

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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The Irish national centre
combating illegal content online

CONTENT WARNING: Please be aware that the content enclosed relates to child sexual abuse and exploitation; as such some readers may find parts of the Annual Report uncomfortable or upsetting to read.

The publication aims to raise awareness and inform policy development in the area of child protection and online safety by providing facts and figures in respect of Hotline.ie national and international efforts undertaken to combat child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation online.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of our members, supporters, partners or the European Union.

THE TERM "CHILD PORNOGRAPHY"

In Ireland, the sexual abuse, sexual coercion and sexual exploitation of children are offences under the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 [as amended by the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017] and often referred to by their legal definition "child pornography". Child pornography includes any visual or audio representation, be it an image, audio recording,

a video, a drawing, pseudo-photograph (where the computer-generated image is almost indistinguishable from that of a real living child), or written material i.e. story about the sexual assault of a child. To accurately convey the gravity and nature of the material as well as challenge any notion that such acts may be carried out pursuant to the consent of the child, the term "child sexual abuse material" or "child sexual abuse imagery" will be used in this publication, unless the term is specifically referring to a legal definition.

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THANK YOU

Our work would not be possible without the incredible partnerships we have formed over the years, the support and ongoing collaboration between public-private sectors, law enforcement, online service providers operating from Ireland, and last but not least the public's readiness and willingness to report suspected illegal content online.

The Hotline.ie team would like to express our sincere heartfelt gratitude to everyone for the role they have played and continue to play for the protection of countless children in Ireland and abroad. Each have made important and unique contributions that have directly impacted on the success of this essential service, which is part of a wider national and global Safer Internet ecosystem.

We remain as committed as ever to further develop strategies, partnerships and leverage state of the art technology to combat the availability and proliferation of child sexual abuse online, disrupt the cycle of child sexual exploitation, prevent repeat-victimisation of children and ensure Ireland remains one of the most hostile hosting environments in the world.

You can also make a difference whether by reporting to us, funding us, or collaborating on technology, research and best practice development.

Thank you,

Hotline.ie team

CONTENTS

- 1 Foreword: Minister for Justice and Equality
- 2 Welcome from our President
- 3 Don't trivialise crimes against children
- 4 It's a Crime
- 5 About us
- 7 What to report
- 8 How to make a report & what happens next
- 9 Statistics & findings
- 10 Statistics & findings: at a glance
- 11 Statistics & findings: volume of reports received
- 13 Statistics & findings: Hotline.ie report classifications
- 15 Statistics & findings: Analyst testimonial



17 Statistics & findings:
reports classified as child
sexual abuse material

19 Statistics & findings:
the children in the imagery

20 Statistics & findings:
CSAM distribution

25 Statistics & findings: snapshot
of CSAM hosting patterns

29 Vicarious stress counselling,
caring for our staff

31 A Partnership
Approach

32 The Irish Safer
Internet Centre

33 Department of Justice
and Equality

34 Cooperation with law
enforcement agencies

35 Cooperation with other
national stakeholders on online
safety and child protection

36 Founding member of the
International Association of
Internet Hotlines, INHOPE

37 Our Members

Foreword: Minister for Justice and Equality

As Minister for Justice and Equality, I am pleased to have the opportunity to contribute the foreword to this Hotline.ie Annual Report for 2019.

In 2019, Hotline.ie completed another year of its commendable and difficult work as a vital avenue for members of the public to securely, anonymously and confidentially report suspected illegal content online, particularly child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Overseen by the Department of Justice and Equality, and collaborating with An Garda Síochána, Hotline.ie has carried out this work for 21 years with diligence and professionalism. Prioritising online safety is a key element in building stronger and safer communities under the new Programme for Government, *Our Shared Future*.

Recent years have seen considerable increases in the number of reports being received and actioned by Hotline.ie. As this report shows, 2019 saw a 79% increase in such reports on the previous year. On the one hand, this reflects increasing public engagement with the service, but on the other hand, it potentially demonstrates a concerning increase in illegal online child sexual abuse material.

As this Annual Report details, each of these anonymous reports from the public received by Hotline.ie can involve anything from a single image to thousands of images and videos. Every such image and video is a crime, and for each of these there is a victim, or victims, who have suffered abuse, and who are re-victimised each time their abuse is viewed as it is disseminated across the globe.



Combatting this illegal, harmful and predatory use of the Internet requires a collaborative, adaptive approach involving as many stakeholders as possible. It was particularly welcome then that Hotline.ie has recently published its new Code of Practice and reached out to relevant organisations to expand its membership.

I look forward to continued good cooperation with Hotline.ie as it carries out its important work.

Helen McEntee T.D.
Minister of Justice and Equality

Welcome from our President

On behalf of the board and members of Hotline.ie I would like to welcome you to our Annual Report, which provides an analysis of facts, figures and trends in tackling illegal content online.

In 2019, Hotline.ie received and assessed over 10,000 public reports which represent a 209% increase over the all-time annual average (3,482). Encouragingly, these statistics indicate that the public recognise and are willing to report abusive material when they see it.

On the back of these public reports, Hotline.ie identified more child sexual abuse material (CSAM) than ever before (2,575 reports), all of which has been removed from the Internet and reported to law enforcement for investigation.

These results were achieved in a more technologically advanced world with perpetrators becoming more technically adept at hiding CSAM across multiple platforms and jurisdictions. In 2019, Hotline.ie traced CSAM to 31 other countries which is testament of the global nature of this heinous crime against children. To learn more about the intricacy, ripple effect and tangible difference one report to Hotline.ie could make, I invite you to read the Analyst testimonial on page 15.

I would like to sincerely thank the Hotline.ie team. The board and members of Hotline.ie are hugely grateful for their relentless focus to curb the availability of CSAM and prevent repeat victimisations of children who have suffered from sexual abuse. I would also like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the oversight and ongoing support of the Department of Justice and Equality, and the invaluable collaboration with An Garda Síochána.



We remain committed to working in conjunction with the wider national ecosystem tackling child sexual exploitation, international partners and our members, towards our common goal of achieving greater protections for children. At the same time, we remain hopeful that the wider online service providers industry operating from Ireland will see merit in joining forces with us and supporting the vital work of Hotline.ie.

Whilst some of the Hotline.ie 2019 findings make for very uncomfortable reading, I hope you find our Annual Report to be an informative read and we look forward to reporting further progress next year.

Alan Shanley
President of the Hotline.ie
Board of Management

DON'T TRIVIALISE CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN

 The images and videos we are witness to each day display horrific abuse of children, in most cases younger than 12. Their suffering is real. It's not pornography, it is child sexual abuse. The words that we use to refer to this crime against the most vulnerable in society matter. If you are not referring to the legal definition, we urge you to use respectful terms to avoid trivialising the physical and psychological harm suffered by victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. This would also challenge any attempt by perpetrators to normalise these acts. – Eoin, Hotline.ie Analyst

In Ireland, the sexual abuse, sexual coercion and sexual exploitation of children are offences under the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 [as amended by the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017] and are often referred to by their legal definition "child pornography".

As provisioned by the Irish law "child pornography" includes any visual or audio representation, be it an image, audio recording, a video, a drawing, pseudo-photograph (i.e. where the computer-generated image is almost indistinguishable from that of a real living child), or written material e.g. story about the sexual assault of a child.

However, as outlined in the Luxembourg Terminology Guidelines for the protection of children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, the term 'pornography' is primarily used to describe consensual sexual acts between adults.

Therefore, to accurately convey the gravity and nature of the images and videos we deal with, whilst challenging any notion that such acts may be carried out pursuant to the consent of the child (any person under the age of 18 years), we will use the term "child sexual abuse material" (CSAM) or "child sexual abuse imagery" (CSAI), unless the term is specifically referring to a legal definition.

IT'S A CRIME

It's a crime to
engage in any sexual acts with a
child under the age of 17 years

It's a crime to
invite, induce, counsel or incite a child
under the age of 15 years, to any form
of sexual touching

It's a crime to
engage in any form of sexual activity in
the presence of a child under the age
of 17 years

It's a crime to
cause a child under the age of 17 years
to watch or observe any sexual, indecent
or obscene acts

It's a crime to
send sexually explicit material (any
indecent or obscene images, videos or
words) to a child under the age of 17 years

It's a crime to
possess any child pornography

It's a crime to
knowingly produce, distribute, transmit, disseminate, print, publish, import, export,
sell, show, supply or make available any child pornography

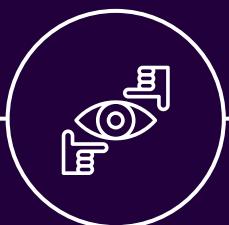
It's a crime to
knowingly advertise, by any means, that the advertiser or any other person produces,
distributes, transmits, disseminates, prints, publishes, imports, exports, sells, shows,
supplies or makes available any child pornography

ABOUT US



Who we are

Hotline.ie is the Irish national centre of expertise combatting illegal content online. We also provide a web-reporting service where members of the public can securely, anonymously and confidentially report suspected illegal content online, especially child sexual abuse material.

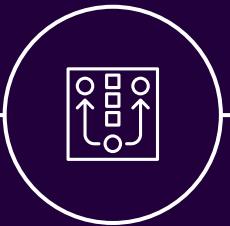


Vision & Mission

Our vision is an Internet rid of child sexual abuse imagery and a digital world with no tolerance to online child sexual exploitative acts and conduct.

Hotline.ie exists to:

- reduce the incidence of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) online;
- disrupt the cycle of child sexual exploitation online;
- help CSA victims and survivors by removing CSAM from the Internet and preventing their repeat-victimisation;
- act as conduit between Industry and law enforcement to ensure swift CSAM removal whilst the children in the imagery may be identified and safeguarded;
- maintain a zero-tolerance approach to online child sexual exploitation and ensure Ireland remains a hostile hosting environment;



Tackling a global problem

Since inception (est. 1999), we've been working closely with a diverse mix of Government and inter-governmental agencies, law enforcement, the European Commission, online service providers and civil society organisations. Hotline.ie is also a founding member of INHOPE (the International Association of Internet Hotlines) having recognised, early on, that decisive action and international reach for the swift removal of CSAM from the Internet irrespective of where in the world it may be hosted, require trusted and vetted international partnerships and cross border cooperation.



Funding

Our work is co-financed by the European Union through Grant Aid under the Connecting Europe Facility: Safer Internet Programme and by our Members through membership fees. As a non-for-profit our resources are finite and we would like to encourage everyone to play their part whether by reporting suspected content to us, funding us, or collaborating on the development of best practices, technology and research. Together we can achieve much more in the fight against child sexual exploitation online.

What to report

Hotline.ie only handles reports referring to suspected illegal content encountered online. Urgent situations where persons may be in immediate danger should always be reported directly to An Garda Síochána.



You can securely, anonymously and confidentially report to [Hotline.ie](#)

- Child sexual abuse material (image, video, text, non-photographic child sexual abuse content etc.)
- Activities relating to the sexual exploitation of children i.e. child grooming
- Racism & Xenophobia
- Financial scams which purport to be Irish financial services or have Irish contact details or appear to have originated from Ireland

Most of the reports we receive are anonymous and refer to suspected child sexual abuse material online.

We know that seeing images and videos of child sexual abuse is upsetting, but if you accidentally come across such content online reporting it to us is the right thing to do, and decisive action will be taken against it.

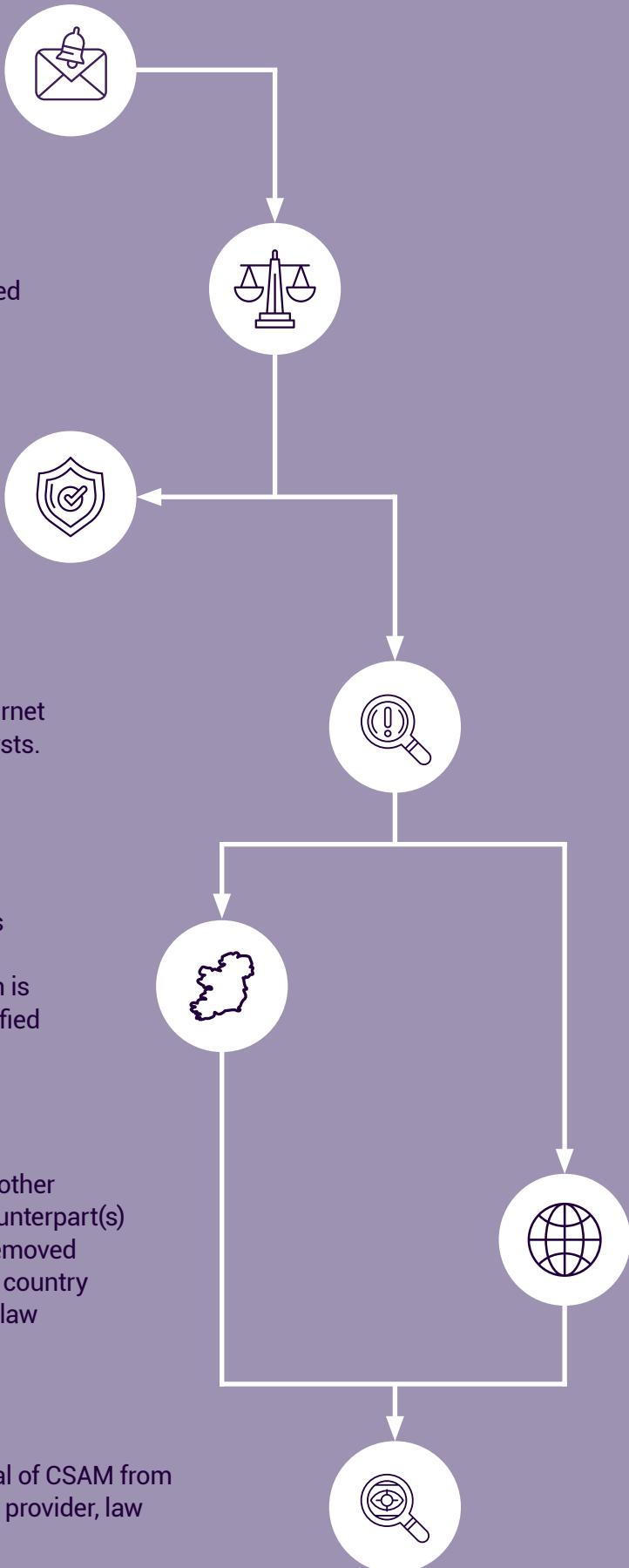
Each report we received is manually assessed by our highly skilled, internationally trained Analysts. Their assessments are accurate and trusted by law enforcement, Internet Industry and INHOPE counterparts.

Hotline.ie is not currently mandated, under agreed operational procedures by the Department of Justice and Equality and law enforcement, to undertake pro-active search of illegal content on the Internet.

We will take action to have content removed from the Internet only if the reported content is classified by our Analysts as potentially illegal under the Irish law.

How to make a report & what happens next

Go to www.hotline.ie and click on 'make a report' to anonymously and securely submit a report.



Each report is analysed and classified in accordance with Irish law by our highly trained and certified Analysts.

When a report is classified as 'not illegal', no further action is taken.

When a report is classified as CSAM, the Internet location of the content is traced by our Analysts.

CSAM accessible from Ireland: simultaneous notice is sent to (1) An Garda Síochána & (2) the appropriate online service provider which is then responsible for the removal of the specified content from the Internet.

CSAM accessible in Ireland but hosted from other country(ies): notice is sent to the INHOPE counterpart(s) in the source country(ies) to have it swiftly removed at source. If there is no hotline in the hosting country the report is dealt with through international law enforcement channels.

As required, our Analysts monitor the removal of CSAM from the Internet and liaise with the online service provider, law enforcement and INHOPE counterparts.

STATISTICS & FINDINGS

Context:

Child protection and online safety is a matter of public interest and policy where cybercrime, legislation, corporate social responsibility, as well as civic responsibility intersect.

Hotline.ie provides a vital service, part of a wider national ecosystem for combatting child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation which involves Government, law enforcement, children's services, child welfare NGOs, the judicial system and online service providers, underpinned by cross-border cooperation.

Our team, of highly skilled expert Analysts, spends every working day manually assessing some of the most challenging content imaginable. On the back of public reports, we have identified and removed more child sexual abuse imagery from the Internet year on year. We work in close collaboration with law enforcement and international partners to ensure child sexual abuse material is swiftly removed at source, irrespective of where in the world it may be hosted, and that the children in the imagery may be identified and safeguarded. For more information please see A Partnership Approach.

Purpose:

The Hotline.ie Annual Report is a publication which aims to raise awareness and inform policy development in the area of child protection and online safety by providing facts and figures in respect of Hotline.ie efforts undertaken to combat child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation online.

While not exhaustive, the figures and findings included hereinafter are meant to highlight some of the challenges and achievements in tackling the distribution, availability and proliferation of child sexual abuse online.

A lot has been achieved over the years, but we cannot afford to become complacent. We recognize the need to continually evaluate, adapt and simultaneously call into question what more can be done through collaborative national and European efforts to better protect children as they deserve nothing less.

We encourage anyone working in this area to use our statistics to help inform their valuable work, and we are confident that through ongoing collaboration and partnership-building complementary strategies may be developed to hopefully one day eradicate child sexual abuse from the Internet.

The Dataset:

The dataset, unless otherwise specified, refers to the period from January 1st to December 31st 2019. The figures and findings included in this publication are predicated only on reports received from the public by Hotline.ie. These should not be interpreted as being indicative of the full extent of child sexual abuse production, distribution, consumption and even commercialisation.

The percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Statistics & findings: at a glance

1 in 4 

reports led to child sexual abuse material

in 2019, a quarter (2,575) of all publically sourced reports (10,773) were classified as CSAM leads, compared to an eighth of reports in 2018.

32  countries

predicated on geographic IP lookups, CSAM appeared to be hosted from 32 countries in 2019, including Ireland. 53% of CSAM appeared to be hosted in the Netherlands, whilst 0.3% in Ireland.

30 

reports classified as financial scam and as racism & xenophobia

Whilst most of the reports we receive quote CSAM suspicion; in 2019, 315 reports quoted financial scam suspicion and 89 racism & xenophobia. Subsequently 13 reports were classified as financial scams ranging from phishing websites to more subtle attempts purporting to be Irish organisations. The remaining 17 led to dehumanising racist commentary and "white supremacy" type of content, and thus were classified racism & xenophobia.

79% 

increase in reports classified as CSAM benchmarked against 2018 CSAM figures (1,437 reports), 2019 statistics reveal a significant increase in the number of reports classified as CSAM under Irish law.

83% 

of CSAM reports showed children estimated to be 4 to 12 years old

the age group was also predominantly (82%) present in the most severe forms of CSAM, namely penetrative sexual activity between adult and children, and sadistic sexual torture involving a child.

50% 

of reports were classified as not illegal

in 2019, 5,757 reports of all received were classified as NOT illegal. The most predominant content, 1 in 2 reports, referred to (legal) adult pornographic content, whilst the second highest, 1 in 9, to (legal) but extreme (e.g. violent nature) adult content.

*Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number

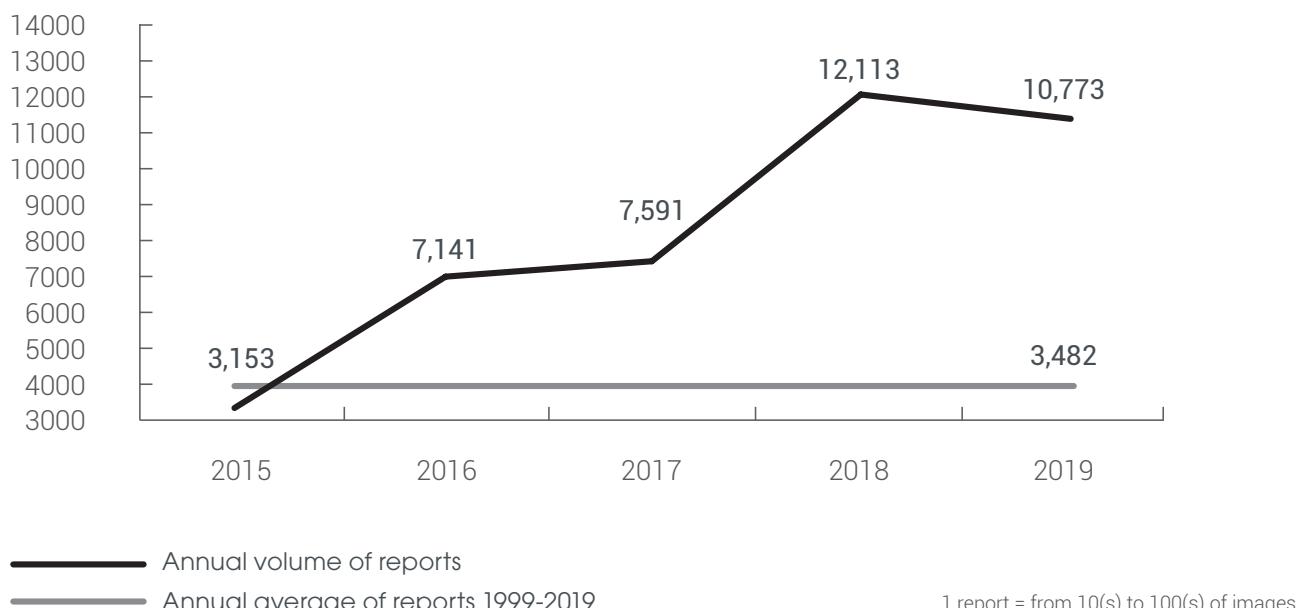
Statistics & findings: volume of reports received

One “report” means a “single” publicly sourced reference of suspected illegal online content received by Hotline.ie. In most cases the “single” reference contains or leads to hundreds of items (i.e. images, videos, list of hyperlinks to other webpages).

Although we received 10,773 publicly sourced reports for just the second time since inception (1999), 2019 also records a minor decrease in the annual volume of reports from the previous year. However, this is not a time to be complacent. When benchmarked against our all time annual average (3,482 reports) 2019 still marks an increase of 209% in reports received and processed by Hotline.ie.

Our internationally (INHOPE/INTERPOL) trained Analysts manually assess each public report received and sift through thousands of images and videos to identify quality leads. Subsequently, these leads are simultaneously notified to the appropriate online service provider for swift removal of the child sexual abuse imagery from the Internet, and to law enforcement, thus ensuring the children in the imagery may be identified and safeguarded.

Annual volume of reports received by Hotline.ie



51% (37,618)
of all time reports made to Hotline.ie

were received over the last 4 years
2016-2019

When a report is submitted to Hotline.ie by a member of the public, there is usually a specific reason for the report that is given or implied by the reporter, to which we refer to as a "suspicion". In the event of a report submitted to Hotline.ie without a declared "suspicion" the label "other" is assigned by default. The information provided by the reporter is not altered in any way. Following report assessment our Analysts will assign a

classification which can either confirm or differ from the reporter's suspicion.

In 2019, 85% of reports received quoted "child pornography" (child sexual abuse material) as a suspicion. The infographic below showcases the outcome of our assessment and classification of each of the reports received in 2019.



Breakdown by reporting channel

Publicly-sourced reports	9,728
Derived reports	1,045



Total 2019 reports

10,773



Breakdown by Hotline.ie classification

Content already removed	318
Non-actionable reports	2,093
Insufficient detail	349
Outside Hotline.ie remit	574
Other (not found & not accessible)	1,166
Query	4

NOT-illegal (Total)	5,757
Adult pornography	3,150
Extreme adult content	631
Age inappropriate child posing	775
Other Not-Illegal	1,201

ILLEGAL (Total)	2,605
Child pornography (CSAM)	2,575
Racism and xenophobia	17
Financial scam	13

Statistics & findings: Hotline.ie report classifications

Our expert Analysts assess each report received within Hotline.ie remit, in accordance with rigorous standards and by reference to Irish law, especially the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 (as amended by the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017), and the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989. Hotline.ie does not make moral judgements as to what type of content should or should not be on the Internet.

Not illegal

Not illegal is an overarching category which incorporates four individual classifications namely, adult pornography, extreme adult content, age inappropriate child posing and other not illegal. When the content "in itself" is not assessed as contrary to Irish law it receives the "not illegal" classification and no further action will be taken by Hotline.ie.

The adult pornography classification is applied when the individuals featured in the imagery are assessed as over 18 years of age (as provisioned by Irish law)

The extreme adult content classification refers to content which is not contrary to Irish law but would be of a violent nature or upsetting to certain people.

The age inappropriate child posing classification refers to imagery which does not meet the threshold set out in the Irish law for "child pornography" but may be age inappropriate, for example a child in swimwear posing explicitly. However, if the image is accompanied by additional contextual information i.e. sexual comments and where the content is hosted in Ireland, our Analysts will reach out to the online service provider seeking the content's removal under the Hotline.ie Code of Practice or their own Terms and Conditions.

The other not illegal classification refers to instances where the content found by Analysts at the reported specified location is not contrary to Irish law and where none of the previous three categories would fit, for example reports about news articles, satire, youtube videos of children arguing, etc.

Non-actionable reports

Non-actionable reports is an overarching category which incorporates four individual classifications, namely insufficient detail, outside Hotline.ie remit, other (not accessible & not found) and query.

Insufficient detail. This classification is assigned when a reporter does not provide sufficient information for our Analysts to ascertain which content is being reported or how to access it. This would occur for example if a URL (link) is not provided, or if a large website is referred without any indication of suspicion, content being reported or how/where to find it.

Outside Hotline.ie remit refers to any issues which are not covered by Hotline.ie stated remit, such as but not limited to: copyright infringement, spyware allegations, sale of drugs, sale of documents or personal data, trade of endangered species, money-laundering allegations, etc.

Other (not accessible & not found), where Not Accessible is assigned when one of the following occurs: (i) the domain name does not exist, (ii) the domain resolves but the server is no longer

functioning, (iii) the website requires payment for registration to the section reported but login details are not provided by the reporter, or (iv) in the case of P2P the file is no longer being shared. Not Found is recorded when reports refer to a specific location whilst at the time of assessment our Analysts cannot find any content of the nature described in the report at said location (or linking from it) and there is nothing to suggest that it was removed, or when a 404 error "page not found" is returned.

Query: in some cases queries submitted to Hotline.ie may progress to a full report. When this happens the outcome of the assessment is recorded in the appropriate category i.e. CSAM. Members of the public wishing to submit a query within Hotline.ie's remit or to receive a report acknowledgement and response should opt for the submission of a non-anonymous report and ensure to include a name and email address. Any personal data relating to a non-anonymous report will be deleted within ninety days from completion of the assessment. For more details please read our Privacy Statement available on www.hotline.ie

Content already removed

Content already removed is recorded by our Analysts when the reported webpage, clearly states that content was removed. This may occur where the content owner no longer wishes to make it available and has deleted it; the content was actioned in the meantime through other means or it was in breach of the online service provider

Terms & Conditions. In such a case our Analysts have no way of knowing beyond a reasonable doubt whether the content would have been potentially illegal under Irish law and as such the only classification that can be assigned is content already removed.

Statistics & findings: Analyst testimonial



One report might not sound like a lot; however more often than not, one report means hundreds or thousands of images of child sexual abuse. I will use one report from 2019 to exemplify.

One anonymous report to Hotline.ie led to a website advertising links together with descriptions suggestive of child sexual abuse, each leading to hundreds of images and videos. In total, 21,798 images and 1,583 videos were manually assessed and classified. Of these 8,132 images and 1,132 videos were classified as the worst of the worst child sexual abuse material.

The depth of abuse witnessed was immense. The content depicted children of all ages, nationalities and genders being subjected to sexual abuse by men and women, or being forced to act out sexual activity while being filmed or photographed.

The images and videos ranged from high resolution to low, from studio-produced material to homemade production. Some of the videos would last seconds, whilst others were over an hour long.

Aside from manifestly child sexual abuse imagery, a significant proportion of the imagery classified as not illegal, displayed legal adult content.

All of the content assessed and classified as child sexual abuse imagery was hosted in Western Europe, however it's important to note that hosting (Internet location) is not always indicative of where the content was produced or uploaded to the Internet. In this particular case, details in the imagery pointed to locations all over the world; with visual evidence of children in hotel rooms in south-east Asia, homes in South America, America and Europe.

This type of report is not a rare occurrence. As Analysts we have noted time and time again a website displaying child sexual abuse imagery whilst advertising further content on another that can be readily accessed. Superimposed, the imagery is often hosted in multiple countries and so what might seem like just one report can be a complex maze.

A report like this serves as a clear reminder that child sexual abuse and exploitation is a global problem, from the abuse committed, to its recording, its distribution and its consumption.

Sean, Hotline.ie Analyst

Statistics & findings: Analyst testimonial, Case Study

1

anonymous report
to Hotline.ie

21,798 images & **1,583** videos
manually assessed and classified

8,132 images & **1,132** videos
the worst of the worst child sexual abuse imagery

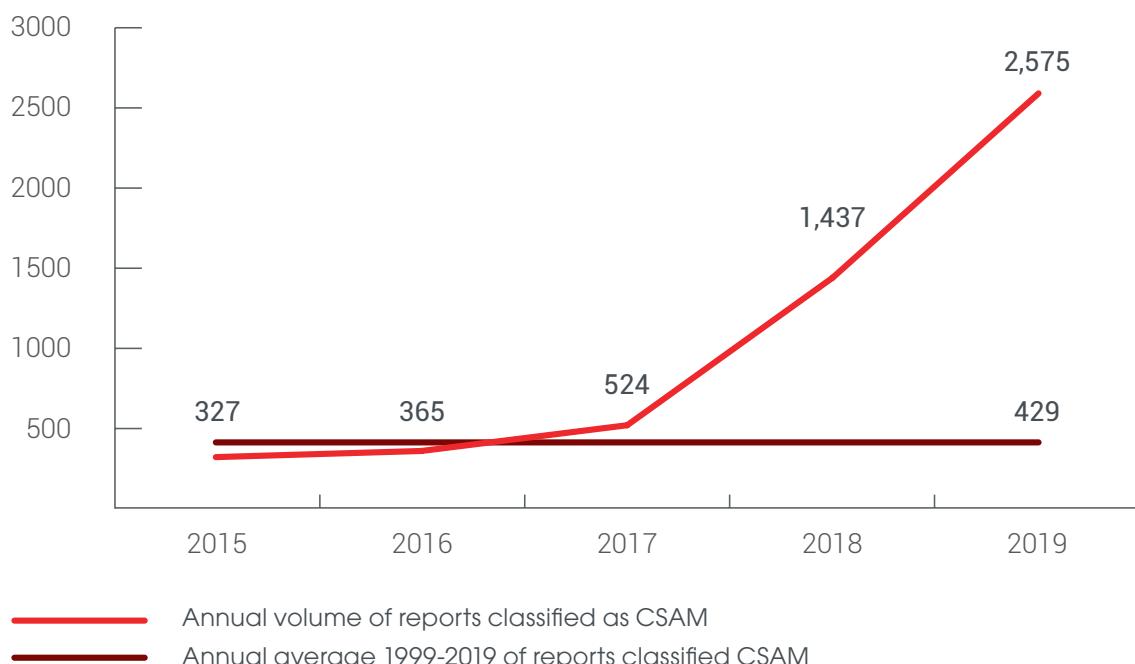
child victims, boys & girls from
around the globe

Statistics & findings: reports classified as child sexual abuse material

Our expert Analysts only review and assess materials which is submitted to Hotline.ie by the public or uncovered in the course of assessing a public report. Hotline.ie is not mandated under current operational procedures approved and overseen by the Department of Justice and Equality to actively search out child sexual abuse material on the Internet. As such this report is limited to information predicated on incidences of child sexual abuse material distributed primarily on the open public Internet and through commonly used services where unsuspecting members of the public accidentally came across it.

The graphic below shows the evolution of reports classified as child sexual abuse material per year and benchmarked against the annual average of all time reports classified same. You will note that since 2016 there has been a significant, year on year, increase in the incidence of reports classified by our highly skilled Analysts as constituting child pornography, as defined by the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 [amended by the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017].

Annual volume of reports classified as child sexual abuse material

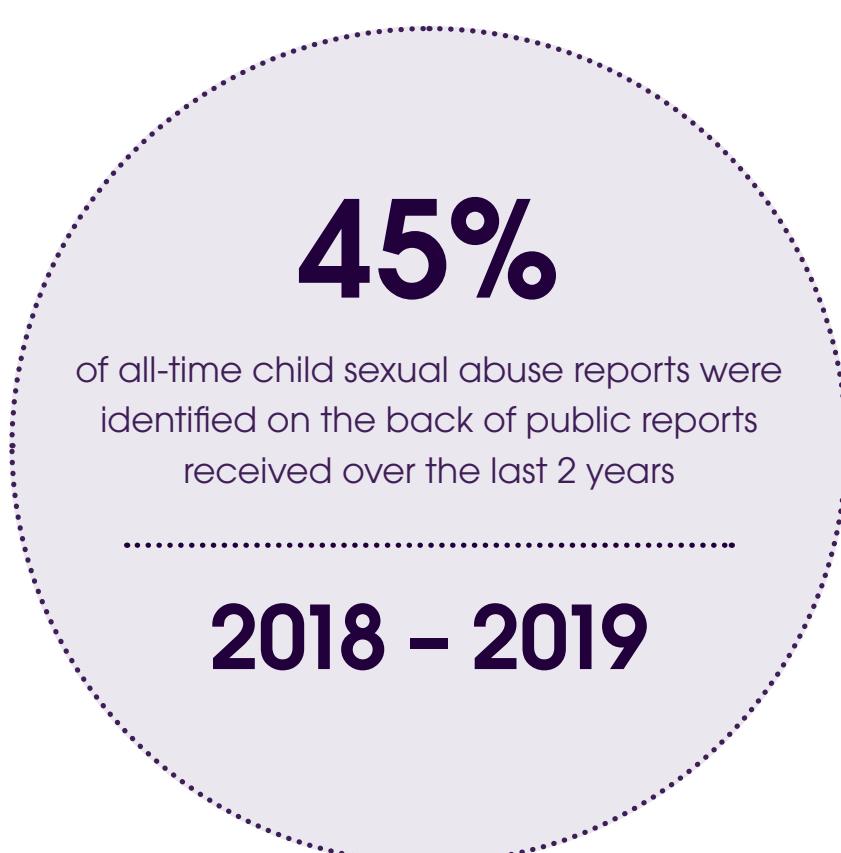


In 2019 Hotline.ie identified and removed the highest number of child sexual abuse material reports since its inception (1999).

Benchmarked against 2018 figures, it constitutes a marked increase of 79%, whilst against the all-time annual average (429 reports) a 265% rise in reports classified as child sexual abuse material in 2019.



With each child sexual abuse reference (website, image, video, etc.) we remove from the Internet, there is one less instance of re-victimisation and a chance to give voice to an unidentified child who may be suffering in silence, often out of fear, often because they are too young to even speak. While I hope for a day when such imagery ceases to exist, until then, I welcome any opportunity to contribute to its end. – [Eoin, Hotline.ie Analyst](#)



45%

of all-time child sexual abuse reports were identified on the back of public reports received over the last 2 years

2018 – 2019

Statistics & findings: the children in the imagery

2,575

Reports classified
as child sexual
abuse material

in most cases each containing hundreds to thousands of images or videos

Gender breakdown

3%
Boys 

83%
Girls 

14%
Both (girls & boys) 

Age breakdown

83%
of CSAI in 2019 displayed
pre-pubescent children
aged 4 to 12 years of age.

7%
of CSAI in 2019 displayed
infant children aged 3
and younger.

10%
of CSAI in 2019 displayed
pubescent children aged
13 to 16 years of age.

Severity

14%

explicit sexual
posing of a child
with emphasis
on genital area

8%

explicit sexual
activity of a
child, no adult
visible

10%

non-penetrative
sexual activity
between adults
and children

62%



6%

sadistic
sexual torture
/ bestiality
involving a child

91%

of this imagery showed infants and
children 4 to 12 years of age.

Statistics & findings: CSAM distribution

*Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number

**2,575 reports classified as child sexual abuse material, in most cases each containing hundreds to thousands of images or videos

Banner/link site



Top CSAM gateway service

Cyberlocker



Top CSAM end-destination service 2019

Video streaming



Top most reported under CSAM suspicion, whilst only 1.2% confirmed

Web search results



Least reported under CSAM suspicion, whilst 0.3% confirmed

URL Referrers - disguised CSAM websites



Adnetworks used as part of the CSAM distribution chain



Payment required to access more CSAM



CSAM websites advertising & linking to other similar resources



Analysing the methods for CSAM distribution, our Analysts have noted that perpetrators do not abandon old platforms to move with the latest technology and trends onto the latest fora for communications. Instead the distribution of online child sexual abuse expands across all available digital mediums. Our Analysts have identified that some online services are being misused to act as gateway, whilst others as "end-destination".

For example, in 2019, banner/link sites were the top CSAM gateway (299% increase over the number of CSAM banner/link reports recorded in 2018).

A banner/link site is a website or webpage made up of adverts for other websites with text links (in most cases) or images that take you to third-party websites when you click on them.

Banner/link sites were found to most likely direct to cyberlockers (Internet hosting services specifically designed to host (store) user's files), the most prevalent CSAM "end-destination" in 2019.

By means of comparison, forums were the top CSAM gateway in 2018 (35% of all child sexual abuse reports), whilst in 2019 the incidence of forums distributing CSAM decreased significantly, now accounting for only 15% of the 2,575 reports. Forums continue to be commonly used by groups of like-minded individuals as means of communication for nefarious purpose.

Statistics & findings: CSAM distribution



It can be quite jarring to witness individuals conversing so casually about the sexual abuse and exploitation of defenceless children, as if they are a commodity. The discussions attempting to normalise, legitimise or justify the consumption and production of child sexual abuse material may be as unsettling as the content itself."

– Sean, Hotline.ie Analyst

CONTENT WARNING: sexually explicit language which some readers may find distressing:

"We are girl-lovers, paedophiles, hebephiliacs. We are not child-molesters, rapists, or monsters. We strive to be the place where we can use words such as, "respect" and "morals" as opposed to, "fuck-toy" and "slut". We don't want you to give up your lust for little girls but we do ask that you have a decent attitude if you choose to join us. If your focus is solely on sex, maybe we're not for you. If this sounds like a group you want to be a part of, please join us. We're happy to have you." – encountered by our Analysts in the course of investigating a public report.

Sometimes the links shared or advertised in these forums lead to websites which contain previews of child sexual abuse imagery and payment walls or content trading to gain access to the community and further imagery.

We use the term "commercial" CSAM to refer

to images and videos which in our professional opinion appear to have been produced or are being used for the purpose of financial gain by the distributor. Layers of payment mechanisms, content stores, membership systems, advertising frames, pre-paid cards, credit systems, text message payments, and virtual currencies make the commercial nature less obvious at times.

In 2019, our Analysts noted that in 15% of reports classified as CSAM, digital advertising networks and legitimate brand owners were exploited as part of the CSAM dissemination chain to fraudulently generate revenue. Additionally, 18% of the reports led to websites displaying previews of child sexual abuse imagery and requesting payment to gain access to full galleries.

More so, certain "brands" of dedicated CSAM websites seem to operate collectively, moving together across hosting providers in different countries, appearing on many different URLs over time and advertising their content across various platforms. These can also be accompanied by "logos" which allow users to easily identify the nature of the website.

Adnetworks used as part of the CSAM distribution chain

Payment required to access more CSAM

CSAM websites advertising & linking to other similar resources

15%

18%

8%

A continuing trend from previous years is the prevalence of disguised CSAM websites which only reveal the imagery when accessed following a predefined "digital pathway" of links from other websites (or gateways). When the "digital pathway" is not followed or the website is accessed directly through a browser, legal content is displayed instead. In some cases the imagery displayed on such websites is hosted at a different location or across hosters in different jurisdictions. Therefore, each of these instances require greater diligence to ensure CSAM is removed at source, which in turn may lead to removal from other sites i.e. websites that would be using the same hosting source, even if those websites are unknown to Hotline.ie.

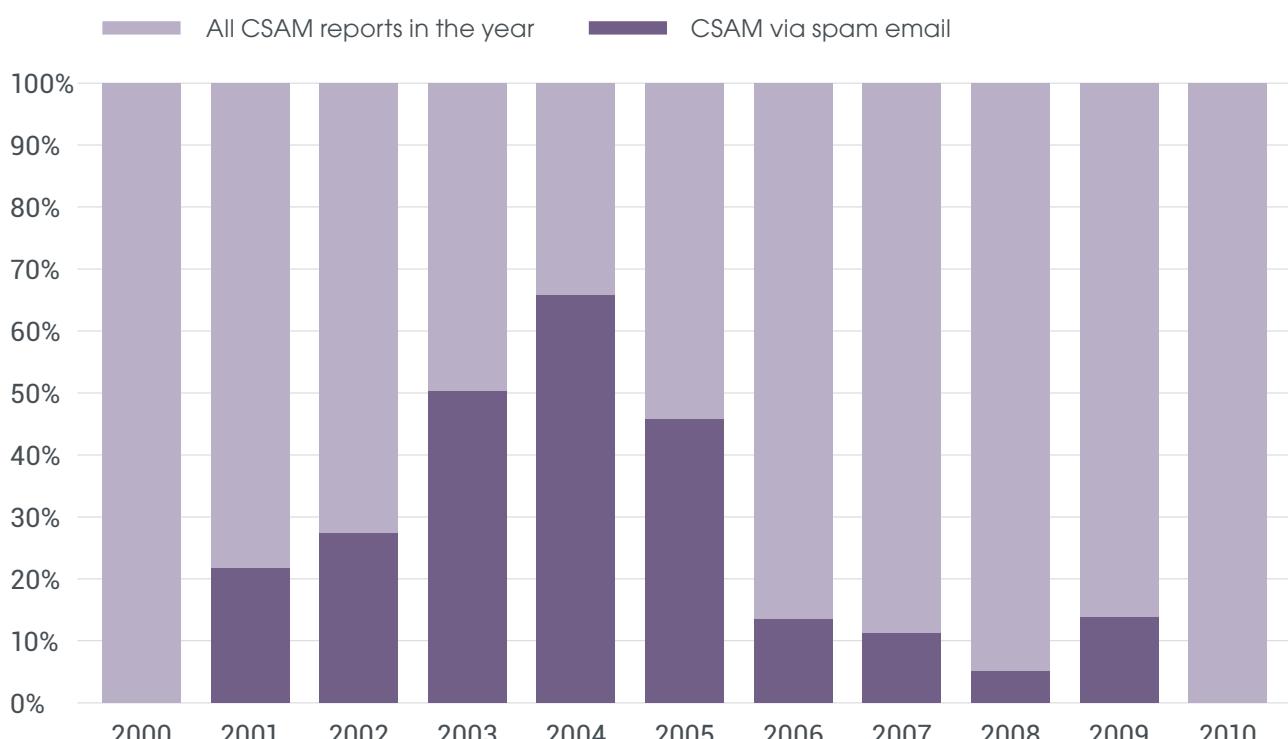
This trend for distributors to hide the dissemination of criminal imagery has been increasing year on year. In 2019, one in three child sexual abuse reports assessed by Hotline.ie was classified as a CSAM disguised website. This is a 532% increase in disguised websites incidence when compared to 2018 figures for same.

URL Referrers - disguised websites

39%

Ten years ago (2000-2010) the distribution of CSAM online, including movement patterns, was far more static and thus simpler to assess and remove. One particular and prominent trend, since smothered, was the advertising of child sexual abuse imagery by means of email spam (basically CSAM sent directly to your inbox). It was recorded for the

first time by Hotline.ie Analysts in 2001, peaked in 2004 accounting for 66% of the child sexual abuse reports, whilst the first significant decrease was marked in 2006 (13% of CSAM reports). Subsequently, 2010 was the first year of the decade when Hotline.ie recorded no CSAM spam email incident.



Statistics & findings: CSAM distribution

It is indisputable that the digital world is evolving at a faster pace than ever before, and with it the online distribution and movement patterns of child sexual abuse and exploitation are becoming more intricate, whilst perpetrators are becoming more tech savvy and sophisticated in their attempts to evade detection. We will also continue to hone our assessment expertise, develop strategies, partnerships and tools that enable our work and allow us to remain at the forefront of the fight against this heinous transnational crime.

As outlined earlier, when a report is submitted to Hotline.ie by a member of the public, there is usually a specific reason for the report that is given or implied by the reporter, to which we refer to as a "suspicion".

The top most reported under CSAM suspicion in 2019 was video streaming (33% of all reports received); whilst the least reported under CSAM suspicion was web-search results at 1.5%.

Video streaming

33%

Top most reported under CSAM suspicion, whilst only 1.2% confirmed

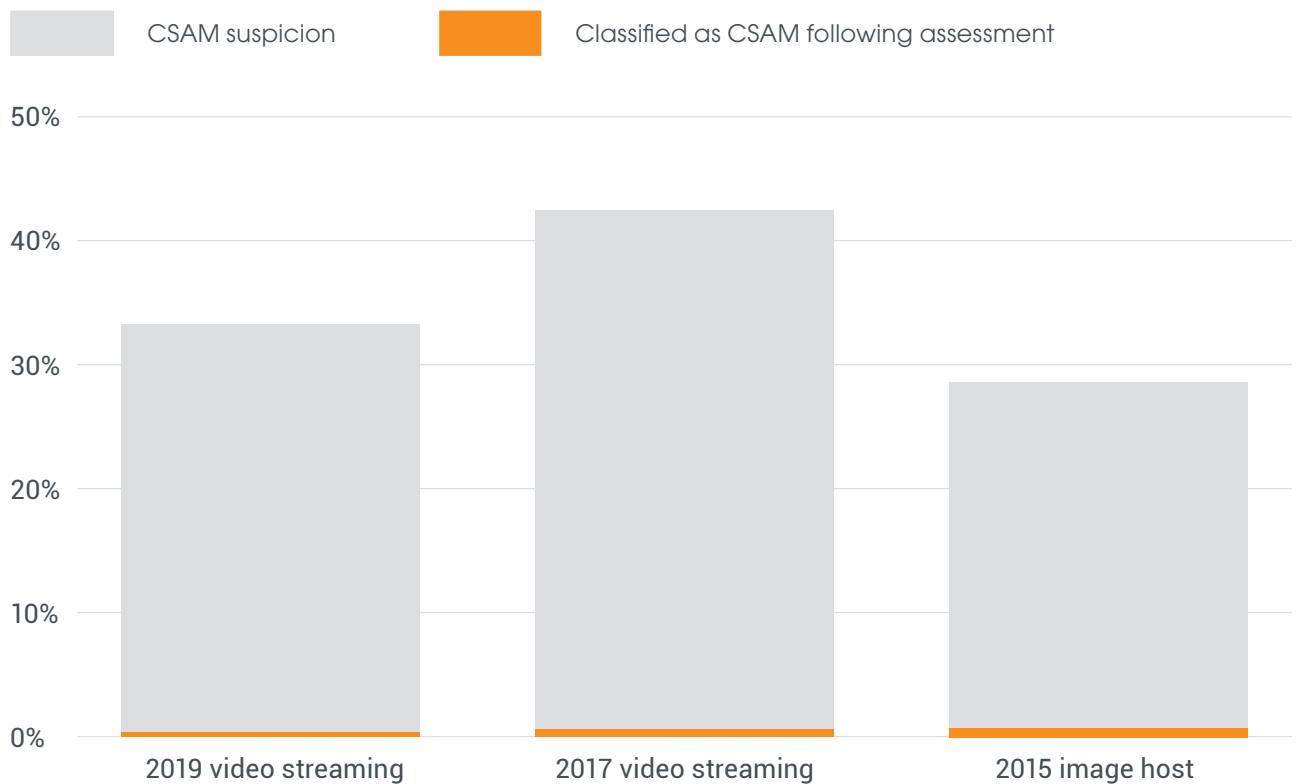
Web search results

1.5%

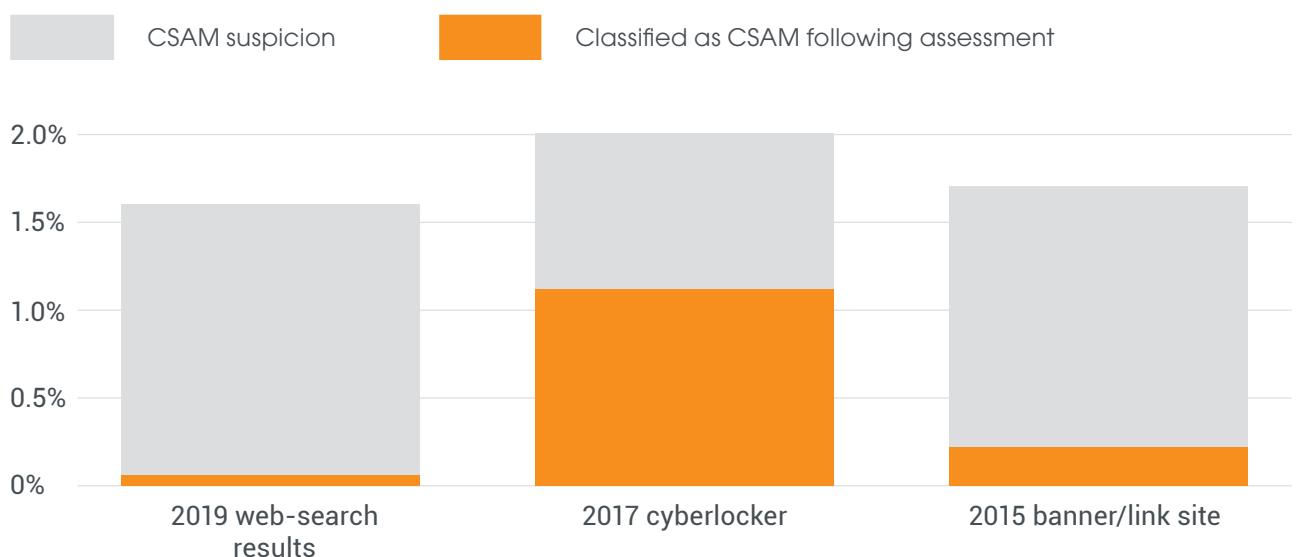
Least reported under CSAM suspicion, of which 0.3% confirmed



Top most reported under CSAM suspicion

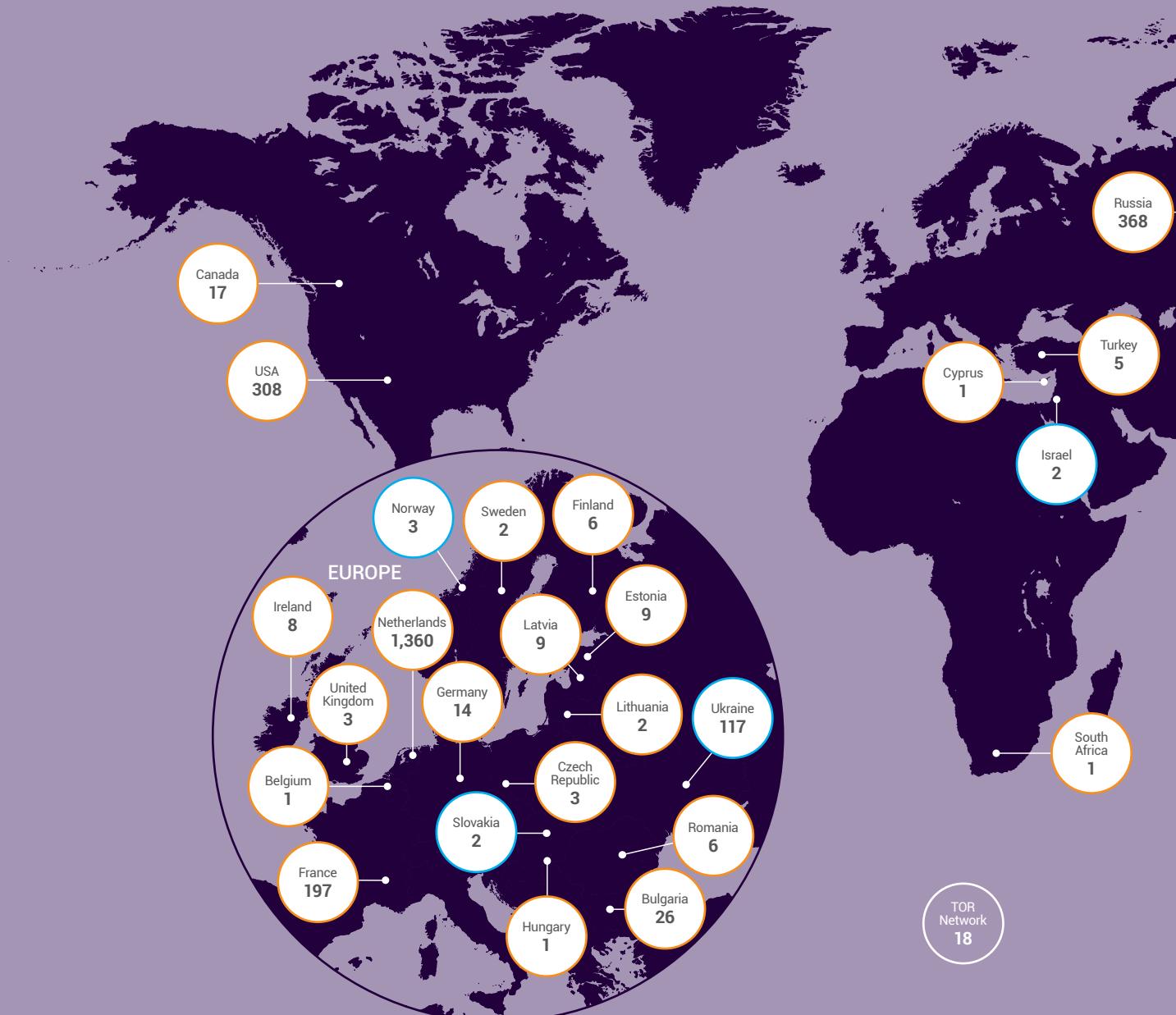


Least reported under CSAM suspicion



It is noteworthy that, despite the low reporting rate of web-search results, cyberlockers and banner/link sites under CSAM suspicion, the ratio of classified CSAM is significantly high. For example 1 in 2 cyberlocker reports were classified in 2017 as containing hundreds of child sexual abuse imagery.

Statistics & findings: snapshot of CSAM hosting patterns



The world map infographic shows where child sexual abuse imagery identified by Hotline.ie in 2019 was hosted (based on geographic IP lookups).

Our expert Analysts use at least three methods to trace and determine the geographical Internet location of CSAM at which the illegal content is hosted at the time of assessment. This allows us to work in collaboration with relevant partner hotlines to have the illegal content removed at source as quickly as possible.



- INHOPE member hotline
- Country without INHOPE member hotline presence
- Location not determined, i.e. TOR (.onion)

COUNTRIES

32

(Up from 2018), of these 7 without
INHOPE member hotline presence

CSAM HOSTED IN IRELAND

0.3%

Down from 2018

CSAM HOSTED IN EUROPE

64%

(Up from 2018), where one in two CSAM
reports was traced to the Netherlands

CSAM TOR NETWORK

0.7%

(originating location not determined)
Down from 2018

It should be noted that CSAM hosting figures only indicate where the content resides and where it is provided from, at a certain moment in time, and by no means should it be conflated with the production and consumption of child sexual abuse imagery in a given jurisdiction. As showcased earlier in this report a child victim may be sexually abused in one country, the images of the abuse uploaded to the Internet in a different jurisdiction, hosted on

servers in yet another and the content accessible anywhere in the world. Perpetrators belong to every nationality, gender and socio-economic status and the same is true for their victims.

Throughout 2019, our Analysts traced CSAM to 32 countries worldwide, inclusive of Ireland, which proves once again that no jurisdiction is immune.

Statistics & findings: snapshot of CSAM hosting patterns

Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) are continuing to be misused by perpetrators for child sexual abuse imagery distribution (26% of 2019 CSAM reports made use of CDNs). The primary purpose of a CDN (see adjoined infographic) is to speed-up the delivery of online content. CDNs copy the pages of a website hosted in the USA, for example, to a network of servers dispersed at strategic geographical locations called points of presence. When you try to watch a video displayed on the website hosted in the USA, instead of your device receiving the content from the server in the USA, it will be made available to you from the point of presence closest to your location (Ireland), for example the Netherlands.

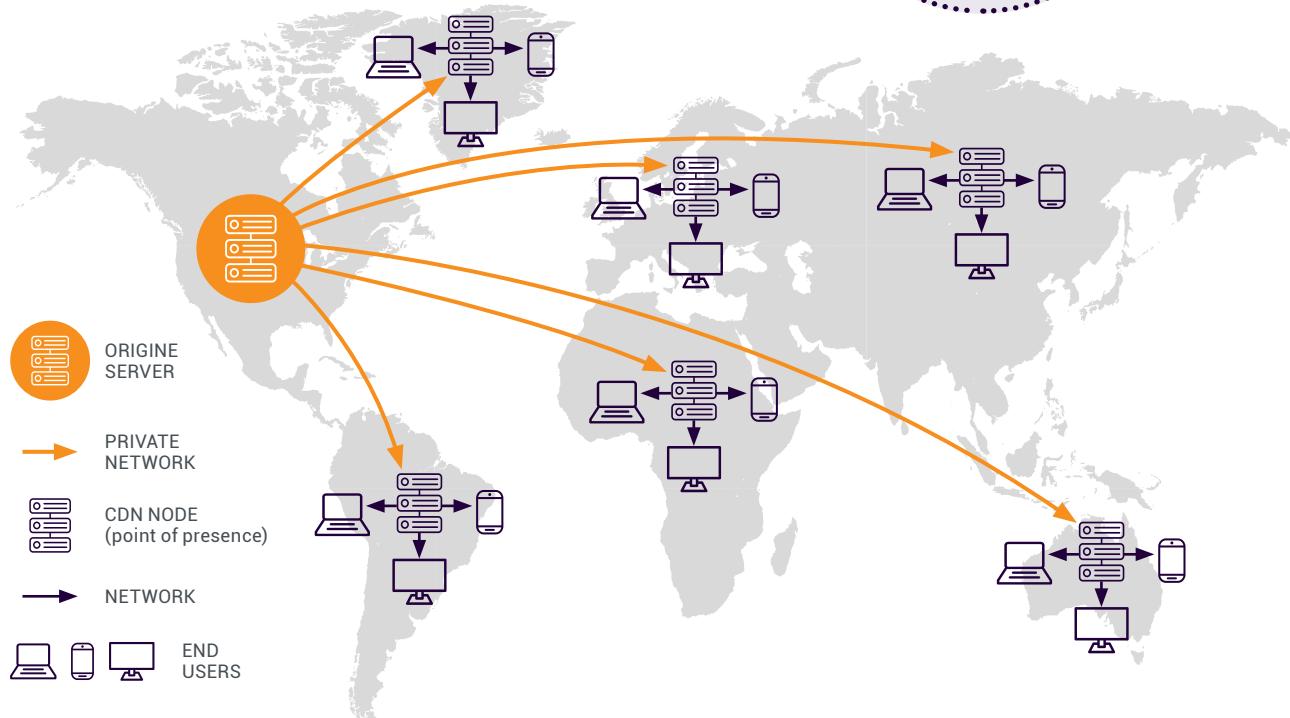
The location of the originating server is not always easily identifiable and can be reversed order, namely: masked outright. The only way a user would know if a CDN has been accessed is if the delivered URL is different from the URL that has been requested. Although this has led to faster delivery of digital content to all Internet users, CDNs are being increasingly misused by perpetrators to distribute child sexual abuse imagery. This causes complications when seeking to identify the true Internet location of the illegal content as the

standard tracing techniques will locate the point of presence rather than the origin server where the content is actually hosted. Fortunately, companies offering CDN services are extremely cooperative and committed to assisting in the removal of child sexual abuse imagery from the Internet.

Ireland is ever growing as an attractive location for data hosting for the likes of CDNs, with its location between America and Europe offering low-latency global connectivity. It is also increasingly becoming home to large datacentres owned by multinational companies and is expected to double its data hosting capacity within the next five years. This increase will represent a challenge in maintaining a CSAM hostile hosting environment, and one that Hotline.ie is taking very seriously, by continually building and enhancing its partnerships with online service providers, law enforcement and international partners.

26%
CSAM reports
in 2019
(up from 2018)

How a Content Delivery Network (CDN) works





Online child sexual abuse material is an international problem which needs an international and integrated approach to be combatted. Our task as hotlines in this integral fight is to prevent CSAM being spread online; either by preventing it from being uploaded in the first place, or taking it down as fast as possible when it surfaces. Together, we stand strong whilst we all fight this crime in different ways. It takes a network!"

Dagmar Gouka Team Leader Dutch Hotline against CSAM,
INHOPE member hotline since 1999

While in 2017 (for the first time in the last 8 years) there was no CSAM report found, by either Hotline.ie or other INHOPE member hotlines, to be hosted in Ireland; in 2018, 1.6% of all CSAM reports were. Benchmarked against 2018 figures, in 2019 we saw a decrease in the incidence of CSAM hosting in Ireland, namely 0.3% of the reports classified as CSAM by Hotline.ie.

2009

first instance of CSAM traced by Hotline.ie to Ireland



It's vital that content tracing is accurate, as every minute child sexual abuse imagery remains on the Internet is another minute too long. For hotlines worldwide to work effectively and swiftly remove child sexual abuse imagery from the Internet, irrespective of where in the world it may be hosted, international multi-stakeholder cooperation is vital. Trust is an important catalyst, together with a universally agreed mission namely, an Internet rid of child sexual abuse material. Being part of a global network of dedicated professionals all working for enhanced protection for children, gives all of us in Hotline.ie faith and hope for a brighter future." – Eoin, Hotline.ie Analyst

VICARIOUS STRESS COUNSELLING, CARING FOR OUR STAFF

Without the unwavering commitment of our compassionate and resilient staff, the work of Hotline.ie would not be possible. It takes a special person to be able to do what it is one of the hardest jobs imaginable.

While our Analysts are highly trained and experienced, the reality is they witness the darkest side of humanity every day, by being exposed to all sorts of hideous content. Ensuring the well-being of our staff is paramount and is informed by best practice and international research.

All new Analysts undergo a specially developed induction training programme to help them mentally process and cope with exposure to disturbing content online. Furthermore, all our Analysts attend

mandatory individual vicarious stress counselling sessions to ensure their well-being and mental health in the face of the challenging work they carry out. In fact, all of our staff are offered counselling support should they wish to avail of it. The following feature article is contributed by Aideen Kilgallen, Vicarious Stress Counsellor who supports our Analysts. This article covers some of the challenges faced by individuals working in this field and the preventative steps taken to ensure these challenges are overcome.



Viewing content that involves images of violence and child sexual abuse can be difficult and impacting on any individual, including content Analysts. One of the challenges facing Analysts working at Hotline.ie and other hotlines around the world is vicarious trauma.

Vicarious trauma occurs when an individual who was not immediately involved or subjected to a traumatic event absorbs and integrates disturbing aspects of the traumatic experience into his or her own functioning (Wendtcenter.org). It is an occupational challenge for people working and volunteering in a variety of fields

working with victims and as such, it is a primary focus of the staff welfare programme at Hotline.ie.

Vicarious traumatisation is a term that describes the cumulative transformative effect on the individual working with survivors of traumatic life events. It can arise as a result of empathic engagement with traumatic material and the reactions that the worker may experience are similar to those of the trauma victim at a cognitive, emotional, behavioural, spiritual, interpersonal and physical level but to a lesser degree.

The discovery of Mirror Neurons in the 1990s and advancement of neuroscience has contributed greatly to the understanding of

vicarious trauma and the potential impact of viewing disturbing content. It is understood that they represent a distinctive class of neurons that discharge both when an individual executes an action and when they observe another individual in that action. Thus, if a person sees images of or views a traumatic situation, their neurological response will be less intense than the individual in the situation itself, but similar to that which they would have in that scenario. We know that the experience of child sexual abuse can clearly have a traumatic impact and therefore it makes sense that viewing such material may have a similar impact.

The images and videos that Hotline.ie Analysts encounter on a daily basis act as incredibly powerful stimuli and can easily create intense emotional and physical responses. With that in mind, viewing such content can cause vicarious stress to manifest in a number of ways. At a cognitive level, a worker may experience a loss of concentration, disillusionment, recurring intrusive disturbing images that may occur uninvited and at unrelated times outside of work. At an emotional level, the worker may experience a sense of powerlessness, anger, or overwhelm. Their sleep may be disturbed, they may become impatient, irritable, withdrawn and/or moody in all areas of life. They may find themselves focussing on the negatives in humanity or even questioning the meaning of life.

Analysts may also experience these emotions outside of the workplace and personal relationships may be affected. Evidently, the impact can be wide reaching and individuals may find themselves resorting to counterproductive coping mechanisms such

as alcohol use, smoking, overeating etc. With these potential consequences of their work, the mental health of Hotline.ie Analysts is at risk. Therefore, maintaining awareness of the issue and introducing measures to combat its possibility is vital to the staff welfare programme at Hotline.ie.

One of the preventative measures in combatting vicarious trauma or the potential ongoing impact of viewing disturbing images is the ability of the content Analyst to monitor the impact of such work and respond appropriately. The provision of counselling supervision support provides a non-judgemental space for them to explore the possible impacts of the work both at a conscious and unconscious level, identifying needs and addressing them.

I work with Hotline.ie Analysts to ensure that their well-being remains unaffected by the work they conduct and that they have appropriate support networks in place both inside and outside the workplace. Keeping in touch with your mental health is a vital aspect of daily life. It is a challenging environment in which to work but placing staff welfare at the foreground of the mission is of vital importance. Prioritising the mental health of content Analysts is an indispensable aspect to the work conducted at Hotline.ie and ensures that Analysts are as effective and comfortable in their work as they can be.

Aideen Kilgallen
B.A (PSY) Co.Psy, i.a.h.i.p. i.c.p.

A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH



For over two decades, Hotline.ie has been working at the intersection of civil society, law enforcement, online service providers and NGOs, for the protection of children from child sexual abuse and exploitation. We know it's hard to learn and talk about child sexual abuse, but it is of the utmost importance we do. It enables us to better address the issue, and even prevent vulnerable children from becoming victims in the first place. I say "we", because protecting children against these crimes is a complex, multi-pronged effort which requires a robust ecosystem. I've seen the impact of what we can do when we work together. However, I know we can do even more with greater industry-wide and cross-industry cooperation. The world today is very different from what it was almost a year ago. We've witnessed how society came together to support and protect one another and end the COVID-19 pandemic. There is now a sense of urgency to also come together to better protect children and end child sexual abuse material and exploitation online.

Ana Niculescu, Chief Executive Hotline.ie

The Irish Safer Internet Centre

Hotline.ie is also an integrated part of the Irish Safer Internet Centre, one of 30 Safer Internet Centres in Europe forming the INSAFE network. We encourage the responsible use of technology and work to make the Internet a safer place.

We do this through the provision of:

1. Hotline service, where members of the public can securely, anonymously and confidentially report suspected illegal content online, especially child sexual abuse imagery and activities relating to the sexual exploitation of children. www.hotline.ie
2. An awareness centre, promoting the autonomous, effective, and safe use of the Internet and digital technologies by young people through a sustained information and awareness strategy targeting parents, teachers, and children themselves. It also develops and disseminates resources that help teachers integrate Internet safety into teaching and learning in schools. www.webwise.ie
3. Helpline service, 24/7 free confidential listening services for all children up to the age of 18 in Ireland. www.childline.ie
4. Helpline service, free and confidential service for parents and guardians. www.npc.ie

The Irish Safer Internet Centre initiative is coordinated by the Department of Justice and Equality, and part funded by the European Union through the Connecting Europe Facility: Safer Internet programme. Hotline.ie's Safer Internet Centre partners:



www.webwise.ie



www.childline.ie



www.npc.ie



Co-financed by the European Union
Connecting Europe Facility

Department of Justice and Equality

The Hotline.ie web-reporting service was launched in November 1999, to fulfil key recommendations of the Irish Government Working Group on the Illegal and Harmful Use of the Internet (1998), namely the establishment of (i) a self-regulatory approach by service providers, (ii) an Internet hotline service where the public could anonymously report "child pornography" online, and (iii) the development and enforcement of an Industry Code of Practice and Ethics setting out the duties and responsibilities of online service providers operating from Ireland and common acceptable use policies.

Since inception, the Hotline.ie operations and procedures have been approved and overseen by the Department of Justice and Equality. Additionally, the activities of Hotline.ie and An Garda Síochána CSAM blocking initiative together fulfil Article 25 of the Directive 2011/93/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, in Ireland. These activities are overseen by the Criminal Justice Policy, Department of Justice and Equality, whilst the remainder of the Directive has been transposed into Irish law.

Through the provision of the CSAM Notice and Takedown service and by working in collaboration with online service providers (Hotline.ie members) operating from Ireland, Hotline.ie also fulfils key requirements of the 2000-31-EC e-Commerce Directive which furnishes online service providers with the "mere conduit" exemption from liability for illegal content either on/or accessed through their services. The CSAM Notice and Takedown service is recognised worldwide as a vital and effective solution in removing CSAM on the Internet, curbing its availability and proliferation, disrupting the cycle of sexual exploitation of children and preventing repeat-victimisation.

Hotline.ie will continue to work closely with the Criminal Justice Policy, of Ireland's Department of Justice and Equality, to examine and further develop domestic and international strategies to better combat the problem of illegal and harmful use of the Internet, and enhance cooperation with other key national and European stakeholders for that purpose.

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies

Child sexual abuse and exploitation is a transnational crime taking place both offline and online. In tackling what is universally agreed to be one of the most serious crimes in the world, the collaborative work of Hotline.ie, online service providers, and law enforcement ensures that child sexual abuse material is swiftly removed at source and that the children in the images may be identified and safeguarded, and the perpetrators identified and brought to justice.

As with just about everything that has ever been invented, there will be individuals to misuse technology and the Internet for criminal purposes, in this case for the production, sharing, distribution and even commercialisation of child sexual abuse.

Due to rapid CSAM movement patterns, content reported in one jurisdiction almost always ends up being traced to another jurisdiction, which has been captured statistically by Ireland, UK, Austria and most of the European based hotlines. Thus, uninterrupted hotline service, international multi-stakeholder cooperation, together with the public's readiness to report suspect imagery of children is key in combatting the availability and proliferation of child sexual exploitation on the Internet.

Whilst online child sexual abuse may be a borderless crime, due to the very nature of the digital world, it is not a faceless crime and there is nothing virtual about the child's suffering. Repeat-victimisation is what happens to a victim when

their abuse is recorded i.e. images/ videos and made available, shared on the Internet. Each repeat viewing and sharing of the content constitutes a perpetuated violation of the rights of the child. The experience they go through at such a young age is unimaginably horrific, scarring, and life lasting. The prevention of re-victimisation of children who have suffered sexual abuse is at the heart of our work, and as such we strive to have every identified CSAM swiftly removed at source.

Our highly trained Analysts sift through thousands of public reports leading to hundreds of thousands of images and videos to identify quality leads. The content classified as most probably illegal under Irish law is submitted to the Paedophile Investigation Unit of the Garda National Protective Services Bureau. Hotline.ie's triage function should not be confused with criminal investigation which together with evidence gathering to support criminal proceedings is a matter for law enforcement alone.



An Garda Síochána continue to support and work closely with Hotline.ie. Hotline.ie is an integral part of the mechanism within the State to combat online child exploitation and the proliferation of child abuse material. I welcome their 2019 report and their assistance in 2020 and beyond.

Declan Daly, Detective Chief Superintendent, Garda National Protective Services Bureau

Cooperation with other national stakeholders on online safety and child protection

In July 2018, An Taoiseach launched the first National Action Plan for Online Safety, a coherent and united policy approach across Government which has been drawn up following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders.

Inter alia, the Plan reinforces the Government's commitment to continually work closely at international level, both through the European Union and globally, on coordinated initiatives that will make the Internet a safer environment. This will also ensure better synergies between national and European policies.

The Hotline.ie reporting service is an essential conduit between Industry, the public sector and law enforcement stakeholders. A reflection of this is its inclusion in the National Action Plan for Online Safety, in relation to, but not limited to, actions aimed at enhancing Industry responsiveness in the context of a rapidly evolving online environment.

A Cabinet Committee, chaired by An Taoiseach with membership comprising relevant Ministers, maintains political oversight of the National Action Plan and implementation of corresponding actions; while functional responsibility for relevant policy issues remains with the lead Minister/Department, who will be accountable to the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament) for

implementation of assigned actions. Last but not least, to further support political and public engagement, a Minister of State has been tasked by Government to ensure an effective link between the political system, Government Departments, and external stakeholders.

Additionally, The National Advisory Council for Online Safety, a forum for non-governmental, Industry and academic stakeholders, chaired by a Minister for State with support from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and clear, specific Terms of Reference, was also setup.

Hotline.ie is a member of the National Advisory Council for Online Safety and we are as committed as ever to continually contribute our expertise and work collaboratively with all relevant stakeholders to tackle what are ultimately, global issues of public interest with due account of the borderless nature of the digital world.

Founding member of the International Association of Internet Hotlines, INHOPE

In 1999, Hotline.ie alongside seven other organisations and with financial assistance from the European Union "Internet Action Plan Programme" co-founded the International Association of Internet Hotlines (INHOPE). Today, the INHOPE network of Internet hotlines spans the globe with over 46 hotlines in 42 countries (all EU Member states and the UK, Russia, South Africa, North & South America, Asia, Australia and New Zealand).

INHOPE itself is neither a hotline nor does it undertake any form of content assessment. Instead INHOPE's mission is to support and enhance the work of hotlines by managing a secure EU-funded international CSAM report management system (ICCAM) which enables member hotlines

to exchange CSAM reports between different jurisdictions. INHOPE and INTERPOL hold regular joint training sessions for hotline Analysts; all Hotline.ie Analysts have been certified, subsequent to the completion of INHOPE/INTERPOL Content Assessment trainings.

INHOPE is also responsible for expanding the network of trust by supporting the establishment of new Hotlines particularly in countries where there would appear to be a need for hotline service.

Through the INHOPE network, member hotlines work in partnership with Government agencies, law enforcement agencies and NGOs to curb the availability and proliferation of child sexual abuse material online.



Hotline.ie has been laying the groundwork for a better digital tomorrow, since 1999, leading the way in the development and implementation of best practices to tackle child sexual abuse online, which have been adopted by the whole INHOPE network. Hotline.ie cooperation with partners and stakeholders both domestically and internationally ensures real impact is made. It is through the collaborative efforts of every single hotline, like Hotline.ie, making up the INHOPE network that more child sexual abuse imagery than ever before is being removed from the Internet." – **Denton Howard, Executive Director of INHOPE**

INHOPE member hotlines abide by the INHOPE Code of Practice, rules, regulations and policies where the INHOPE's Quality Assurance Programme (est. 2014) ensures compliance and an optimal standard of hotline operations by existing and new members alike. Since the inception of the INHOPE Quality Assurance Programme, Hotline.ie has been assessed twice by independent experts and each time found to be compliant and exceeding

the INHOPE requirements. It was subsequently awarded the INHOPE Quality Assurance Certification for excellent service and standards of operation in 2015 and more recently February 2018.

Since June 2018, Ana Niculescu Chief Executive of Hotline.ie is also INHOPE Vice-President.

Our Members



Every report can make a world of difference. With a few clicks you can make a difference!

While we hope you never come across child sexual abuse imagery on the Internet, if you ever stumble across sexual images and videos of under 18s online, do the right thing by reporting those to Hotline.ie.

It takes 60 seconds to make an anonymous report to www.hotline.ie/contact-us/report

We don't need your details, just your help!

Thank you