

Product, Content & Brand Guidelines

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1. Purpose and Area of Application

All companies of the Zalando Group are committed to trading responsibly and we take steps to ensure that the goods we sell and procure have been produced in an ethical, safe and environmentally conscious manner and that brands we collaborate with also uphold and reflect our company values.

As outlined in our [Do.Better Strategy](#), Zalando is committed to being **inclusive by design** and a welcoming place for everyone. This includes our commitment to only sell and display products and content that are inline with our values and, above all, are non-offensive to our customers. We promise our customers an experience that they can trust and they rightly expect us to adhere to high product, content and brand standards.

The purpose of our Product¹, Content² and Brand³ Guidelines is to set clear standards of what is not permissible for the products made available to our customers, the content shared on our platform, and the brands we partner with.

The Product, Content & Brand Guidelines (or PCB Guidelines) are complementary to our [Code of Conduct and other sustainability and ethical standards](#), which set the baseline for social, environmental and chemical compliance, and apply to all Business Partners, including, but not limited to: suppliers, agents and trading companies (hereinafter “Business Partners”) of Zalando SE and all its subsidiaries (hereinafter “Zalando”). They define what Zalando considers to be offensive, illegal or otherwise inappropriate products, content or brands and act as a reference point for employees of Zalando and our Business Partners when making decisions regarding the type of content, products and brands that are permitted on Zalando. They apply to all products and content sold through and/or displayed on Zalando’s websites, including content pertaining to an individual product, such as the product name, product description, as well as images and videos of the product and logos. Similarly they also apply when selecting brands with whom we may want to or already partner based on their conduct and principles. For example, if a brand has a name, a logo, or through its brand representation (i.e marketing, styling of models, etc.) that could be classed as a violation of the PCB Guidelines, the brand is to be considered offensive and therefore a non-viable partner for Zalando. The same evaluation is to be conducted if a brand has a history or a new case (e.g. history of discrimination, misconduct of Senior Management) classified as a violation of the PCB guidelines.

The PCB Guidelines do not include an exhaustive list of use cases. Product and content producers, along with those choosing and selecting brand partners, are expected to make the required and necessary judgements when applying the PCB Guidelines to ensure that products, content and brands displayed on Zalando meet our requirements and represent our values. Both employees of Zalando and of our Business Partners are required to familiarize themselves with the PCB Guidelines in accordance with the [Zalando Platform Rules](#) (3.7 Compliance with Zalando’s Sustainability Requirements & Ethical Guidelines) . In the case that a product, content or brand in question cannot be fully assessed by the PCB Guidelines, please refer to our internal escalation process explained in **Chapter 4**.

We have adopted a continuous improvement approach towards our 2023 ambitions, which we expect Business Partners to adopt and demonstrate clear progress towards. This improvement reflects our ambition to raise the bar across the industry and only work with Business Partners who align with our ethical standards by 2023. In addition to ongoing compliance checks carried out during delivery and production, Zalando’s Quality Assurance performs regular spot-checks on the product assortment to verify Business Partners’ compliance with the PCB Guidelines specified below.

Products, content and brands on Zalando may be flagged as being in violation of the PCB Guidelines by various sources, including, but not limited to: buyers, customers, or

¹ *Product* refers to all goods made available to our customers on any Zalando platform.

² *Content* refers to all media (print, digital, visual, copy) made available to our customers on any Zalando platform.

³ *Brand* refers to a Business Partner’s conduct and principles including but not limited to: name, image, background history, and marketing practices.

campaigning groups. Products, content or brands that are considered to be in violation of the PCB Guidelines will not be displayed on Zalando - if already live, the product or content violation will be removed. In case of a violation(s), remediation and corrective action plans will be designed (based on the severity) in collaboration with Business Partners to prevent additional violations. Further, Zalando reserves the right to suspend Business Partners from selling on the platform or terminate the business relationship, if they violate the PCB guidelines and the legal requirements for such termination under applicable law(s).

2. Definition of Illegal and Offensive Products, Content and Brands

Zalando has defined **12** dimensions that constitute offensive and illegal content. What can be deemed Illegal is clearly defined based on laws (e.g. what is unlawful) and what can be deemed offensive is based on our [Code of Conduct and other sustainability and ethical standards](#), including these PCB Guidelines (outlined below). In order for products or content to be sold and/or displayed on Zalando, the products and content may not contain, represent, condone or promote the following (please see sections 2.1 - 2.12 for detailed descriptions):

1. **Discriminatory or hateful activities**, including derogatory representations based on ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, political views, disability, age or sexuality; support for racism, sexism or other discriminatory ideas; slurs or negative stereotypes etc.
2. **Political extremism**, including any fascist related symbolism; specific numbers associated with political extremism; far-right symbolism; etc.
3. **Adult content**, including graphic depictions of sexual activity; nudity or poses, camera angles, props and or styling that suggest pornographic intent; etc.
4. **Glorification of violence and use of weapons**, including depictions of violence and weaponry; explicitly showing or hinting at extremist or terrorist organizations; linking to gangs; etc.
5. **Defamation of religion** including negative or mocking depictions of symbols, iconography, quotations, etc. from any registered religion
6. **Perpetuation of stereotypes and cultural appropriation**, including slurs or caricatures based on stereotypes; depictions of cultural symbols, iconography, traditions (including the use of language) which are not representative of the producer and/or brand's own heritage.
7. **Objectification and exploitation**, including sexualization or exploitation of minors (under 18 year olds); sexualization of individuals; any images hinting at any form of trafficking; images of minors in underwear, swimwear; etc.
8. **Self-injury and harmful behavior**, including graphic or otherwise triggering imagery relating to self-harm; instructions around self-harm; promotion of any self-harm behavior; etc.
9. **Substance use**, including the portrayal of hard drugs (e.g. cocaine, heroin, magic mushrooms); messages promoting or celebrating the use of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs; etc.
10. **Inappropriate language**, including targeted language that is offensive to women and minorities, and the word "fuck"; etc.

11. **Intellectual property rights infringements**, including products and content for which patterns, cuts or other features infringe legally protected IP rights (e.g. copyrights, design rights or trademarks); etc.
12. **In addition to our Animal Welfare and Sustainable Sourcing Policies**, including engaging in prohibited activities and using materials related to the manufacture, sourcing and sale of products sold through Zalando, as defined in the [Animal Welfare](#) and [Sustainable Sourcing](#) policies.

In order to make the identification of offensive products and content as clear and unambiguous as possible, we have included detailed guidelines per dimension below:

2.1 Discriminatory and hateful activities

We will not tolerate any discriminatory or hateful activities in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. This includes:

- Derogatory representations based on ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, political views, disability, age or sexuality.
- Support for racism, sexism or other discriminatory ideas and stereotyping.
- Hate-based conspiracy theories and misinformation.
- Denial of an individual's gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Shaming of body shape or size.
- Attacks on individuals, including public figures based on their membership in a vulnerable or protected group.
- Mocking or attacking the beliefs, sacred symbols, movements, or institutions of the protected or vulnerable groups, including people grouped together based on their actual or perceived race, color, social class, ethnicity, immigration status, national origin, religion or faith, sex or gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, medical, or mental health condition. This also includes people who are grouped together based on socio-economic status, age, disability, weight or size, pregnancy and veteran status.

2.2 Political extremism

We will not tolerate any messages of political extremism in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. This includes:

- Unconstitutional imagery according to German Law: [Strafgesetzbuch-StGB](#) (Section 86a prohibits the "use of symbols of unconstitutional organizations (outside the contexts of art or science, research or teaching)."
[List of banned organizations](#):
 - Sozialistische Reichspartei (1952)
 - Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (1956)
 - Freie Deutsche Jugend (West Germany)
 - Volkssozialistische Bewegung Deutschlands/Partei der Arbeit (1982)
 - Aktionsfront Nationaler Sozialisten/Nationale Aktivisten (1983)
 - Deutsche Alternative (1992) (not to be confused with Alternative für Deutschland)
 - Nationalistische Front (1992)
 - Wiking-Jugend (1994)

- Freiheitliche Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (1995)
 - Blood and Honour, Germany chapter (2000)
 - Anything Nazi-related, including those not covered by Strafgesetzbuch (Section 86a).
 - Any Nazi-related symbolism and imagery, including any display of swastikas, triskeles, a black sun, golden stars in specific positions on shirts, two lightning bolts for the SS, the war flag of Germany during National Socialism (Reichskriegsflagge).
 - Any products that hint at Nazi-related approaches, including combinations of colors, font, and/or use of specific words (e.g. Siegorg, Auschwitz, Holocaust, etc.).
 - Specific numbers that will be paid close attention to will be:
 - 18 — Adolf Hitler's initials are the first and eighth letter in the Latin alphabet.
 - 88 — "Heil Hitler", stands for two times the eighth letter in the alphabet. If you count from the back of the alphabet 8 times, you get "SS".
 - 14 — 14 words "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children" where "our people" means the "Aryan race".
 - 74 — "G" and "D" for "Grossdeutschland" - seventh and fourth letters of the alphabet.
 - 28 — Neonazi network Blood & Honor (stands for second and eighth letters of the alphabet) - banned in Germany since 2000.
 - 198 — $19 + 8 =$ "Sieg Heil", stands for 19th and eighth letters in the alphabet.
 - 1919 — "SS" two times the 19th letter in the alphabet.
 - Far right symbolism, including but not limited to: fascist regimes, Celtic cross, Ku Klux Klan (KKK), white power or pride (e.g. any reference to "white only"), and anything linked to the Confederate flag.
 - Patterns of or appropriated by political extremism, including the Keffiyeh pattern (of any color).
 - Political or cultural icons connected to negative events throughout history (e.g. Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust, slave trade, colonialism, Che Guevara, etc).
 - Hate symbols (e.g. white power gesture).
 - Any symbols or imagery that use any of the above listed symbols in a way to demonstrate an anti-movement (e.g. anti-Nazism with a crossed out swastika).
- Note: This is to prevent triggering communities impacted by this imagery.

2.3 Adult content

We will not tolerate any adult content in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. This includes:

- Graphic depictions of sexual activity.
- Images of nudity where the poses, outfits, styling, camera angles, or props suggest pornographic intent.
- Graphic visuals of sexual behaviors (e.g. erotic visuals, visuals from Kamasutra).
- Cartoon or anime characters engaged in sexual activities.

- Blow-up dolls referencing sexual activity.
- Fetishized imagery.
- Vivid sexual text descriptions.

Zalando reserves the right to differentiate between pornography and other mature content.

- Product and content pertaining to sexual health/education, art, and well-being with adult nudity presented in a non-pornographic context are permissible.
- Products of exclusively erotic/sexual, BDSM or fetish purposes are not allowed (e.g. sex toys). However, products like harnesses and chokers are permissible when displayed as fashion accessories and not sexual objects (given the imagery meets the other requirements mentioned in these guidelines).
- Lingerie and underwear products (like the *Ouvert* style) that show fully exposed chest, genitalia, or buttocks are permissible. Any images with a model must avoid full exposure and sexual objectification/exploitation, as outlined in 2.7 *Objectification and exploitation*. If this is not possible on a model, then flat images (without model) are acceptable.
- Transparent (or see-through) products that reveal a model's nipples through the clothing may be displayed (in compliance with 2.7 *Objectification and exploitation*).
- Products and content considered to be mature and acceptable must depict, or be modeled by, individuals who are clearly over the age of 18 years old, please refer to 2.7 *Objectification and exploitation* and our [Kids Policy](#) (internal) for details on preventing the sexualization or exploitation of minors.

2.4 Glorifying violence and use of weapons

We will not tolerate any messages glorifying violence in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. This includes:

- Any product or content showing violence (e.g. hanging, fighting, punching, cutting).
- Any product or content explicitly showing or hinting at any extremist or terrorist organizations.
- Any product or content linked to gangs:
 - Gang symbols, (e.g. hand symbols- Business Partners are responsible to double check the meaning of all products and content displaying an individual showing a hand signal or simply the hands themselves against potential gang affiliation and implication.
 - Any reference to gangs, especially the explicit writing of gang names (e.g. Crips, Bloods).
- Any product or content showing weapons, including guns, knives, machetes, bombs, atomic bomb mushrooms, any reference to chemical or biological weapons.
 - These symbols will be allowed if they are part of official flags, for example the Mozambican flag (incl. AK-47) or Angolan flag (incl. machete) as long as these flags are not further associated with violence through additional graphics superimposed on products.

- These symbols can also be permissible in popular culture references (i.e. film posters, music imagery) as long as the references do not promote the use of violence or weapons.
- Any products or content featuring military imagery and/or tools, including gas masks, anything that could be perceived as weapon upholstery, bulletproof vests and trousers, or any military related utility vests and trousers (usually with weapon upholstery).
 - Specifically the combination of military styles with national flags is not allowed.
 - Utility vests and trousers are allowed in reference to belt bags, camping, fishing and sportswear.
 - Cargo trousers are allowed (even in camouflage) as long as it does not include references to military imagery and/or tools (e.g. weapon upholstery).
 - Camouflage is allowed as a fashion pattern, but should not be allowed in conjunction with any military imagery and/or tools (e.g. weapon upholstery).
- Any graphic including a noose or hinting at the idea of a noose.
- Any products, content or brands referencing past and present wars or conflicts.

Furthermore, the current world and political climate at any given time may influence the degree to which this dimension is imposed. For example, to be sensitive to current or coming wars and conflicts, camouflage print or military-looking products (e.g. items with lapels, badges, etc.) may be paused as they can be considered insensitive and/or offensive. At such times the Zalando Product, Content and Brand Panel will provide specific, additional guidance to Business Partners.

2.5 Defamation of religion

We will not tolerate any messages where religion(s) are defamed in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. This includes:

- Any content or imagery which could be considered to be mocking or attacking the beliefs, convictions, sacred symbols, movements, celebrations or institutions of any registered religion.
- Any content or imagery of one religion that could be considered to be mocking or attacking the beliefs, sacred symbols, movements, celebrations or institutions of any other registered religion.

2.6 Perpetuation of stereotypes and cultural appropriation

We will not tolerate any products, content or brands that perpetuate stereotypes or exclude certain individuals to be sold through Zalando platforms. Stereotype is defined as a generalized but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or community. This includes:

- Slurs, including caricatures, based on stereotypes.
- Implying negative assumptions about people from certain groups (e.g. clichés about gender, age groups, ethnicities, job families or any other diversity characteristics).

- Implying that a person should change something about a characteristic associated with their identity, in order to fit stereotypical definitions of beauty (e.g. lightening / darkening skin color, etc.).

We will not tolerate any form of cultural appropriation in products, content or used generally by brands sold through Zalando platforms. Cultural appropriation refers to the exploitative practice of taking a source of inspiration outside the context of its original culture without permission and/or respect for its symbolism. This includes anything which is not representative of the producer/brand's own heritage.

- Any form of taking cultural symbols and garments out of their original context to be repurposed for a brand's own context or meaning (e.g. traditional dress produced by contemporary brands with no cultural connection, or a brand using a culture's symbols as "decoration", etc.). This includes products and content in which a brand attempts to "honor" or "appreciate" another culture but Zalando or our customers find them offensive and/or inappropriate.
- The use of script or terminology (e.g. language, letters, symbols, etc.) of a different language or culture used by another producer/brand without the same heritage or connection.
- Any content that depicts images, icons, or symbols of religious, cultural or spiritual significance in a stereotypical, satirical, or mocking form.
- Any product or content marketed for a specific religious or cultural holiday/festival that is not intrinsically linked to the celebration.

Please note, if a product has been produced by a brand with a genuine connection to the culture or cultural elements in question, the product, content and/or brand is to be permitted. The examples above pertain to products, content and/or brands stemming from a dominant group that have appropriated elements of a historically marginalized group in an exploitative, disrespectful or stereotypical way.

2.7 Objectification and exploitation

We will not tolerate any objectification or exploitation of anyone in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. This includes:

- Sexualization or sexual exploitation of minors. This applies to any individual appearing younger than 18 years old, and applies specifically to any images which imply grooming, sexual remarks, or any imagery which is questionable here in any way.
- Any image focusing on the sexualization of an individual.
- An image or text that explicitly or implicitly depicts the lack of consent of an individual.
- Any image of a person where the pose is more sexual in nature and there is a bold line superimposed over the eyes (color of the line is irrelevant).
- Any sexualized image of a person where the body is shown but the head is not.
- Any image hinting at adult sexual services that may involve sexual or physical exploitation.
- Any image hinting at any form of trafficking.

- Human trafficking and other illegal commercial exploitation, for instance organ trade or protected and endangered wildlife and wildlife products.
- Any image hinting at exploitation in general i.e child labor, forced labor, child soldiers, etc.

2.8 Self-injury and harmful behavior

We will not tolerate any messages of self-injury or harmful behavior in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. This includes:

- Instructions around self-injury/harm.
- Graphic or otherwise triggering imagery, for example someone slitting their wrists. This can be an explicit image but also an image that hints at this behavior.
- Any promotion of any self-injury or harmful behavior.

2.9 Substance use

We have specific guidelines concerning the depiction of alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs. We will not tolerate any of the following in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms:

- Any time drugs are portrayed or referenced, including but not limited to cocaine, heroin, magic mushrooms. In the specific case of marijuana:
 - Not allowed: Any imagery of a marijuana smoking device (e.g. joint, blunt, pipe, bong, etc.). Any imagery of someone/something smoking from a marijuana smoking device (e.g. joint, blunt, pipe, bong, etc.), including if this is done by a cartoon character. Any imagery of psychedelic drugs referenced as such (i.e. mushrooms).
 - Allowed: Symbols of marijuana as a plant, including a picture of a marijuana leaf. Symbols of mushrooms as a part of nature.
- Any messages promoting the use or overconsumption of alcohol, cigarettes and illegal or pharmaceutical drugs, e.g. phrases like “high on life” when accompanied by a depiction of someone/something consuming substances like alcohol, cigarettes and drugs.

2.10 Inappropriate language

We will not tolerate any inappropriate language in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. This includes:

- Use of language that is specifically offensive to minorities and women is strictly prohibited. This also includes words or terminology which are offensive in their native language but may be unknown in the local language (i.e a t-shirt with an offensive slogan written in Spanish should not be sold in the UK). Please see: [Block List](#) [Internal].
- The word “fuck” is never allowed (and its equivalent in other languages).
 - This also includes if a word is written and not spelled the same way - but the implication is clear. For example, if you see “FUC” and the last letter is covered, or the spelling is changed to say “fuct” or “fucc” but the implication is clear.

- Using the phrase “Fuck you” or “Fuck off”.
 - Symbols for the word are also not allowed (i.e. middle fingers). Again, symbols can also be permissible in historical or popular culture references (i.e. film posters, music imagery).
- Zalando holds the right to judge translation in other languages as inappropriate or offensive.

2.11 Infringement of intellectual property rights

We will not tolerate any violation of intellectual property rights in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. These are considered legal violations and will be dealt with accordingly.

2.12 In addition to our Animal Welfare and Sustainable Sourcing Policies

Our [Animal Welfare](#) and [Sustainable Sourcing](#) Policies define the minimum social, environmental and animal welfare standards that apply to the manufacture, sourcing and sale of products sold through Zalando, and include prohibited activities and materials. We will not tolerate any violations to these policies in the products, content or brands sold through Zalando platforms. Additionally, this includes:

- All images must be sensitive to animal welfare issues.
- Using live animals in photoshoots should be avoided. If animals are used, all care should be taken to reduce harm, stress and fear.

3. Additional Guidance for Brands

The above listed dimensions apply to all products, content and brands on Zalando (e.g. content on Zalando may not be discriminatory or hateful, politically extreme, etc.). However, in addition to these dimensions, there are additional guidelines that apply specifically to content created by brands and sold on Zalando.

3.1 Additional content-specific guidelines:

Content that violates these rules may not be displayed on Zalando:

- Models should look healthy and respect EU standards on minimum sizes (e.g. visibly underweight). See Zalando’s [Model Booking Policy](#) for more information.
- Children’s underwear and beachwear may not be shown on models. See the [Kids Policy](#) for more information.
- Adult garments must be shown only on models visibly over 18 years of age (with special attention to underwear and beachwear).
- Models may not conceal their chest, genitalia or buttocks with their own body parts or the body parts of other models (e.g. arms, hands, legs), whereas they would be fully exposed otherwise.
- Models may not be represented in derogatory or discriminatory postures, including postures that are objectifying, overtly sexualised or perpetuate stereotypes (e.g. women subservient to men).

- Images may not be overly retouched (specifically, darker skin tones may not be lightened).

3.2 Additional brand-specific guidelines:

Brands that violate these rules may not be displayed on Zalando:

- Brand names, logos and products must not be offensive, discriminatory or exclusionary and must adhere to the values outlined in our [Code of Conduct and other sustainability and ethical standards](#) along with the guidance outlined here. However, brands with names, logos or products inherently tied to the brand founder's heritage, culture, lived experience, etc. (e.g. the brand [BrownSkin](#)) are to be permitted.
- Brands who have heavy representation or endorsement from celebrities and influencers, etc., which do not align with our values. This includes brands directly owned by celebrities and influencers, etc., which do not align with our values.
- Brands whose marketing and general imagery (e.g. model styling, campaign content, etc.) is consistently not in line with the guidance provided in this document.
- Brands with a history or background of instances that violate our current [Code of Conduct and other sustainability and ethical standards](#) (including the PCB Guidelines) without proper reconciliation.

4. Internal Escalation Process

Cases that are not covered by the PCB Guidelines or that fall into potential “gray areas” should be double checked against other cases and/or follow the escalation process as outlined in the Product, Content & Brand Guidance Tool (internal Zalando document).

5. Appendix

5.1 Important Contacts:

- Compliance: compliance@zalando.de
- Diversity and Inclusion: team-diversityinclusion@zalando.de
- Ethical Responsibility: ethical-responsibility@zalando.de

5.2 Important Links:

- [Do.Better strategy](#)
- [Code of Conduct and other sustainability and ethical standards](#)
- [Zalando Platform Rules](#) (Internal)
- [Animal Welfare Policy](#) (Internal)
- [Sustainable Sourcing Policy](#) (Internal)
- [Strafgesetzbuch-StGB](#) & [List of Banned Organizations](#)
- [Kids Policy](#) (Internal)
- [Model Booking Policy](#) (Internal)
- [Block List](#) (Internal)
- [Product, Content & Brand Guidance Tool](#) (Internal)