

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Irish Internet Hotline Annual Report 2025: CSAM increasingly moves behind paywalls as reporting rises to 61,317 cases**

Dublin, Ireland – 13 May 2026: Irish Internet Hotline (IIH) today publishes its 2025 Annual Report, recording 61,317 reports processed, a 14.7% increase year-on-year, as Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) increasingly shifts behind paywalled and closed-access platforms.

Marking its 26th year of operation, the report highlights a growing trend towards the commercialisation and concealment of CSAM online, with illegal material increasingly distributed through subscription-based and restricted-access platforms designed to avoid detection. The shift is reducing public visibility, limiting opportunities for incidental discovery, and creating significant operational challenges for those working to identify and remove harmful content.

Irish Internet Hotline CEO Mick Moran said: “The content itself has not changed. What has changed is how deliberately it is being hidden and how children are increasingly being commodified for payment. These barriers reduce visibility, slow disruption efforts, and make the work of identifying and removing this material significantly more difficult. It also highlights the need for financial institutions to play their part and partner with us to reduce the abuse of their financial service networks for this peddling of child sexual abuse material and other forms of exploitation.”

Despite the increased scale and complexity of online harms, 99.6% of assessed CSAM was removed at source through coordinated notice-and-takedown efforts involving industry, law enforcement, and international partners.

Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration Jim O’Callaghan TD said: “I want to commend the team behind the Irish Internet Hotline. Their work is not always visible, but it is essential. It requires judgment, resilience, and a strong sense of purpose, and it makes a real difference in protecting people, particularly children from harm online.

“Last year more than 61,000 reports were processed, the highest number in its 26-year history. That tells us that people are paying attention. It tells us that when individuals encounter harmful content, more are choosing to report it. That matters because this system depends on people taking that step. Because of those reports, more than 50,000 items of illegal content were confirmed. Behind those figures is constant assessment, coordination, and action, often across multiple jurisdictions and in very challenging circumstances.” Ahead of the report launch at eir HQ, CEO of eir Oliver Loomes added: “These figures published today are a reminder that online harms are increasing in volume and complexity, and that tackling them requires constant vigilance and stronger cooperation. Irish Internet Hotline plays a crucial role by turning public reporting into real outcomes through coordinated notice-and-takedown and international collaboration. As a founding member, eir is proud to support that work, because protecting people online is a shared responsibility across industry, platforms, law enforcement and the public.”

**Brian Nisbet (Chairman), Paul Cunnane, William McCoubrey (Treasurer), Gerard O’Hara, Tony Doherty, Aisling O’Donoghue, Carol McAlpine**

## Key Findings from the 2025 Irish Internet Hotline Annual Report

- **CSAM increasingly moves behind paywalls**  
CSAM remained the dominant category of illegal content in 2025, with 49,808 reports processed. A growing proportion was identified on paywalled and closed-access platforms, reducing visibility and limiting detection opportunities. Analyst-derived reports fell from 12,487 to 5,011 as a result of restricted access.
- **Sharp rise in computer-generated CSAM**  
Reports showed a 325% increase in computer-generated CSAM, alongside an increase in content involving infants, which rose from 1% to 4%.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation Material (CSEM) remains a concern**  
A total of 456 CSEM reports were assessed in 2025, with an 88% removal rate achieved. While this material may not be illegal, it remains sexually exploitative in nature.
- **High removal rates achieved for Intimate Image Abuse**  
Irish Internet Hotline processed 862 Intimate Image Abuse (IIA) reports, achieving a 96% removal rate for publicly accessible content. Removal times ranged from three minutes to 24 hours.
- **Financial scams continue to rise**  
Reports relating to financial scams increased by 52%, with 194 fraudulent websites identified and a 95% removal rate achieved. Irish Internet Hotline expanded engagement with financial institutions during 2025, including through the addition of Bank of Ireland as a member organisation.
- **Gap remains between public perception and legal thresholds on hateful content**  
A total of 510 reports relating to racism and xenophobia were received, representing a 44% decrease year-on-year. However, only four reports met the threshold for potential criminal investigation. The report highlights the continuing gap between content perceived by the public as hateful and the threshold required for criminal investigation under existing Irish legislation. IIH encourages continued reporting of hateful content to help build a clearer picture of the scale, patterns and trends of online harm.

The report concludes that as online harms continue to evolve in scale and sophistication, effective responses will depend on sustained collaboration between industry, law enforcement, government and international partners. The continued support of Irish Internet Hotline members and stakeholders remains critical to identifying, assessing and removing illegal online content.

### About Irish Internet Hotline

Irish Internet Hotline is Ireland's national reporting centre where members of the public can report suspected illegal and harmful online content in a secure and anonymous way—particularly child sexual abuse material. Irish Internet Hotline is a member of the INHOPE network, the Irish Safer Internet Centre and works closely with An Garda Síochána and international partners. The public is reminded they can report suspected illegal online content anonymously, securely, and confidentially at [www.hotline.ie](http://www.hotline.ie). Timely reporting prevents crime, revictimisation of children and helps bring offenders to justice.

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