



## **Questions about the eco Complaints Office?** We have the answers!

### ? **Who can submit a complaint to the eco Complaints Office?**

In principle, every Internet user has the possibility to submit a complaint.

### ? **What does it cost to submit a complaint to the eco Complaints Office?**

There are no costs incurred for the complainant through the submission or processing of a complaint.

### ? **What types of complaints are processed by the eco Complaints Office?**

The eco Complaints Office processes in particular complaints regarding the following illegal Internet content:

- Offences against sexual self-determination (particularly openly accessible adult pornography, child and youth pornography, or pornography involving violence or bestiality)
- Distribution of anti-democratic or Nazi propaganda
- Incitement of the masses
- Instructions for or encouragement to commit criminal acts
- Extreme representations of violence
- Support or advertising of criminal or terrorist associations
- Youth-endangering content and content which impairs development
- Impermissible sending of marketing emails and newsletters

### ? **What happens with the complaint that I submit to the eco Complaints Office?**

Every complaint submitted is examined by the eco Complaints Office lawyers according to German law to see whether the content is in fact illegal.

For questionable content hosted in Germany, the experts from the eco Complaints Office analyze what the source of the content is, and examine the specific legal situation. If it concerns content which according to the law must be made inaccessible, the Complaints Office contacts the service provider responsible (Content, Hosting or Platform provider).



If, in addition to this, the content meets the definition of a statutory offence, a report is made to the law enforcement agency concerned.

For illegal content that is hosted by a provider outside of Germany, the complaint will be forwarded to one of more than 45 partner complaints offices from more than 40 countries, and will be pursued there. If no partner complaints office exists, the eco Complaints Office will contact the service provider directly.

[This infographic](#) demonstrates at a glance how the eco Complaints Office functions.

### ? **Can I submit my complaint anonymously?**

Yes, but you then cannot get and feedback about the outcome of the complaint. The complaint will be – like every other complaint – examined thoroughly.

### ? **Are my personal details forwarded for the processing of a complaint?**

We process complaints confidentially as a rule. If, as an exception, the forwarding of personal data is necessary, we will inform you in advance and request your permission to pass on your data.

### ? **Will I receive feedback about the outcome of the complaint processing?**

With the exception of complaints about spam emails, you will be informed about the progress of your complaint. This is unfortunately not possible for complaints about spam as a result of the large number of complaints, and this would take resources from the processing of complaints.

### ? **How can I submit my complaint?**

All complaints can be made using the online form on the eco homepage, or by sending an email to [hotline@eco.de](mailto:hotline@eco.de).

For the submission of complaints about Spam, the eco Complaints Office has also created a separate email address, because more information is needed for dealing with spam than can be given on the online form (for more on this, see the question “What do I need to consider for a spam complaint?”).

General complaints about spam – for example about unwanted advertising emails – should therefore be sent to [allgemeiner-spam@internet-beschwerdestelle.de](mailto:allgemeiner-spam@internet-beschwerdestelle.de).



Complaints about spam with illegal content such as pornography or right-wing extremist content should be sent to [besonderer-spam@internet-beschwerdestelle.de](mailto:besonderer-spam@internet-beschwerdestelle.de).

### ? **Is there any point to making a complaint?**

Yes. The eco Complaints Office has been functioning successfully for years – this can be seen in our quarterly statistics.

### ? **What do I need to consider for a spam complaint?**

When you submit a complaints about spam, it is especially important that you send the complete email and the expanded email header. You can find out how to display the complete email header here: <http://www.isipp.com/resources/email-headers/>.

### ? **Why, in some circumstances, do I continue to get spam after submitting a spam complaint?**

Complaints about spam are – just like other complaints – processed anonymously. At the same time, this means that the sender is not informed about the complainant. Our goal is that senders should completely stop sending impermissible emails, and not simply delete individual names from their mailing list.