meldestelle gegen Kinderpornografie und Nationalsozialismus im Internet, finden Sie hier:

[www.stopline.at](http://www.stopline.at)



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## Preface

Dear readers,

at this point we can look back on more than 17 years of Stopline, and each year we have had something new to report. In 2014, it was the extremely high number of incoming reports; in 2015, we observed an increase in the quality of incoming reports. Both the number of reports we could process and the percentage of reports pointing to material that was actually illegal were higher than in 2014.

This observation allows for several conclusions. In last year's preface, I mentioned that it was getting harder for users to understand where exactly the line between legal and illegal content is drawn. In 2014, 35% of the reports that reached Stopline concerned material outside the scope of Stopline's work. In 2015, however, this percentage was almost cut in half. The educational work through the media may have been successful in helping users report the right types of content to Stopline. Our own public relations work, in which we continually stress that we are a hotline for child pornography and National Socialist content, may of course be a factor as well.

Strikingly, the proportion of actual National Socialist content has grown this year, both as a percentage (6%) and in absolute numbers (34 verified reports). Usually this content is hosted in countries where publishing such material is legal. We were all the more surprised, therefore, to find in 2015 one instance of National Socialist content that was hosted in Austria. The other five instances of illegal content that were hosted in Austria concerned child pornography. Thanks to the excellent cooperation with Internet Service Providers, it was possible, as always, to immediately remove this content from the Internet. Thus Austria continues to be an unattractive location for hosting such content.

Another trend that became apparent this year was that more and more video content is being reported to Stopline. Often, this content consisted of "sexting" videos of teens that were shared in social networks. On January 1, 2016, an amendment to the law went into effect in Austria which decriminalises the actions of young people who voluntarily share pornographic images of themselves with their intimate partner. This is certainly a welcome change as it reflects the altered everyday reality of young people today. This amendment, however, does not affect Stopline's work since the reports we receive are about content that was published on the Internet and is visible to anyone. Publishing pornographic images of minors online continues to be illegal.

Finally, I would like to again thank all those who have supported Stopline from the beginning and are instrumental in the hotline's success. Some are mentioned in the following pages. Fighting illegal content online would not be possible, however, without the many attentive users, the media, and the employees of Stopline. Your actions are truly indispensable to our work. Thank you for all you do!

Dr. Barbara Schloßbauer  
Project manager and chair of Stopline's advisory board



## Stopline at a glance

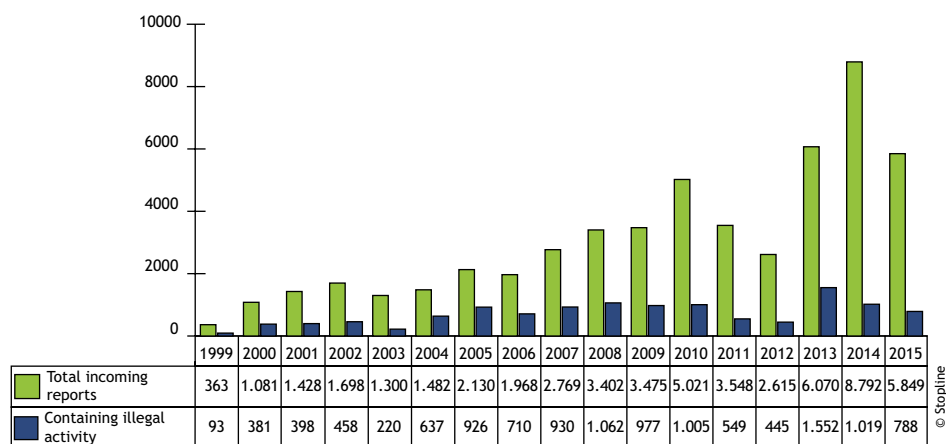
Stopline is the online contact point for people who come across child pornography or National Socialist content on the Internet. Stopline's main goal is to remove such illegal content from the Internet, especially online publications from Austria.

Stopline was founded in 1998 as a result of a voluntary agreement between the Austrian internet service providers (ISPs). The industry was eager to take a stand after child pornography had been found on the server of an Austrian ISP, published by one of its customers. Besides child pornography, another offence for which the Internet is an important distribution medium was at that point defined as part of Stopline's area of operations: National Socialist offences.

Stopline is operated by the ISPA, the Austrian Association of Internet Service Providers, and has been authorized and recognized by public authorities since its inception. It cooperates closely with the hotlines of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and with Austrian internet service providers. In order to successfully combat illegal content on the Internet worldwide, Stopline is part of the International Association of Internet Hotlines (INHOPE).

In the 17 years since its insistence, Stopline has processed more than 53,000 reports. By an average of 23% of those reports concerned material that was in fact illegal and most of which was hosted on servers abroad. Not least because of Stopline's efficiency and the prompt responses of Austrian internet providers, Austria is not an attractive location from which to distribute illegal material.

## Incoming Reports 1999 - 2015



## How Stopline Works



Stopline employees do not look for illegal content themselves; instead, they work exclusively with incoming reports. These reports come from mindful Internet users as well as partner hotlines within the international INHOPE network.

### What can be reported?

Stopline processes reports on:

- **Child pornography**, as defined in § 207a of the Austrian Penal Code (StGB)\*;
- **National Socialism**, as defined in the laws banning National Socialist activities, symbols and regalia (Verbotsgesetz, Abzeichengesetz, etc.)\*.

Reports include content found online in:

- Websites
- Newsgroups
- E-groups
- File sharing services
- FTP servers
- Social networks

### How can a report be made?

Illegal online content can be reported - anonymously if desired - in the following ways:

- By filling out an online form at [www.stopline.at](http://www.stopline.at).
- By sending an e-mail to [meldung@stopline.at](mailto:meldung@stopline.at).

## Does the reported content constitute an offence?

Stopline assesses whether the reported content violates the laws against child pornography or National Socialist propaganda.

### How does Stopline pursue illegal content?

Further steps depend on the internet service provider's (ISP) country of origin.

#### Illegal content in Austria:

If the content is distributed through an Austrian ISP, Stopline forwards the information to the police and contacts the ISP. The ISP is asked to remove the content from the web so that it cannot be accessed any more.

Stopline itself does not delete or censor allegedly illegal content. Instead, Stopline gives recommendations to the providers regarding their further course of action. It is up to the provider itself to decide how to respond. In Austria, however, providers are well aware of their responsibility so that illegal content is promptly removed from the web.

#### International illegal content:

If the illegal content is stored on a foreign server, Stopline forwards the information to the Austrian police as well as to its international partners. Within the INHOPE network, more than 45 partner hotlines around the world fight against illegal content on the web.

### IMPORTANT:

Please do not actively search for illegal material and do not send any pictures to Stopline! This alone may constitute an illegal act. For Stopline, describing the source of the suspicious material as accurately as possible is all that is needed to process the report.

\* The full text of these laws can be accessed in German at [www.ris.bka.gv.at](http://www.ris.bka.gv.at).

## The year 2015 in numbers

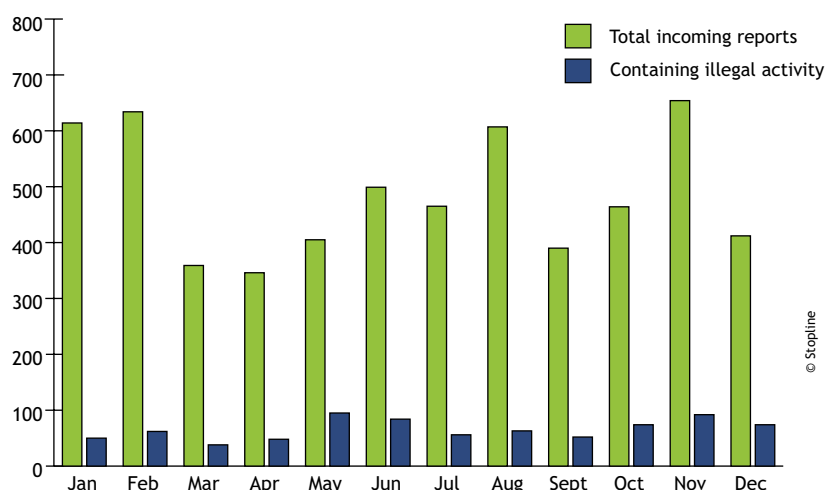
After the unusually high number of reports we received in 2014, the number of reports we received in 2015—5,849 reports in total—is closer again to the numbers we registered in 2013. However, the percentage of reports pointing to material that was actually illegal, i.e., deemed child pornography or National Socialist propaganda, has increased slightly from 12 percent to 13 percent. In absolute numbers, the 788 instances of illegal content that were verified in 2015 consisted of 754 instances of child pornography (96 percent) and 34 instances of National Socialism (4 percent).

These numbers show that the proportion of National Socialist content is once again on the rise: in 2014 it stood at one percent and this year at six percent, which is roughly equivalent to the percentage we registered in previous years.

The amount of illegal content that was hosted in Austria has remained relatively constant, with five instances in 2014 and six instances in 2015, the latter consisting of one National Socialist offence and five child pornographic offences. After being informed by Stoptline, the respective providers immediately removed the content from the Internet so that it could no longer be accessed.

We are happy to note that the quality of reports is rising, as can be seen in the data showing the categorisation of reported content by Stoptline on page 7: In 2015 only 18 percent of reports concerned topics outside the scope of Stoptline's work; in 2014, the comparable number was 35 percent. After taking out all reports about content that could not be found or accessed, as well as reports that could not be processed for other reasons, we were still left with more than half of all reports, which were then assessed by Stoptline and, if necessary, forwarded to the relevant bodies or authorities.

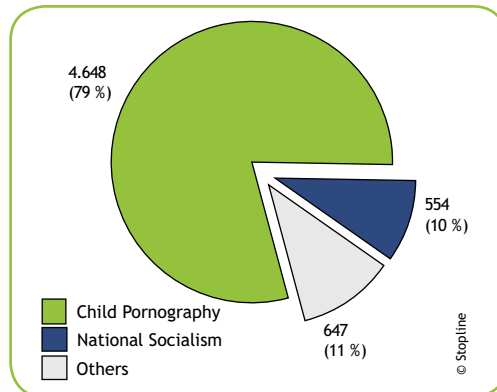
## All reports vs. criminally relevant reports in 2015



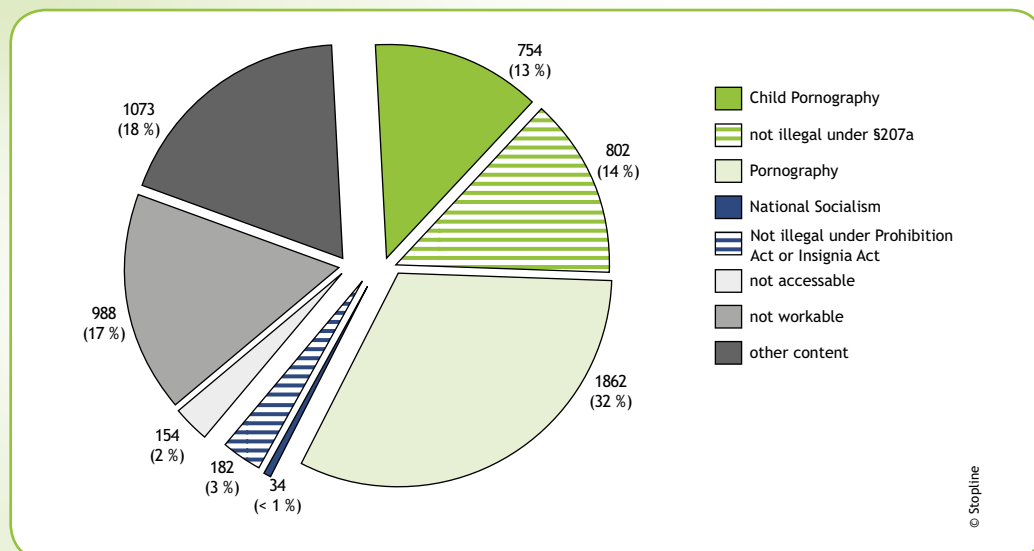


### Incoming reports in 2015 - categorization by reporting user

In 2015, each month more than 480 reports, on average, were made to Stopline. Of those, about one in seven reported content that was actually illegal. Almost 80 percent of the total of 5,849 reports were classified as child pornography by the reporting user. Nearly 554 reports (10 percent) were classified as National Socialist content. In the remaining cases (“other”), users reported content that they could not clearly assign to either of these categories.



### Categorization of 2015 reports by Stopline



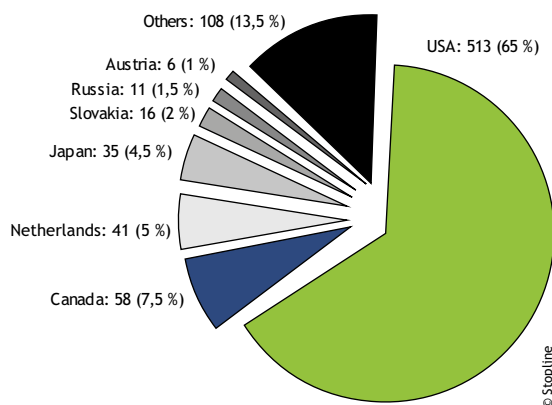
In 2015, 788 reports, or 13 percent of the 5,850 incoming reports, were classified as illegal by Stopline (compared to 12% in 2014). Ninety-six percent of the illegal material was child pornographic.

More than half of all reports must be carefully investigated by Stopline. Not everything that users assume to be child pornography or National Socialist content actually meets the legal criteria for those categories. Thirty-two percent of reports concern legal pornography with obviously adult participants. Seventeen percent of reports contain material that, after careful investigation by Stopline, is deemed to be a depiction of minors or of National Socialist topics which may seem illegal to a layperson, but which nevertheless do not violate either § 207a StGB or the laws banning National Socialist activities (namely, the Austrian Prohibition Act and the Austrian Insignia Act).

Content classified as “other” concerns either material that is clearly not illegal or material that is related to other topics and which may theoretically be illegal but is outside the purview of Stopline, such as online fraud. In addition, content often cannot be accessed because it is either protected by special barriers (such as passwords) or because it has already been removed. These reports are categorized as „not workable“.

## International cooperation regarding illegal content in 2015

The majority of reported content that Stopline classified as illegal was hosted on foreign servers. This goes to show how vital international cooperation is when it comes to removing illegal content from the Internet. Through the international network of hotlines, INHOPE, hotlines can cooperate quickly, efficiently and without red tape. One of Stopline's most important activities, therefore, is to immediately notify the partner hotlines in the country involved.

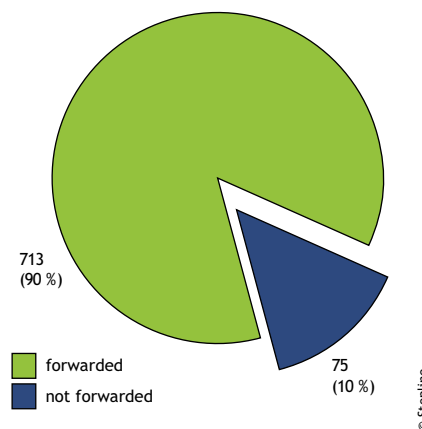


## The most common countries of origin 2015

Illegal content is hosted primarily where unburdensome and cheap IT infrastructure (server, webspace, connectivity) is easily available. As a consequence, the top three countries were the USA (65 percent), Canada (7,5 percent) and the Netherlands (5 percent). In 8,5 percent of cases, it was technologically impossible to determine the country of origin. Austria is still not an attractive location for hosting such content (only six cases in 2015).

## Notification of INHOPE partner hotlines 2015

Stopline forwards all content that has been identified as illegal to the Austrian police. Just as important is the prompt notification of the respective INHOPE partner hotline. With the exception of Vietnam and Indonesia, hotlines exist in all countries of origin that Stopline received frequent reports for in 2015. Therefore, Stopline could directly notify a competent hotline in 94 percent of cases relating to childpornography hosted abroad.



Details: [www.inhope.org](http://www.inhope.org) and [www.inhopefoundation.org](http://www.inhopefoundation.org) as well as on page 12 and 14.



## 2015 - The most important figures at a glance

Stopline's incoming reports / of these, classified as illegal material - by content:

	Number	Containing illegal activity	
		Number	Percentage
Child pornography	4.648	754	16 %
National Socialism	554	34	6 %
Other	647	-	-
Total incoming reports	5.849	788	13 %

Stopline's incoming reports / of these, classified as illegal material - by online source:

	Number	Containing illegal activity	
		Number	Percentage
World Wide Web	4.946	763	15 %
Social Media	616	8	1 %
TOR Network	170	15	8 %
Filesharing	40	0	0 %
Other	77	2	3 %
Total incoming reports	5.849	788	13 %

The most common countries of origin in:

	Number	Percentage
USA	513	65 %
Canada	58	7,5 %
Netherlands	41	5 %
Japan	35	4,5 %
Slovakia	16	2 %
Russia	11	1,5 %
Germany	8	1 %
Austria	6	1 %
Others	34	4 %
Not determined	66	8,5 %

Content that Stopline identified as illegal in was forwarded to:

	Number	Percentage
Police (BK and BVT)	788	100 %
Austrian ISPs	6	0,8 %
INHOPE partner hotlines	713	90 %

\* All numbers commercial rounded.

## Stopline's public face in 2015

### Presentation of Annual Report

On April 14, 2015, Barbara Schloßbauer (Stopline) and Maximilian Schubert (ISPA) presented Stopline's Annual Report and statistics for 2014. A wide variety of media outlets was represented and reported on this event.



### Stopline's public face

ISPA is firmly committed to increasing Stopline's visibility. Therefore, Stopline was prominently represented at numerous events such as the ISPA Forum, ISPA press conferences, and the Internet Governance Forum Austria. In addition, Stopline sends informational material to interested parties upon request.



#### Stopline-Beirats-Mitglieder 2015

Barbara Buchegger, Saferinternet.at  
Daniela Drobna, ISPA  
Ewald Ebner, Federal Criminal Agency  
Sibylle Geißler, Protection of the Constitution  
Thomas Grünewald, Ministry of Justice  
Otto Hopfner, Protection of the Constitution  
Bernhard Jungwirth, Saferinternet.at  
Michael Pilz, Lawyer  
Martin Prager, ISPA Managing Board  
Robert Schischka, nic.at  
Barbara Schloßbauer, Stopline  
Gabriele Schmölzer, University Graz  
Maximilian Schubert, ISPA  
Wolfgang Schwabl, Telekom Austria AG  
Jürgen Unterböck, Federal Criminal Agency

### Stopline's advisory board meetings

Stopline's advisory board serves to counsel and advise Stopline on its work. At regular meetings, experts from the Austrian executive branch, the Internet industry and business are able to exchange ideas in a non-bureaucratic manner.

Their know-how helps Stopline to work even more effectively, to utilize synergies with partners and to build a strong network against illegal content on the Internet. The Stopline advisory board promotes the cooperation of these different organizations and the exchange of knowledge.



### Participation in groups of experts

Stopline's team contributes its expertise to several committees and specialized groups that deal with child pornography and National Socialism. For example, Stopline is a member of working groups in the Federal Ministry of Family and Youth and serves on the advisory council of Saferinternet.at.

## Reviewing the changes to the Austrian Penal Code

Last year this section was devoted to the event celebrating 15 years of Stopline\*. At the event, numerous experts spoke on the topic, “What is key in combating illegal content on the Internet?”

Among other things, Katrin Lankmayer (ECPAT) reviewed the sometimes paradoxical legislation surrounding the topic of child pornography, stating that “for current phenomena such as sexting, where teens voluntarily create sexually charged images of themselves and send them to others or post them on social media, the existing legislation is only partially applicable.” During the event the speakers therefore called for the law to be amended to correspond with reality and thus to decriminalise young people’s actions.



With the latest amendments to the Austrian Penal Code (Strafgesetzbuch or StGB), the legislature has taken these concerns into account and amended § 207a as follows:

- (5) Not punished according to para 1 and para 3 shall be whoever
1. creates or possesses a pornographic depiction of a person under full age with that person’s consent and for that person’s or their own use,
    - 1a. creates or possesses a pornographic depiction of his own person under full age or offers, procures, relinquishes, presents, or makes accessible in any other way such a depiction to another for their own use...

Unlike the situation previously, it has now been established by the amendments to § 207a StGB that distributing such images is no longer a criminal offence per se. The consensual exchange of pornographic photos or videos of oneself between two youths aged 14 and over—so-called „sexting”—has now been decriminalised. It is, however, still prohibited for the recipient to pass on such images to third parties. Publishing such images on the Internet remains illegal as well.

\* <https://www.stopline.at/ueberuns/jubilaumsveranstaltung-2014/>

## Stopline International 2015

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERNET HOTLINES  
**INHOPE**



### INHOPE

Since INHOPE's inception in 1999, Stopline has been a member of this international association of Internet hotlines against child pornography (see page 14) and participates in international meetings. At INHOPE meetings, topics such as technical and new legal developments are discussed, and trends and statistics are compared between the respective countries. This exchange of experience is especially important to enable the joint tracking of illegal content across borders. Furthermore INHOPE organizes regularly educational and training events for hotline employees on a myriad of topics. Geographical distance is bridged by using online tools, so-called webinars.

### International events

As in previous years, a representative of Stopline took part in the Safer Internet Forum 2015 in Luxembourg. This event, which is the most important European conference on the topic of "Safer Internet," regularly attracts politicians and scientists as well as representatives of the police, the hotlines, child and youth protection organisations, the Internet industry, and numerous other experts to discuss the newest developments and trends.

Stopline also took part in a meeting of the European Financial Coalition against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Online that was held in Budapest.

### Safer Internet Day 2015

In 2015, Stopline once again supported the international Safer Internet Day. More information can be found at <http://www.saferinternet.at/saferinternetday/sid-2015/>.

Information about international activities can be found at [www.saferinternetday.org](http://www.saferinternetday.org)



## Media coverage of Stoptline in 2015

In 2015 Stopline's activity was frequently covered in the media. Here is a digest:



**Origin:**  
 ISPA News, Mai 2015  
 stopptdierechten.at, 15.4.2015  
 Kurier, 15.4.2015  
 derStandard.at, 14.4.2015  
 Die Presse, 15.4.2015  
 Kleine Zeitung, 15.4.2015  
 Computerwelt, 14.4.2015  
 saferinternet.at, 21.4.2015  
 gegensexuellegewalt.at, 14.4.2015

A complete list of all media reports about Stopline can be found at [www.stopline.at/presseclippings](http://www.stopline.at/presseclippings)



## Stopline - national and international Cooperation

### Safer Internet Centre Austria

Together with Saferinternet.at and Rat auf Draht, Stopline forms the „Austrian Safer Internet Centre“. As the Austrian partner in the Safer Internet Network of the EU, Insafe, it contributes to comprehensive awareness raising about safe Internet use.

#### Saferinternet.at

[www.saferinternet.at](http://www.saferinternet.at)



**Saferinternet.at**  
Das Internet sicher nutzen!

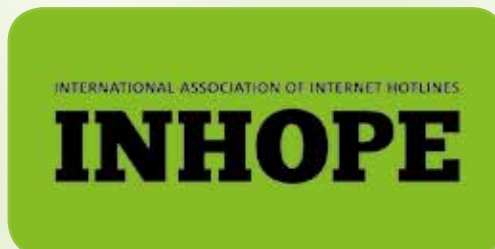
#### Rat auf Draht

[www.rataufdraht.at](http://www.rataufdraht.at)



### INHOPE - International Association of Internet Hotlines

An Internet without borders requires cooperation without borders when it comes to combating illegal content. That is a lesson the first Internet hotlines at the end of the 1990s had to learn very quickly. Therefore, in 1999, eight European hotlines - amongst them, Stopline - joined forces in international cooperation to start taking action against child pornography together. At the end of 2015, INHOPE had 47 member organizations in 42 countries worldwide.



The INHOPE Foundation, an organization that supports new hotlines in the making, especially in emerging and developing nations, currently has six members.

[www.inhope.org](http://www.inhope.org)

[www.inhopefoundation.org](http://www.inhopefoundation.org)

## Cooperation with the Austrian police

For many years, Stopline has been cooperating with the relevant departments of the Austrian police in the Ministry of the Interior.



### Hotline for National Socialist offences

This hotline of the Austrian executive forces is located at the Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism (BVT). Whenever Stopline's experts identify a report as pertaining to National Socialist offenses, the BVT is activated.



### Hotline for child pornography on the Internet

The Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (BK) operates the police hotline for child pornography and child sex tourism. Stopline informs this authority whenever a report has actually led to the identification of child pornographic material on the Internet.

## Facilitator and Supporter of Stopline

### ISPA

The Austrian association of Internet Service Providers, ISPA, is the umbrella organisation of the Austrian Internet industry.

[www.ispa.at](http://www.ispa.at)



### nic.at GmbH

nic.at is the registry for domains under .at, .co.at and .or.at. Since its inception, Stopline has been supported by nic.at.

[www.nic.at](http://www.nic.at)



### EU

Stopline is co-financed by the European Union's Connecting Europe Facility (CEF): Telecom/Safer Internet.

<https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility>



**We need your help -  
for a safe Internet**



Report online content if you believe that it may violate the law.

Order the Stopline brochure free of charge.

Link from your website to [www.stopline.at](http://www.stopline.at).

Publish Stopline's logo.

**office@stopline.at**  
**www.stopline.at**

Please don't hesitate to contact us with  
further questions and suggestions at  
[office@stopline.at](mailto:office@stopline.at).

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<https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility>

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