

HERE'S HOW INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION LED TO ARREST OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSER IN PORTUGAL.

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[Press Release](#)



Today the Portuguese Judicial Police hosted a media event to show how international cooperation led to the arrest of two men who sexually abused children. The event, hosted at the Portuguese Judicial Police Headquarters in Lisbon included Europol, [INTERPOL](#) and [US ICE](#), each of which had an important part to play in the events leading up to the arrest of the men in 2017.

Those events were the culmination of a year-long investigation by various police agencies across Europe and the world into the child abuse darknet site known as 'Babyheart' and its administrator known as 'Twinkle'.

Working collaboratively and using the secure information exchange systems provided by Europol and INTERPOL, investigators from different agencies including US ICE, Austrian Bundeskriminalamt, French Gendarmerie, Italian Polizia di Comunicazioni, UK National Crime Agency and West Midlands Police, Australian Federal Police and Queensland TaskForce Argos, Canada's Toronto Police Service and the Brazilian Federal Police gathered intelligence.

That intelligence pointed at the user Twinkle being the administrator of the 'Babyheart' darknet site who [sexually abused children](#) and posted images of that abuse on the site. However, he was using the anonymity of the TOR network to protect himself against the efforts of investigators. He further

claimed to be using advanced methods of encryption and counter-surveillance to ensure that he would not be detected or prosecuted by law enforcement. He gave few clues as to his actual identity and made finding himself more difficult for investigators by providing misleading information in online posts, messages and through the child abuse material he claimed to have produced.

Careful analysis of the intelligence provided by all the law enforcement agencies involved, including pictures and video files led to a breakthrough. The location of the suspect was narrowed down to Portugal. The Portuguese Judicial Police took control of the investigation and engaged with the prosecutor's office. Further criminal intelligence analysis by experts at Europol, INTERPOL and US ICE led to significant new information about the suspect and the victims that he was believed to be abusing.

Thanks to this cooperation across borders between police forces, the suspect was arrested and charged. His electronic devices were seized and examined leading to the identification of seven victims directly related to him.

Commenting on this case, Europol's Deputy Executive Director Operations, Wil van Gemert, said: "The international collaboration in this case led to the successful identification of the suspect, an Administrator of a darknet site where the abuse of young children was promoted and encouraged. It is essential that this type of collaboration continue to enable the identification of the many victims suffering from child sexual abuse and whose abuse is being shared with millions of offenders around the world."

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