

5

I noticed other candidates had political advertisements on their social media. I didn't see any label on them to make it clear they were ads. I thought this wasn't allowed. Can I report to Coimisiún na Meán?

In general, it is best to always report to the platform first. Under the DSA and the new Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertisements (TTPA), there are requirements for ad transparency. It should be clear, for example, that the information displayed is an ad, on whose behalf the ad is presented, and who paid for the ad.

If ads aren't labelled with this information on online platforms, Coimisiún na Meán would like to know. Our role is to make sure platforms are following these rules.

6

Someone took a photo of my house and shared it online. Then an angry group of people came to protest in front of my house. My children were inside and were afraid. Surely this is against the law? Can I report to Coimisiún na Meán?

If you fear for your **immediate** safety, you should contact An Garda Síochána on 999 or 112. You should report the person who shared the image of your house to An Garda Síochána and report the posts to the platform as illegal content, as it could be considered harassment.

If you do not like the response of the platform to your report, you should then complain/appeal to them. If the platform doesn't reply to you, or allow you to appeal, you can contact Coimisiún na Meán as this is potentially against the rules. When you email politicalrep@cnam.ie, it would be helpful to have screenshots or URLs to show any correspondence you received from the platform, and any evidence to show you were not offered an appeal.

How to report

Reporting content users have concerns about



Some social media platforms allow you to report misinformation or disinformation as a breach of their terms and conditions. Please note, misinformation or **disinformation is not necessarily illegal**.

You may see content online that you do not approve of, or think should not be online. This does not necessarily mean that the content is illegal. **You should always report content to the platform where you saw it if you have concerns**, but outside of what is illegal, platforms are free to set their own rules for what content is permissible.

The **DSA election guidelines**, for example, include recommendations for platforms to demonetise disinformation content, to have and enforce rules to prevent the impersonation of candidates as well as for manipulated content such as deepfakes, to be distinguishable for users. See reporting options on slide 15, and information on reporting to Coimisiún na Meán on slide 20.

Platforms have a legal obligation under the Digital Services Act (DSA) to have rules about acceptable content and **to outline any restrictions on content** in their terms and conditions, or community rules. They also have to enforce these rules **in a diligent and proportionate manner**. They must provide mechanisms for users to report content they consider is in breach of the rules.

Neither Coimisiún na Meán nor any other public body has the authority to require content to be taken down, solely on the basis that the content represents misinformation or disinformation.

The difference between reporting harmful and illegal content

Explainer: Illegal v harmful content



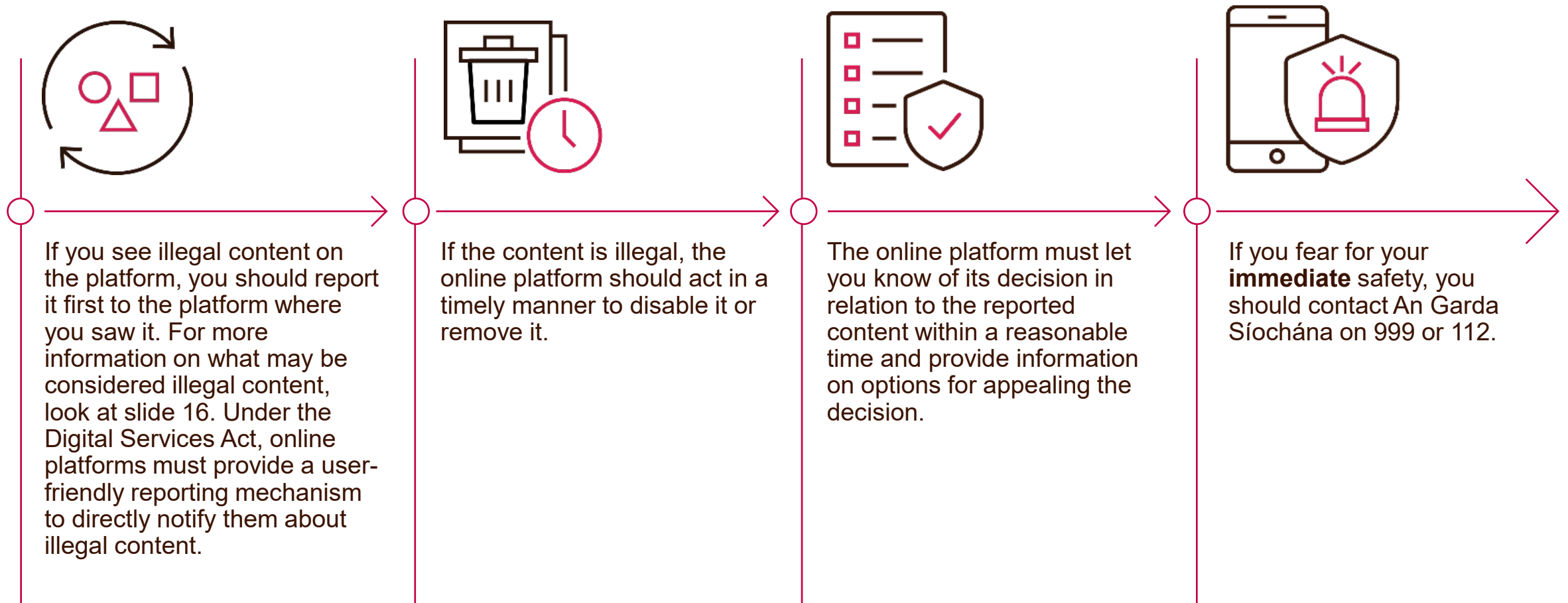
Reporting illegal -v- harmful content
Coimisiún na Meán | Ireland's Media Regulator

Reporting illegal -v- harmful content

Watch on  YouTube

www.cnam.ie/howtoreport

Reporting illegal content online under the Digital Services Act (DSA)



What is illegal content?

If the content is:	It <i>may be</i> illegal under:
A credible threat of violence	Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Part of a campaign of harassment (such as cyberbullying) - Threatening or grossly offensive communication that causes you alarm or distress 	Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997 Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act, 2020
Threatening, abusive or insulting and intended or likely to stir up hatred against a group of people on account of their race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, membership of the Travelling Community or sexual orientation	Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 1989
An unsolicited image of someone's genitals that cause distress, fear or alarm	Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act, 2017
An intimate image shared without consent	Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act, 2020
Encouragement of terrorist activity or a threat to commit an act of terrorism	Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act, 2005

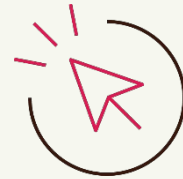
Note: This table is a high-level summary. It does not constitute legal advice, nor does it represent the position that Coimisiún na Meán may take in the context of any regulatory proceeding in which the meaning of the provisions concerned is in issue.

What you need in order to report illegal content online

When reporting illegal content on the platform where you found it, you may need:



An explanation of the reasons why you believe the content is illegal



The location of the content, such as the exact URL(s)



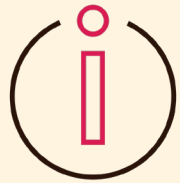
Your name and email address



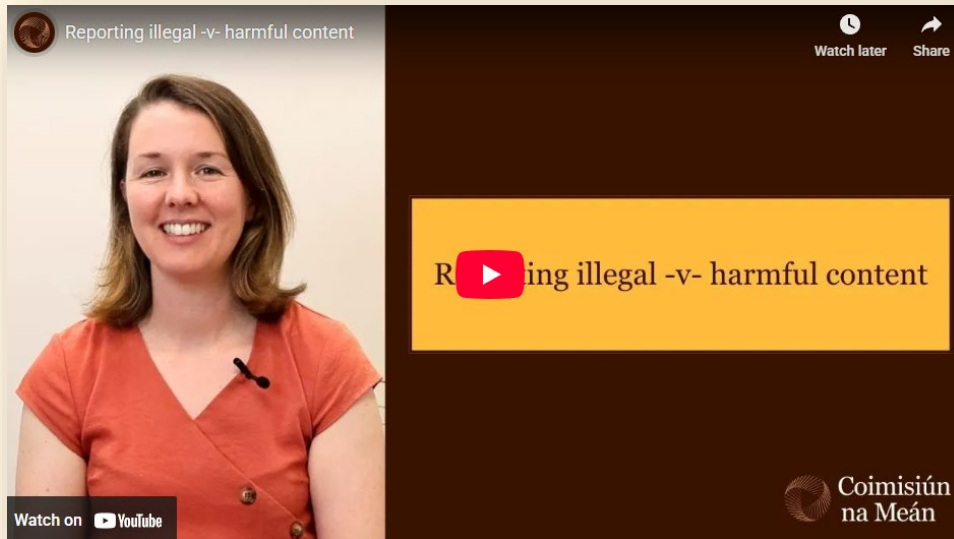
A statement confirming your honest belief that the information and allegations contained in the notice are accurate and complete

Please note, depending on the platform, reporting illegal content may start from normal reporting procedures. However, as you deem the content illegal, a separate form may need to be used, whereby you will be required to give your email and the exact URL to the content which you deem illegal. These forms can vary across platforms.

How to report guides and videos



We have five step-by-step guides, and accompanying videos, which outline the full reporting journey when reporting harmful and illegal content.



1 Open the X app on your phone. If you feel a post is breaking the law, tap the **three dots** and then tap **Report EU illegal content**.

1 To report harmful content, or a breach of YouTube's terms and conditions/community guidelines, you'll need to **log in**.

2 Similar to reporting illegal content, under the video you'd like to report, tap the **report** flag. You may need to scroll across on your phone for this to be visible.

Disclaimer: These guides provide examples and information to help methods on X as of September 2025. They are illustrative only, do not represent the views or opinions of Coimisiún na Meán, including as they may change, and we will try to keep these guides up to date.

How do I contact An Garda Síochána?



How do I report an emergency?

If you fear for your immediate safety, you should contact An Garda Síochána on 999 or 112.

An emergency is any incident which requires an immediate Garda response, for example:

- A danger to life
- Risk of serious injury
- Crime in progress or about to happen
- Offender still at scene or has just left.



How do I report other crimes?

To report a non-emergency crime, you can attend any Garda Station.

A Garda can take a report of a crime from you in person in any station.

You can find details on your local Garda Station [here](#).

If you have queries, or you would like to inform Gardaí of an incident or would like further assistance, contact your [Divisional Liaison Inspector](#). There are Divisional Liaison Inspectors in each division who specifically deal with election candidates.



How do I report a hate crime?

Click [here](#) to report a hate crime online to An Garda Síochána.

Always report any incident you perceive as motivated by hate to An Garda Síochána.

If you fear for your immediate safety, you should contact An Garda Síochána on 999 or 112.

List of Divisional Inspectors across the country

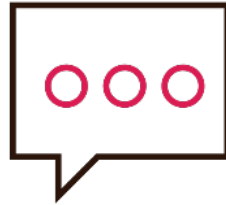


Division	Inspector	Email
DMR South Central	Inspector Aidan Murphy	Aidan.P.Murphy@garda.ie
DMR North Central	Inspector Ken Hoare	Kenneth.a.hoare@garda.ie
DMR SOUTH	Inspector Nigel McInaw	Nigel.m.mcinaw@garda.ie
DMR NORTH	Inspector Sean Earley	Sean.p.earley@garda.ie
DMR EAST	Inspector Francis Gormley	Gareth.f.gormley@garda.ie
DMR WEST	Inspector Martin Geraghty	Martin.g.geraghty@garda.ie
Carlow	Inspector Conor Nolan	conor.p.nolan@garda.ie
Kilkenny	Inspector Alma Molloy	alma.j.molloy@garda.ie
Cavan/Monaghan/ Louth	Inspector Ciarán Clancy	brian.c.clancy@garda.ie
Clare	Inspector Andrew Lyons	andrew.p.lyons@garda.ie
Cork City	Inspector James Hallahan	james.a.hallahan@garda.ie
Cork County	D/ Inspector Eamonn Brady	eamonn.j.brady@garda.ie
Cork County	Inspector John O' Connell	john.ma.oconnell@garda.ie
Donegal	D/Inspector David Durkin	david.f.durkin@garda.ie
Galway	D/Inspector Brendan Carroll	Brendan.carroll@garda.ie
Galway County	D/Inspector Gary McEntee	Gerard.P.McEntee@garda.ie
Kerry	D/Inspector Liam McGraynor	liam.p.mcgraynor@garda.ie
Kildare	Inspector Gavin Dunphy	Gavin.m.dunphy@garda.ie
Laois/Offaly	Inspector Joe Culliton	Joseph.p.culliton@garda.ie
Limerick	Inspector Martyn Wallace	martyn.g.wallace@garda.ie
Mayo/Roscommon/Longford	Inspector David Jordan	david.f.jordan@garda.ie
Meath	Inspector Alan Roughneen	alan.t.roughneen@garda.ie
Sligo/Leitrim	D/Inspector Ray Mulderrig	Raymond.Mulderrig@Garda.ie
Tipperary	Inspector Andrew Lyons	andrew.p.lyons@garda.ie
Waterford	D/Inspector Donal Donohue	Donal.j.donohue@garda.ie
Westmeath	D/Inspector Tom Quinn	thomas.f.quinn@garda.ie
Wicklow	D/Inspector Seamus Ryan	Seamus.m.ryan@garda.ie
Wexford	D/Inspector Padhraic Roberts	Paraic.w.roberts@garda.ie



Information on what you can report to Coimisiún na Meán can be found at:

www.cnam.ie/general-public/report-complain/something-i-saw-or-experienced-online/



Support & Report – An initiative to provide election candidates with assistance during the election period. The aim is to encourage the reporting of this behaviour.



Email: politicalrep@cnam.ie

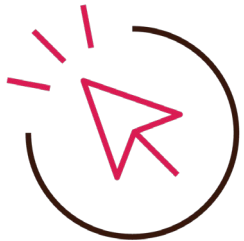
Alternatively, you can fill out the form at www.cnam.ie/reportous

We understand that time is of the essence during election periods. If you have a query, we will prioritise responses to the above email address.

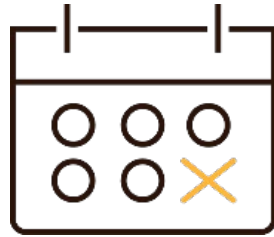
Please note: While it is within Coimisiún na Meán’s remit to assess if providers of an online service are doing what they are obliged to do under the Online Safety Framework, **it is not part of Coimisiún na Meán’s remit to carry out a content moderation role**, to act as an appeal body from decisions of providers of online services in relation to illegal content, or to act as a judge in disputes between different parties or different users about illegal content. This also means **we cannot rapidly or directly remove content**, and the quickest way to have your issue addressed is by engaging with the platform itself. Our role is to ensure platforms have complaint mechanisms in place and are operating them diligently.

How to dispute platform decisions

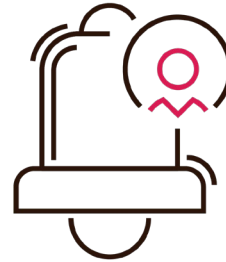
Under the DSA, you have the right to appeal/complain



If you're not satisfied with the online platform's decision on your report, the online platform must provide a user-friendly appeal mechanism, free of charge.



You have 6 months from the date of the decision to lodge an appeal with the online platform.



The online platform must notify you of its decision in relation to the appeal and its reasons for it without undue delay. They must also advise you of the options you have to further appeal if you're still not satisfied.

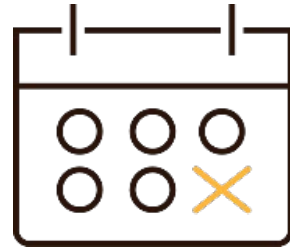


If you believe an online platform has not met its obligations under the Digital Services Act, you can make a complaint to Coimisiún na Meán.

Under the DSA, you have the right to dispute a platform decision



If you're not happy with the online platform's decision, for example, regarding your report or a decision to restrict your content or access – you can lodge a dispute with an Out-Of-Court Dispute Settlement (ODS) body.



A certified ODS Body is required to make its decisions available to the parties within a reasonable period of time and no later than 90 calendar days after the receipt of the complaint.



You can choose an ODS Body based on the expertise that applies to your dispute, including one or more areas of illegal content, or the enforcement of the platform's terms and conditions as well as the type of online platform.



There are many advantages to using an ODS Body, such as cost-effectiveness, speed of resolution, independent and impartial review of disputes. The ODS services are provided to online users for free or at a nominal charge. The user retains their right to take the matter to court at any time.

What are ODS bodies and how do they work?

Out-of-Court Settlement (ODS) bodies are a form of redress available to online platform users under the DSA.

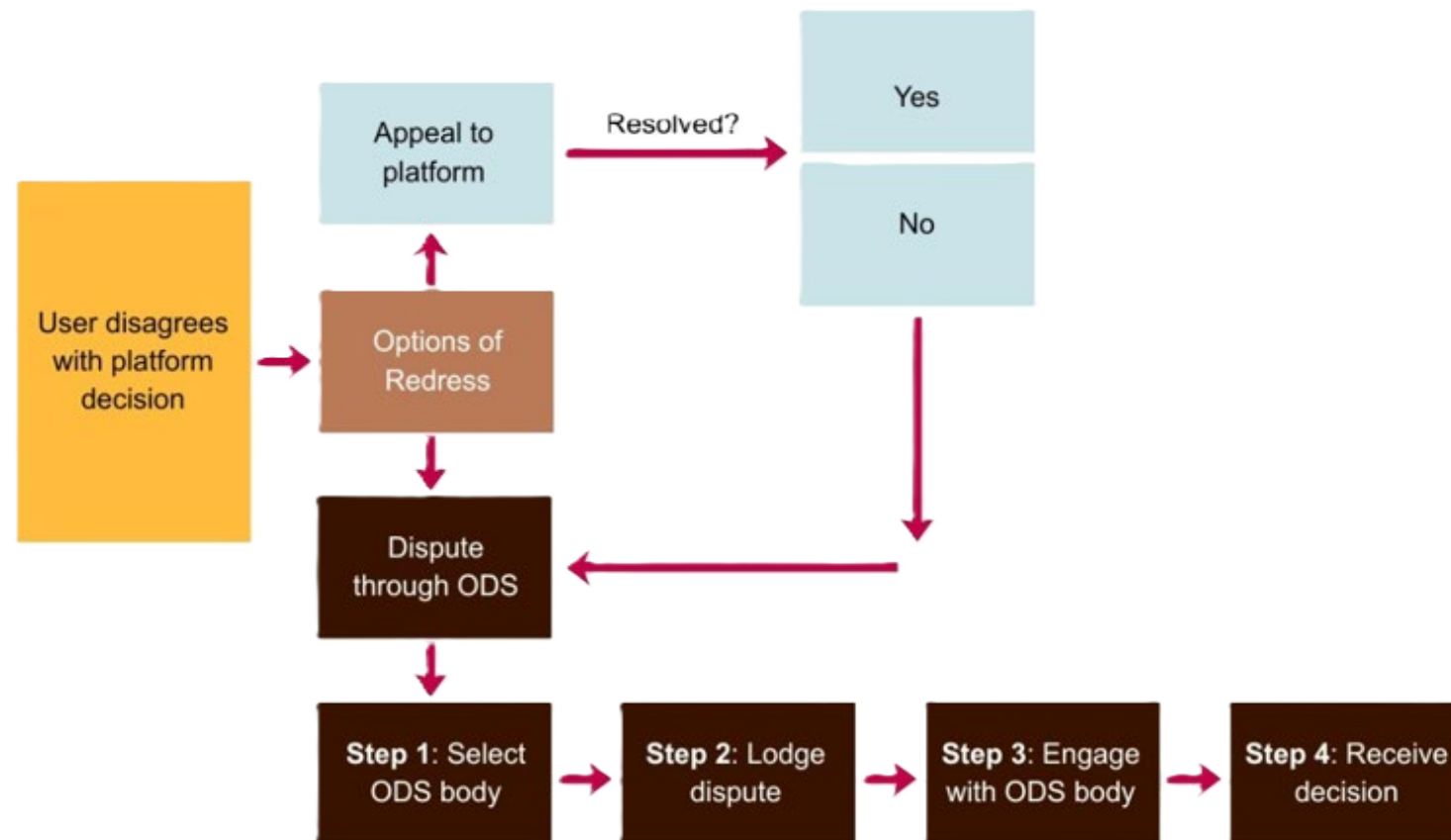
ODS bodies are certified in the state where they are established, but the certification is valid across the EU.

They do not have the power to impose a binding settlement of the dispute.

Neither the user nor the online platform is bound by the decisions of the ODS body.

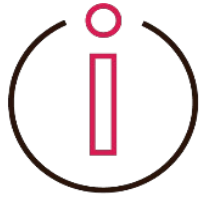
A list of all ODS bodies certified in the EU member states is available on the [European Commission website](#).

Information about ODS bodies certified by Coimisiún na Meán is available on our [website](#).



This infographic represents an average scenario where a user disagrees with a platform decision, and the most common routes of redress they may follow.

Other supports for you



Support

www.womenforelection.ie

[National Cybersecurity Centre](#)

www.electoralcommission.ie/framework

[European Commission: Guidelines](#)

[Regulation of Political Advertising - Electoral Commission](#)

www.bemediasmart.ie

www.factchecking.ie

[Coimisiún na Meán infographic](#)



Report

The reporting mechanism provides a structured process for candidates to report incidents of online threats and harassment.

Contact Centre: Available Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Email: politicalrep@cnam.ie or fill out their form at this link www.cnam.ie/reportous

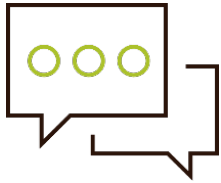
The centre is staffed with people who can signpost relevant support services and structures for your needs.

An Garda Síochána can also utilise this politicalrep email to inform Coimisiún na Meán of any incidents occurring during the election period.



If you fear for your **immediate** safety, you should contact An Garda Síochána on 999 or 112

What you can do/How you can help



If you're reporting illegal content, you will be asked to give an email address, so it is better if this comes from the individual affected, and not a third party.



Report harmful content to the platform. You can do this on behalf of your colleague.



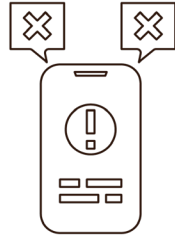

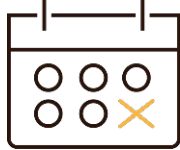
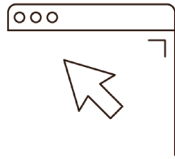


Support your colleagues, listen to them and be there for them. Encourage them to contact An Garda Síochána, if appropriate. Look at your party's support pack, if you have one.



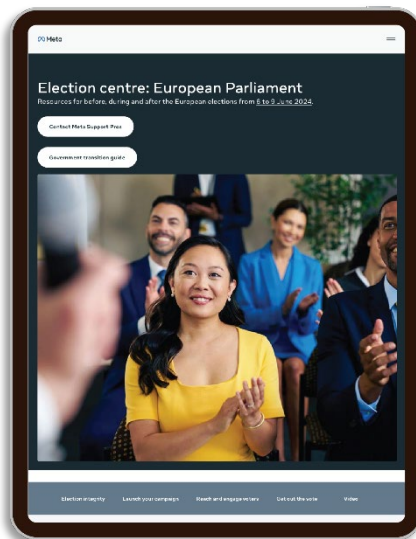
**What you can do to help
others online**

Coimisiún na Meán and An Garda Síochána recognise that the election period is a busy time for candidates, and they are reminded that **they can also report threats, harassment or any other potential criminal activity to An Garda Síochána post-election.** Securing and retaining evidence such as screenshots, etc. is important in this regard.

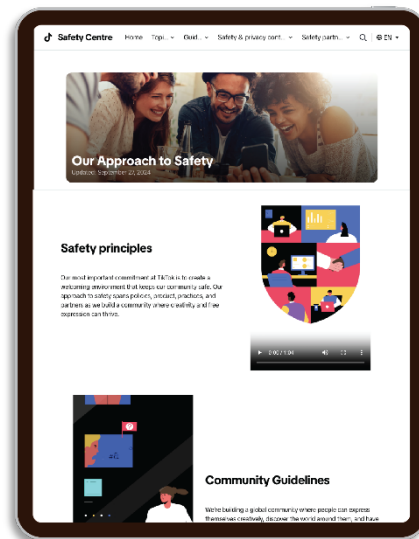
Information should include

					
The specific threats made	Their identities (if known)	When the threats were made (date and time)	Relevant screenshots	The location of the content, such as the exact URL(s)	Details of engagement with the platforms

Available information and support for candidates around elections from platforms



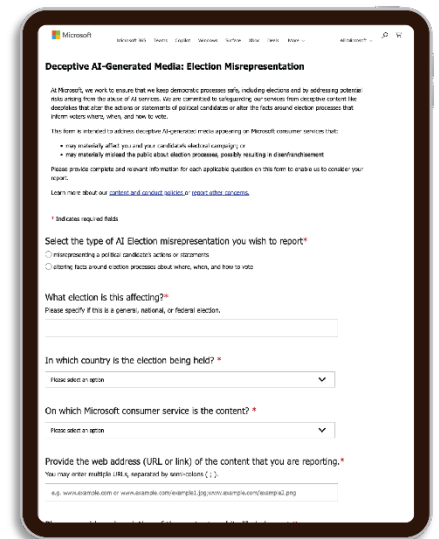
Support hub on [Meta](#)
(Facebook/Instagram -
Contact: Meta Support Pro)



Election integrity
on [TikTok](#)



Policies for election
misinformation
on [YouTube](#)



To report deceptive AI-
generated media
affecting your election
campaign on [Bing](#)

Appendix

What is Ireland's Online Safety Framework?

The Online Safety Framework

Digital Services Act (DSA)

EU regulation that aims to build a safe, fair and trusted online environment

By law, platforms must:

- have easy to use and easy to find reporting mechanisms (including providing the decision made on the content reported)
- set out in their terms and conditions how their algorithms work
- clearly label advertisements

Larger platforms must carry out external audits on risk mitigation measures (e.g. how they are working to ensure their platforms are safe).

Online Safety and Media Regulation Act (OSMR)

Online Safety Code (OSC)

Irish code that applies to providers of video-sharing platform services (VSPs) based in Ireland.

VSPs must state in their terms and conditions that illegal and harmful content is not allowed.

VSPs must allow users to report content, and tell them how they acted on their report (e.g. removing the content).

VSPs are obliged (as appropriate):

- to have effective media literacy measures and tools
- to raise users' awareness of those measures and tools.

Terrorist Content Online Regulation (TCOR)

EU regulation that aims to stop the sharing of terrorist content online and allows for its speedy removal from platforms.

Terrorist content includes the promotion, glorification and encouragement of terrorist activity, as well as calls to action for others to engage in such acts.

As the competent authority in Ireland under the Regulation, An Garda Síochána is the only organisation that can force a platform to remove terrorist content. The platform has one hour to remove the content when An Garda Síochána issue a notice.

What online services do these laws apply to?

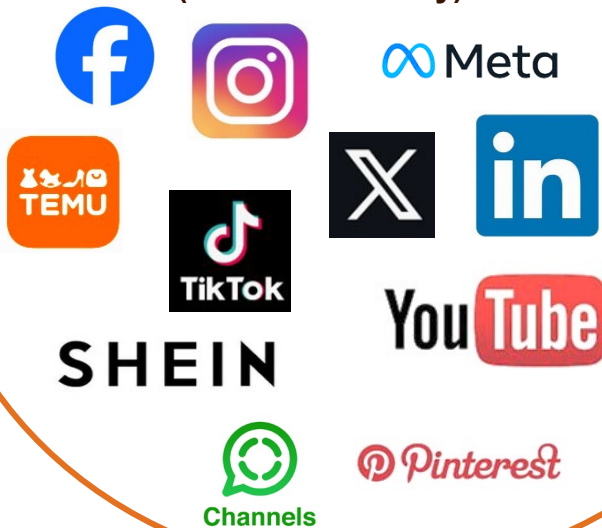
Digital Services Act (DSA)

Online Safety Code (OSC)

Terrorist Content Online (TCOR)

VLOPS

Very Large Online Platforms
(Irish-based only)

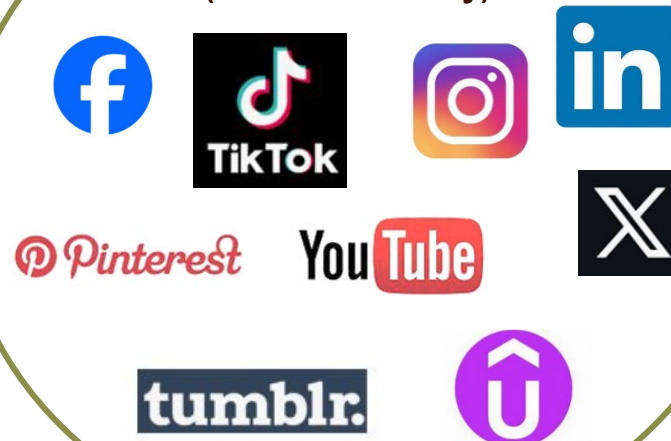


VLOSEs

Very Large Online
Search Engines
(Irish-based only)



Video-sharing
platforms
(Irish-based only)



HSPs – Hosting
Service Providers
(Public only)

Services that enable
the storing and sharing
of data online



Other ISPs and
platforms
Platforms with
under 45 million
users
(Irish-based only)

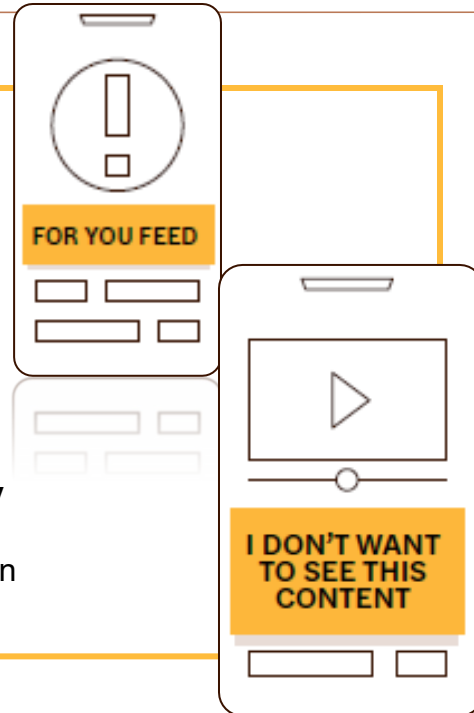
NOTE: The remit of Coimisiún na Meán does not cover print media. That is regulated by the Press Ombudsman.

Your Rights under the Online Safety Framework

The right to be protected from harm

The way online platforms use recommender systems ('for you' feeds) must be set out in their **Terms and Conditions**.

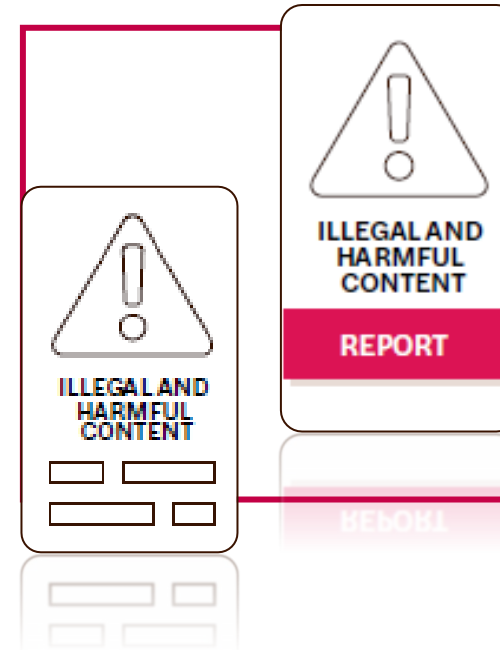
Users should be **easily able to modify or select their preferred options** and have more control over what they see in their feed.



The right to report

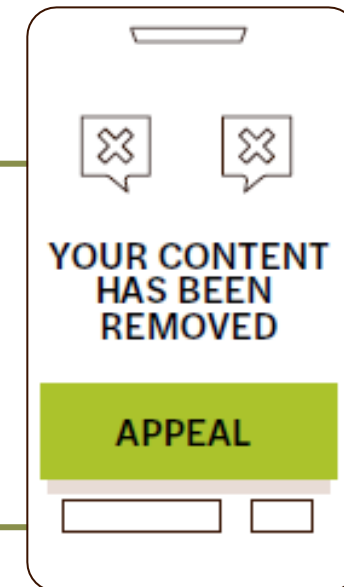
It is important to **report harmful and illegal content** to the platform where you saw it first.

There should be an **easy to find and easy to use** reporting mechanism.



The right to express yourself

If a platform removes your content, you have **the right to know why** and the right to **appeal this decision**.







How to help hold platforms to account

Spot It, Flag It, Stop It
Your voice and participation
can make the internet a
better place.

 SPOT IT	See illegal content online?
 FLAG IT	You should always report it to the online platform where you saw it.
 STOP IT	Online platforms must remove illegal content.

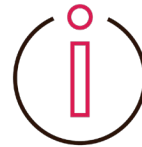
Coimisiún na Meán's public awareness campaign, Spot It, Flag It, Stop It.

			
Play your part – report illegal and harmful content to the platforms!	If you're not sure how to report, get in touch with Coimisiún na Meán's contact centre at politicalrep@cnam.ie or look at our how-to guides at www.cnam.ie/howtoreport	If you have a problem online, always report the issue to the platform first.	The more queries and information Coimisiún na Meán receive from the public, the better it can do its job of making sure the platforms are following the rules.

What is the Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertising regulation? (TTPA)

- The TTPA came into effect on **10 October 2025**. It aims to enhance the transparency of political advertisements and help ensure that the public can make informed choices about, for example, elections by making it easier for them to identify political advertising.
- The labelling of these advertisements is intended to inform the public about the person, group or organisation behind the advertising, and to ensure that they are aware if they have received a targeted political advertisement.
- The TTPA covers both **online** and **offline** political advertising.

What are the labelling and transparency requirements for each political advertisement under TTPA?



A political advertisement must:

- ✓ Clearly identify the message as a political advertisement
- ✓ State the identity of the sponsor of the ad, and where applicable, the entity controlling the sponsor
- ✓ Where applicable, state the election, referendum, legislative or regulatory process to which the political advertisement is linked
- ✓ Where applicable, include a statement a statement on whether targeting or advertising-delivery techniques have been used
- ✓ Include a transparency notice or clearly indicate where the transparency notice can be found
- ✓ Be prominent and adapted to the medium
- ✓ Remain in place if the ad is further disseminated

Who is responsible for regulating the TTPA in Ireland?



What is An Coimisiún empowered to do under TTPA?

An Coimisiún can, for example, appoint authorised officers, conduct investigations, issue compliance notices, and impose administrative financial penalties.

Coimisiún na Meán is the designated competent authority for regulating the entities it currently regulates. These include online platforms (including social media and search engines) broadcasters and video-on-demand services.

The **Data Protection Commission** regulates the rules relating to advertising delivery techniques and transparency of advertising delivery techniques involving personal data.

An Coimisiún Toghcháin is responsible for the regulation of any matters falling outside the scope of Coimisiún na Meán or the Data Protection Commission's remit including newspapers, posters, flyers, leaflets, public spaces (e.g. billboards, bus shelters and banners).



Coimisiún
na Meán

www.cnam.ie