



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

REPORT CENTRE

against
Child Sexual Abuse Material
and National Socialism

FOREWORD

Writing this foreword is for me a moment of reflection every year. What has changed? What developments are shaping our work? Is there anything „new“ to report, or is it rather a worrying trend continuing?

Because what began a few years ago has, unfortunately, continued into 2025. Following the previous peak in reports in 2024, the total number of reports received did fall slightly, but remained well above the average compared to the previous ten years. February and March in particular reached levels that had previously seemed unimaginable. In each of these months, as many reports were received as used to be received in an entire year. You can read the details in this report.

The number of valid reports was particularly burdensome for our small team, as almost every second report was classified as illegal. A new negative record! This development repeatedly presents us with major challenges, not only organisationally but also emotionally, and has certainly pushed us to our limits.

There was, however, one positive sign: after Austria became the number one hosting country for the first time in 2024 (in the 27 years since the reporting centre was established) due to a single case, no reported illegal material was hosted by an Austrian provider in 2025.

Nevertheless, or perhaps even because of this, we carry on day in, day out, rising to the challenge of removing as much illegal content as possible from the internet so that it cannot be accessed or disseminated any further. We will not tire of raising awareness of Stopleveline, as the figures clearly demonstrate just how it is to have functioning reporting centres, particularly in the fight against child sexual abuse material.

My special thanks go to all those who do not look away, but report what they see. It is your vigilance and commitment that make our work possible in the first place. Together, we are helping to make the internet a little safer.

Dr. Barbara Schloßbauer
Stopleveline Project Manager



“As tragic as the rise in reports over recent years is, it also shows that Europe-wide initiatives are raising awareness and that more and more people are contributing to a safer internet.”

CONTENT

About Stopleveline	3
How to report	4
How does Stopleveline operate	5
Reports 2025 in detail	6
Country of origin 2025	8
Reported illegal content 2025	10
Activities 2025	11
Child sexual abuse	12
National socialism	13
Partners	14

ABOUT STOPLINE



Stopline is an online reporting center for people who come across sexual abuse depictions of minors (defined in the law as “pictorial sexual child abuse material”, often still referred to as child pornography) or content relating to National Socialism on the Internet.

The primary objective of Stopline is the prompt and straightforward removal of such content from the internet, especially when it is hosted in Austria.

This reporting center was established in 1998 by the Association of Austrian Internet Service Providers (ISPA). Over the course of its 27-year existence, Stopline has processed more than 392,696 reports. Approximately 20% of these were actually classified as illegal material, predominantly depictions of sexual abuse involving minors, the majority of which were hosted on servers overseas.

392,696

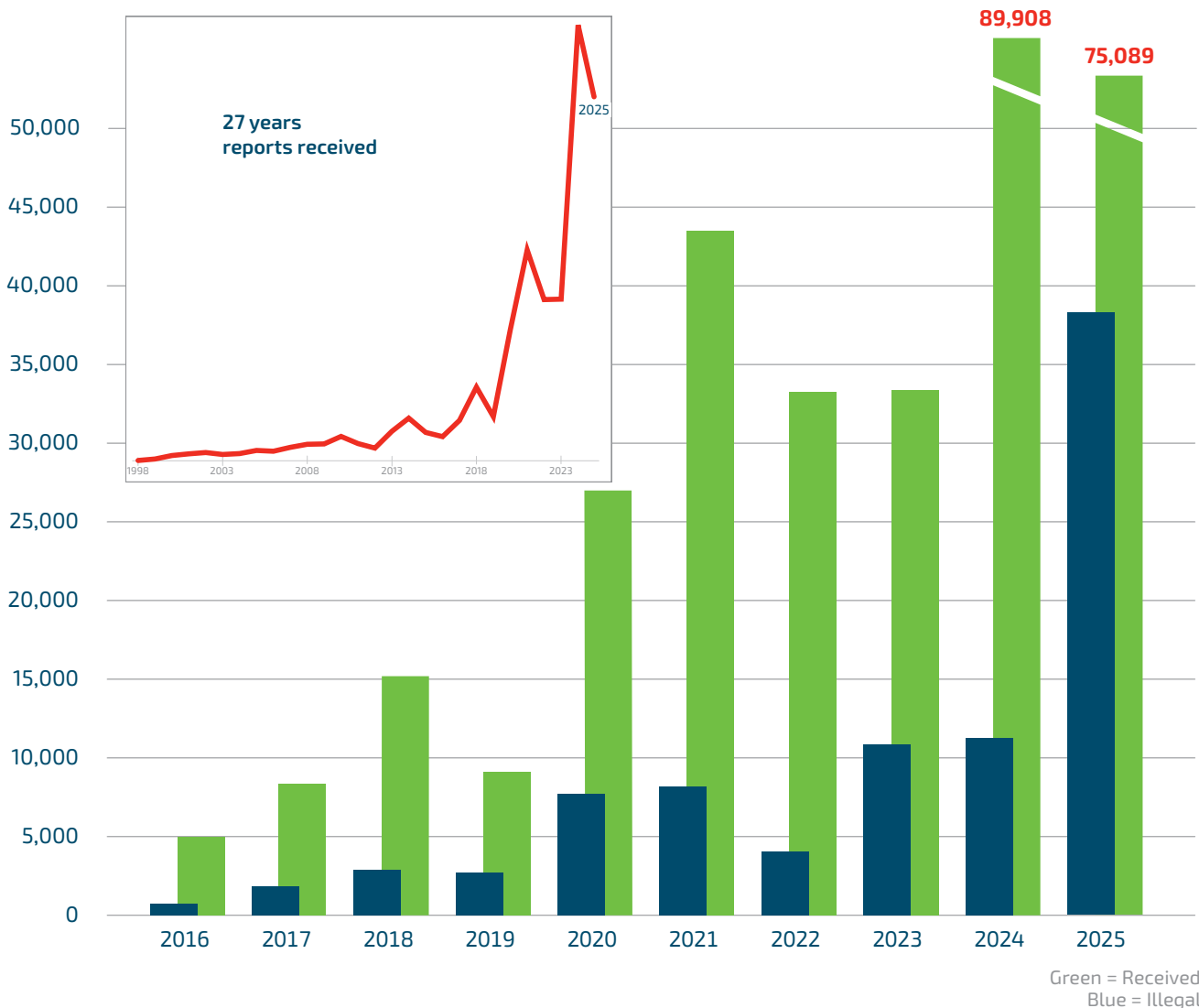
REPORTS
RECEIVED

100,548

ILLEGAL
REPORTS

Reports 1998 - 2025

Reports received vs actionable reports for the last 10 years (2016 – 2025)



HOW TO REPORT: SIMPLE & ANONYMOUS



Which content can you report?

Stoplevelne is responsible for processing reports regarding:

- Child sexual abuse material pursuant to section 207a Austrian Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch, StGB) and
- National Socialism in accordance with the National Socialism Prohibition Act 1947 (Verbotsgesetz) and the 1960 Austrian Abzeichengesetz which prohibits National Socialist regalia and symbols.

How can you report?

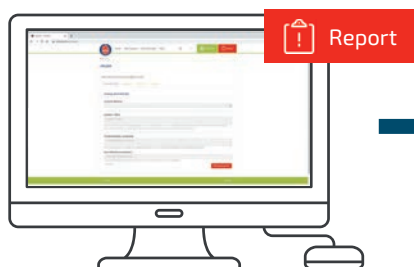
You can notify Stoplevelne of illegal content online – anonymously if you wish – in the following ways:

- using the online form at www.stoplevelne.at
- or by sending an e-mail to office@stoplevelne.at

No matter where on the internet you come across illegal content, do not hesitate to report it to Stoplevelne!



Illegal content?



www.stoplevelne.at



STOPLINE REPORTING PROCESS

DO NOT ACTIVELY SEARCH FOR ILLEGAL MATERIAL!

Under no circumstances should you personally search for any leads on the internet, nor should you send any images or screenshots to Stopline. This may in itself constitute a criminal offence. For Stopline to follow up the report, a source reference for the suspicious material that is as precise as possible (including passwords where available) is sufficient.

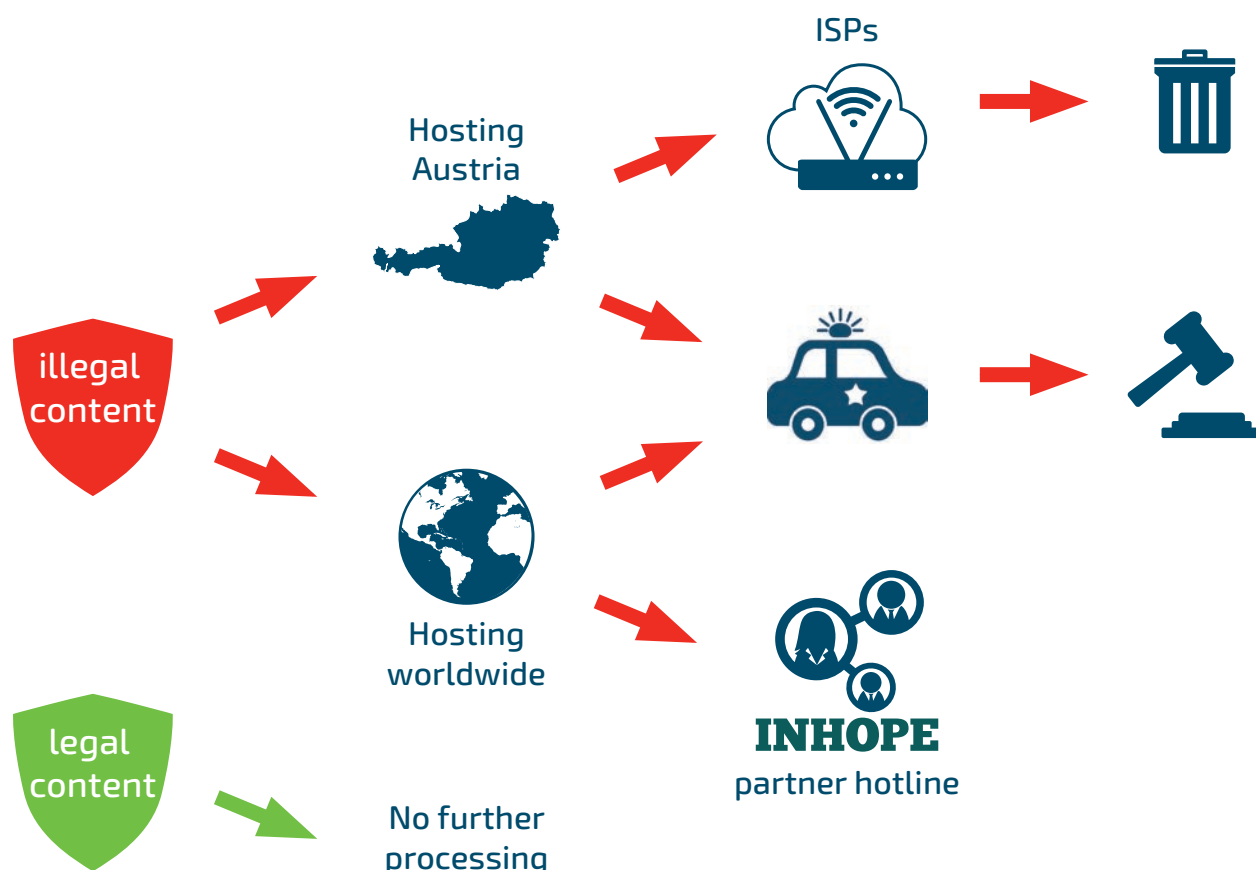
HOW DOES STOPLINE OPERATE?

The Stopline team members do not actively search for illegal content. Instead, they exclusively process incoming reports. These reports are submitted by vigilant internet users and international partner hotlines. For each reported content, Stopline verifies whether it contravenes the legal regulations concerning depictions of child sexual abuse or National Socialist resurgence.

Dealing with illegal content

As soon as Stopline categorizes content as illegal, it notifies the relevant law enforcement agency in Austria. For content featuring depictions of minor sexual abuse, the Federal Criminal Police Office (child pornography and child sex tourism reporting office) is responsible, while the Directorate of State Protection and Intelligence (DSN) handles National Socialist material. These agencies then initiate further measures to investigate the perpetrators and, if possible, the victims.

Simultaneously Stopline, an examination is conducted to determine which country is hosting the material, as the provider's country of origin is crucial for further processing (for details, see pages 8 - 9). If the content deemed illegal by Stopline is hosted in Austria, the reporting office informs the responsible Austrian host provider, ensuring that the content is promptly removed from the internet. Illegal content hosted abroad is forwarded by Stopline to the INHOPE partner hotline in the respective country (for details, see page 14).



REPORTS 2024 IN DETAIL

Record number of reports in 2025: One in two reports classified illegal

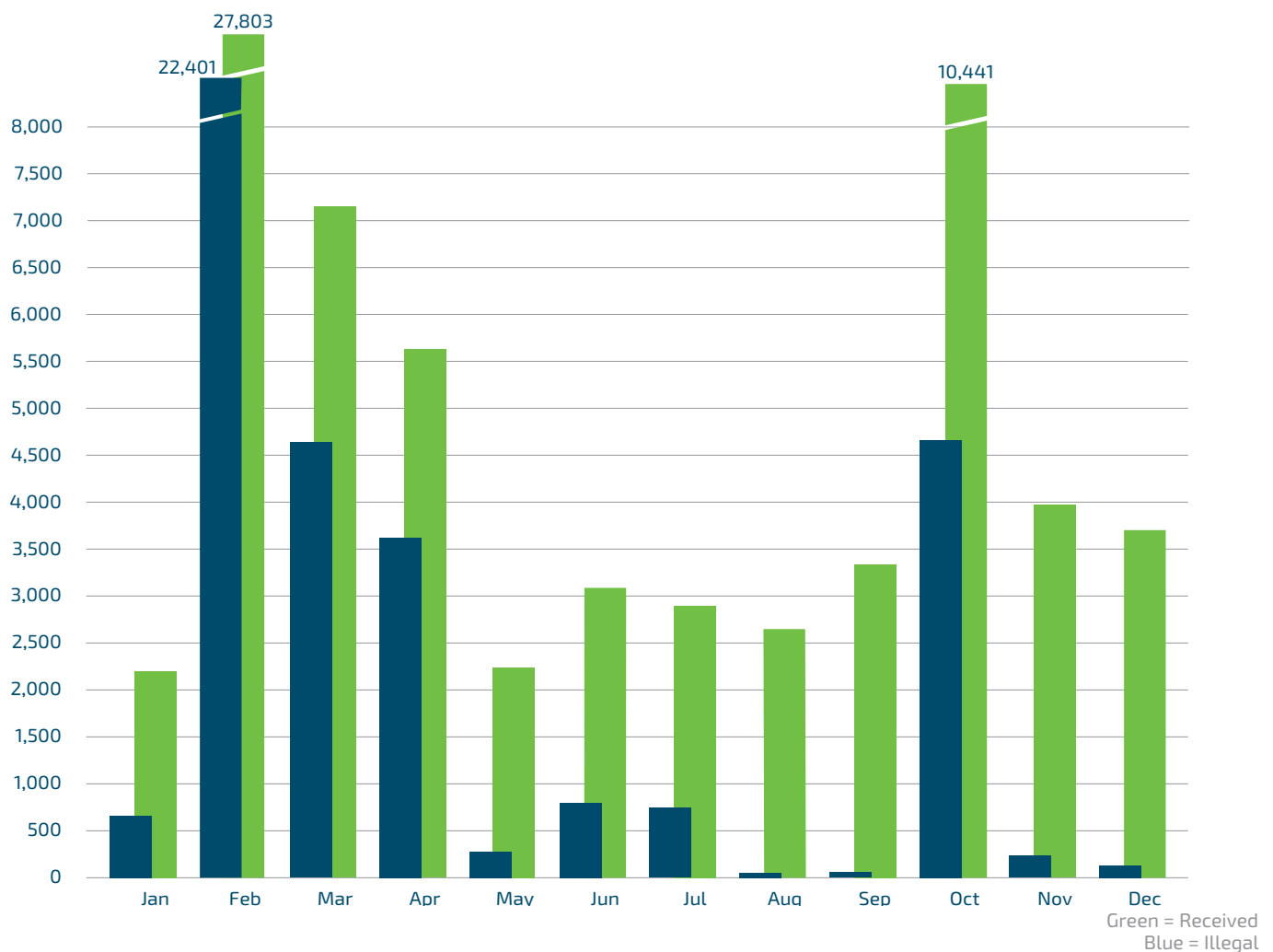
Following a record of around 90,000 reports in 2024, Stopline recorded a slight decline in 2025 to a total of 75,089 reports. However, this figure remains very high compared to the average of recent years.

Particularly alarming is the exceptionally high number of verified reports. With 38,264 reports, three times as many as in 2024 were classified as illegal: a new negative record! This means that one in two reports was verified to refer to illegal content.

75,089

REPORTS
RECEIVED
2025

Reports received vs actionable reports in 2025



Categorisation of reports in 2025 by Stopline

Stopline staff visually review every incoming report to determine whether it contains content relevant to criminal law. The figure of 38,264 illegal reports accounts for more than 50% of the total number of reports received.

This represents a steady increase compared to previous years (e.g. 33% in 2023, 47% in 2024), which is also clearly reflected in the workload involved in processing these reports.

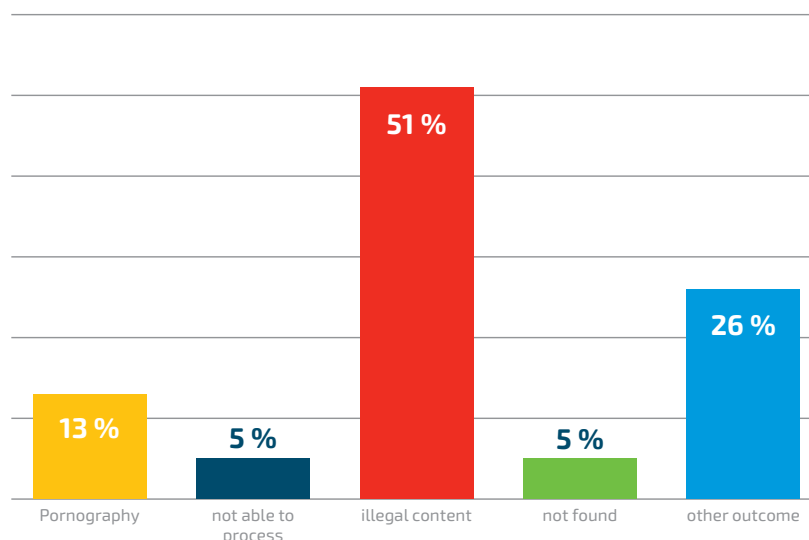
As in previous years, the majority, namely 38,223 cases, to depictions of sexual abuse of minors. In 41 reports, Stopline staff were able to identify a legal violation relating to national socialism.

38,223

CHILD SEXUAL
ABUSE MATERIAL

41

NATIONAL
SOCIALISM



Categorisation of reports by Stopline in 2025

What kind of content is reported?

Even though the proportion of reports involving genuinely illegal content is steadily rising, countless websites are still being reported to Stopline that have no criminal relevance whatsoever. These include depictions of legal adult pornography, but also other content that is entirely harmless.

Unfortunately, it often happens that it is not possible to process the report received. This may be due, for example, to the fact that content is only accessible via an account or upon payment, or that the URL provided is incorrect. Reported content may also no longer be traceable if another hotline, the police or the hosting provider has already dealt with or removed the obviously illegal content.

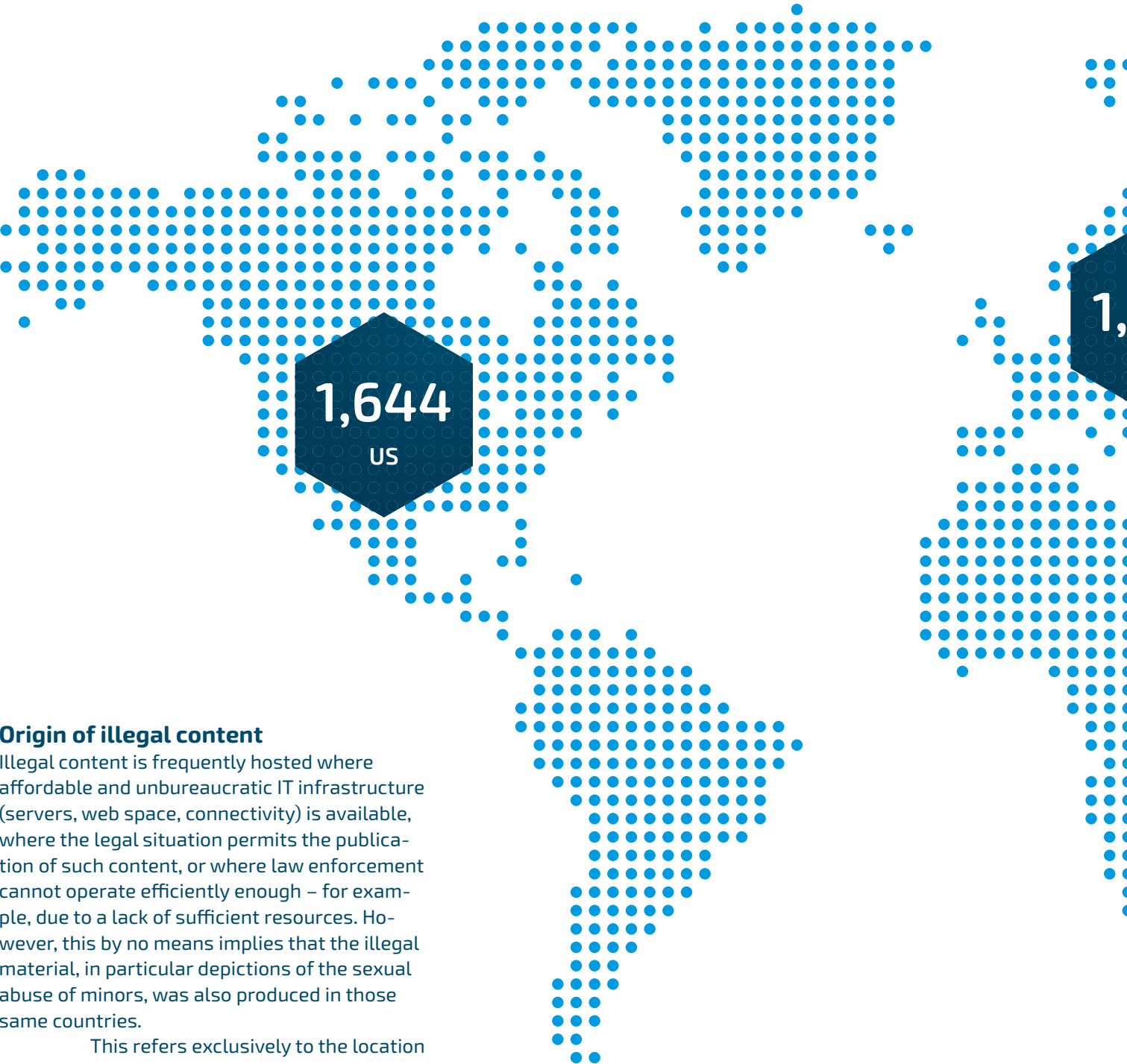
PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN!

When processing reported websites, Stopline staff repeatedly come across content that borders on the legal. Very often, this involves images of unclothed children at play, frequently very young children (e.g. children playing on the beach).

Hence our appeal:

Do not post photos of your children that you would not show to strangers in the street! Bear in mind: such photos can hardly ever be removed from the internet and there is a risk that they may be misused by criminals for sexual purposes!

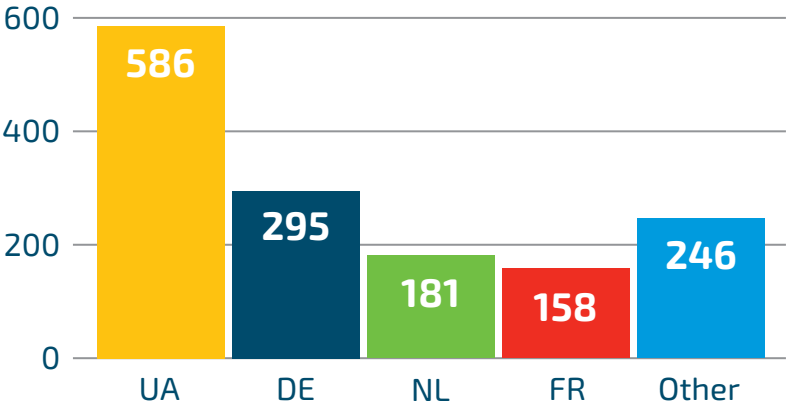
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN 2025



Origin of illegal content

Illegal content is frequently hosted where affordable and unbureaucratic IT infrastructure (servers, web space, connectivity) is available, where the legal situation permits the publication of such content, or where law enforcement cannot operate efficiently enough – for example, due to a lack of sufficient resources. However, this by no means implies that the illegal material, in particular depictions of the sexual abuse of minors, was also produced in those same countries.

This refers exclusively to the location where the prohibited content was published on the internet.



Most common hosting locations 2025 in Europe

UA - Ukraine, DE - Germany,
NL - Netherlands, FR - France



Consistent follow-up of reported content until its deletion

The country of origin of the hosting provider is crucial for the rapid removal of illegal content. Stopline staff therefore endeavour to determine the technical origin as accurately as possible. If this is outside Austria (for 2025: 100%), Stopline forwards the report to the relevant partner reporting centre, which, as part of the INHOPE network, is often directly connected to a shared global database.

In 2025, an increasing number of platforms in Vietnam and Iran were reported to Stopline; unfortunately, combating illegal content is very difficult in these countries and the providers are uncooperative.

A trend that has been evident for some time continued in 2025: for a total of 382 instances of illegal content, it was technically impossible to determine the country of origin. In many cases, this is due to the use of so-called “Dark Web” services, which are accessible via the TOR browser and thus leave no traceable digital footprint.

ILLEGAL REPORTS 2025

Where did reporters find the illegal content?

At www.stopline.at, internet users can specify a wide variety of sources for finding illegal content, including the World Wide Web (e.g. internet browsers), social media channels or newsgroups, as well as file-sharing services.

Whilst only a small amount of illegal content was reported regarding newsgroups and file-sharing services in 2025, one issue continues to feature in Stopline's statistics in a consistent, yet undeniable, manner: the so-called Dark Web, which can be accessed using a TOR browser.

This poses significant challenges for Stopline staff and their international partner hotlines, as well as the police: it is now very difficult to determine the origin of the illegal content and thus successfully contribute to its removal.



Who does Stopline inform about illegal content?

Cooperation with national and international partners plays a key role in removing illegal content from the internet.

If a hosting provider is based in Austria, Stopline contacts them directly to initiate the removal of the content from the internet, so that it can no longer be accessed by internet users. Stopline itself does not delete or block content, but can only issue recommendations for action. Austrian providers are aware of their responsibilities, so illegal content is usually deleted immediately. Thanks to the swift action of all parties involved – particularly the hosting providers – Austria has remained an unattractive location for posting illegal content online for years (not a single case reported to Stopline in 2025).

If the servers are located in other countries, Stopline draws on an international network of partner hotlines and authorities to take action against illegal content as quickly and effectively as possible. In 2025, only around 10% of reports of illegal content could be processed directly on site by a partner hotline in the country of origin, as the major hosting countries in 2025 – notably Vietnam and Iran – do not have a national INHOPE partner hotline. Unfortunately, this often delays and complicates the removal of illegal content enormously. In recent years, the proportion of illegal content originating from countries with a partner hotline has typically been over 70%.

In the remaining cases, Stopline works with the relevant reporting centres at the Federal Criminal Police Office (BK) or the Directorate for State Security and Intelligence Services (DSN) to initiate further prosecution of the illegal content through international police cooperation such as Interpol.

STOPLINE ACTIVITIES

The primary objective of Stopline is the swift and efficient removal of illegal content from the internet. This isn't only achievable due to the rapid and professional efforts of the Stopline team. The goal is accomplished year after year, thanks to strong partnerships, regular exchanges in various committees, and continuous press and public relations work.



NATIONAL COOPERATION

Stopline organises regular meetings of the Stopline Advisory Board and participates in the Saferinternet.at Advisory Board. In addition, Stopline is involved as a member of the National Forum against Anti-Semitism and the Advisory Board of the Safer Internet Centre for Digital Child Protection.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Through several INHOPE member and working group meetings, as well as numerous INHOPE webinars each year, there is an intensive exchange of experiences with partner hotlines based around the world.

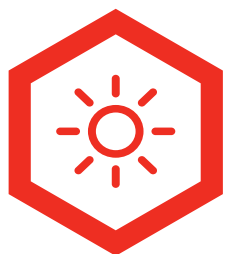


PRESS ACTIVITIES

The customary annual press conference of Stopline and ISPA, accompanied by the relevant press release, leads to extensive media coverage online, in print, and on the radio and TV. Interviews with journalists occur regularly throughout the year.

RAISING AWARENESS

Every year, Stopline participates in Safer Internet Day. To reach the widest possible audience, Stopline regularly posts articles on Facebook and X (former Twitter), where they explain the nature of illegal content and various internet hazards.



EMPLOYEE WELFARE

The work at Stopline, especially handling the consistently high volume of reports, is demanding. Hence, the Stopline staff members regularly partake in coaching and discussions with psychologists. Emphasis is also placed on cohesion within the team, which is promoted through joint activities.

MONTH WITH MOST REPORTS

Figures that the Stopline team had previously only seen in annual statistics: 28,000 reports in February - in just one month! A staggering 80% were deemed accurate and therefore illegal.



CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

What is illegal in Austria?

Since December 1, 2023, Section 207a of the Austrian Criminal Code has been called „Pictorial sexual child abuse material and pictorial sexual depictions of minors“. This refers to the depiction of sexual acts or images focusing on the genitals of persons under the age of 18. In Austria, any action in connection with this is prohibited: Knowingly accessing, producing, offering, procuring, providing, showing, possessing or otherwise making available. The spectrum ranges from images of unclothed children with a focus on their genitals to severe sexual violence.

Underestimated risk: sexting and grooming

A problematic development in this context does not stop Stopline's work: More and more minors photograph or film themselves performing sexual acts and publish these images online (sexting). With this self-portrayal, they not only make themselves liable to prosecution, but also unintentionally make this material available to consumers of pedophilic content.

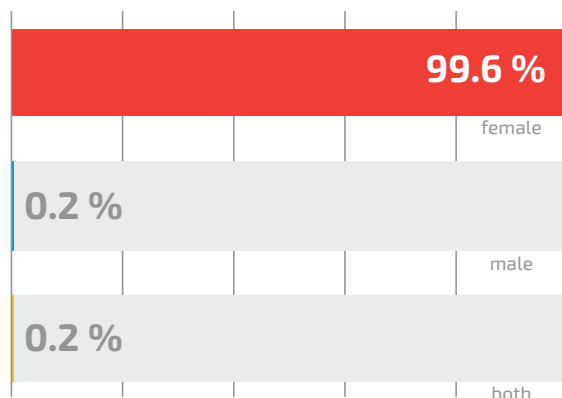
Grooming“, i.e. the initiation of sexual contacts with minors via the Internet is also punishable.

If you are not sure whether it is an illegal presentation, please let us know anyway. The Stopline staff members check for reported contents, if the depiction

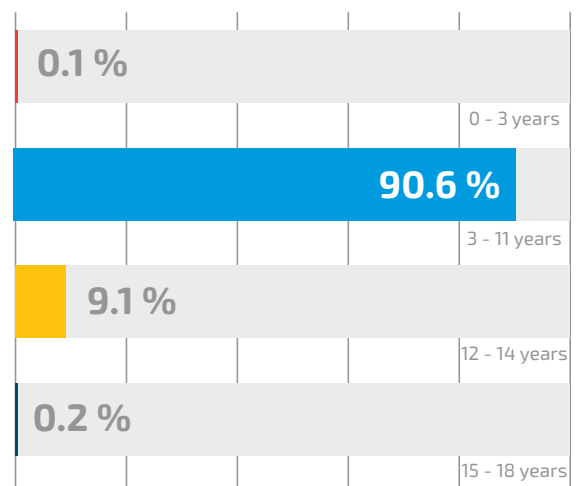
- shows an underage person
- depicts sexual acts or
- focuses on sexual parts.

REMINDER:

Be wary of posting pictures of your children - even seemingly harmless photos can be shared without your permission. You have no control over which websites they end up on.



Sexual abuse by sex in 2025



Sexual abuse by age in 2025

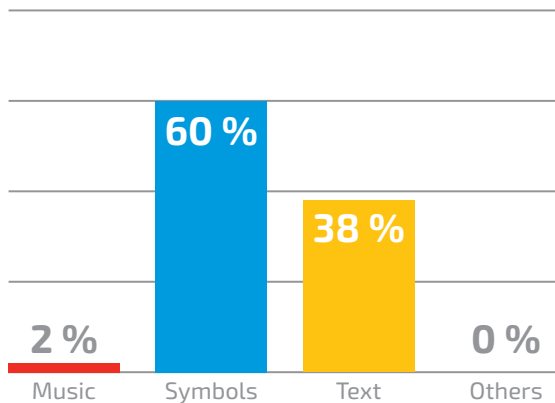
NATIONAL SOCIALISM

What actions are punishable by law?

National Socialist reaffirmation has many facets, but not every racist or inflammatory statement is automatically an endorsement of National Socialist ideas. In Austria, the denial of National Socialist crimes as well as the dissemination and glorification of National Socialist content count as re-activation and are punishable.

This also includes activities such as the dissemination of speeches by National Socialist functionaries, the heroicizing portrayal of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), Schutzstaffel (SS) or Sturmabteilung (SA), the founding of National Socialist associations, the recruitment of members for such an association or even mere participation in it.

ATTENTION:
Critical discussion of the subject is permitted.



National Socialism: Type of offence 2025

Historical reappraisal or criminal offense?

In combating National Socialist content on the Internet, the legal provisions according to the Prohibition and Badge Act are used as a basis in particular. Both provisions clearly state that it is not the critical discussion of the National Socialist past per se that is prohibited, but rather the endorsement of these activities, measures and ideas.

As a rule, the use of National Socialist images and texts is not punishable if it is clear from the depiction that it opposes National Socialism and its ideology. For example, a crossed-out swastika or a swastika above a trash can.

Prohibition and insignia law as a basis

If you are not sure whether the content is illegal national socialistic content, please contact Stoplevel. The employees check if it is one of the following contents:

- the denial of NS crimes
- the glorification of NS ideas or
- the representation of forbidden badges and uniforms

STOPLINE UND IHRE PARTNER

INHOPE – Association of Internet Hotline Providers

INHOPE is the global association of international hotlines for illegal material on the internet.

The shared aim of the 57 INHOPE reporting centres from 52 countries is to remove depictions of child sexual abuse from the internet and to protect young people from harmful and illegal use of the internet.

In addition, INHOPE is committed to the long-term establishment of new hotlines worldwide, so that the network can continue to grow. The rapid and secure exchange of information between INHOPE partners enables, amongst other things, the swift and efficient removal of illegal content from the internet.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERNET HOTLINES

INHOPE

57 MEMBERS

52 COUNTRIES

Exchange of reports and experiences

Learning from the experiences of others and working together to improve the efficiency of collaboration – this is what makes INHOPE such a valuable platform for its members.

New hotlines in particular can benefit from the years of practical experience of established reporting centres such as Stoplevel. Stoplevel, in turn, can contribute its expertise to the global fight against child sexual abuse material and utilise jointly developed technologies.

Further information is available at www.inhope.org.

SMALL HOTLINE – BIG IMPACT!

Stoplevel is one of the smaller hotlines in the international INHOPE network with over 57 partner hotlines. Despite the fact that just two staff members handle the rapidly growing number of reports, Stoplevel was once again among the hotlines that submitted a particularly large number of reports on illegal content to the shared INHOPE database in 2025.

Safer Internet Centre Austria

In collaboration with Saferinternet.at (realized by ÖIAT and ISPA), Rat auf Draht, Stopline comprises the „Safer Internet Centre Austria“. As the Austrian partner in the Safer Internet Network of the European Union (www.betterinternetforkids.eu), it offers comprehensive awareness-raising efforts for safe internet usage. The focus is on education and guidance in handling digital media.

www.saferinternet.at
www.rataufdraht.at
www.ispa.at

Saferinternet.at
Das Internet sicher nutzen!

ISPA
INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS AUSTRIA

147 RAT
auf Draht
von SOS-Kinderdorf



nic.at

 **Bundesministerium
Inneres**
Bundeskriminalamt

 **Bundesministerium
Inneres**
Direktion Staatsschutz
und Nachrichtendienst

Reporting offices of the Federal Ministry

Reporting offices of the Federal Ministry include the Federal Criminal Police Office (BK), which runs the police hotline for child pornography and child sex tourism on the internet.

The reporting office for National Socialist re-enactment within the executive branch is situated within the Directorate of State Protection and Intelligence (DSN).

www.bmi.gv.at/meldestellen

nic.at GmbH

nic.at serves as the registry for domains under .at, .co.at, and .or.at. Since its foundation by ISPA, Stopline has received financial support from nic.at.

www.nic.at

Stopline info material

is available for download at www.stopline.at
A print version of our brochure is also available
to order.

Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

Mehr Information über Stopline, die Österreichische Meldestelle gegen sexuelle Missbrauchsdarstellungen Minderjähriger und nationalsozialistische Wiederbetätigung im Internet, finden Sie hier: www.stopline.at

Owner and publisher:

Stopline

c/o nic.at GmbH
Jakob-Haringer-Straße 8/V
5020 Salzburg · Austria
office@stopline.at
www.stopline.at

Publication details:

Concept and editorial: Simone Binder,
Stefanie Rath, Carmen Ploner, Barbara Schloßbauer
Photos: Anna Rauchenberger/nic.at
gettyimages.com: MickeyCZ, WavebreakmediaLtd,
kyinny, yuelaan, ojoel, golubovy, susisonnschein 1979,
Georgethefourth, monsitj

Place of publication: Salzburg, April 2026

Graphic design: designkraft.at

Financed by:

