

TEN CHILD VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE IDENTIFIED THANKS TO INTERNATIONAL TASKFORCE AT EUROPOL

22 Dec 2017

[Press Release](#)



Over the course of the last two weeks, [Europol's European Cybercrime Centre \(EC3\)](#) hosted at its headquarters the 4th Victim Identification Taskforce where 25 experts from 16 countries and 21 law enforcement agencies gathered to identify the children victim of sexual exploitation and abuse. Thanks to their joint efforts, 10 offenders and victims were localised in 9 different countries. In total, during the previous editions, more than 50 victims in 14 different countries have been identified and safeguarded from their abusers.

On a daily basis, law enforcement comes across millions of images and videos of children being sexually abused. The vast majority of them are found online: in chatrooms, peer-to-peer networks, social media applications and dedicated websites and forums both on the open internet and on the Darknet.

In a determined effort to identify the victims on these images, the first Victim Identification Taskforce (VIDTF) initiative was launched in 2014. Since then, three more editions have taken place. Experts from EU Member States and Third Country partners all over the world gather at Europol for two weeks to tackle the enormous amount of child sexual abuse material online, using advanced techniques, software and their knowledge and expertise. These experts are supported by Europol staff specialised in this crime area. The unique combination of collaborative work, image and video

analysis, and criminal intelligence means that the experts work through millions of files to find and exploit vital clues.

This 4th edition took place in two stages: the preparation week in early November and the analysis phase from 4-15 December 2017. Both were attended by victim identification experts from law enforcement agencies from Australia (AFP, Queensland Police), Austria, Belgium, Canada (RCMP, Toronto PD), Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and USA (US FBI, US HSI, US DOJ) and INTERPOL. Over 400 series of child sexual abuse images and video files have been uploaded to the INTERPOL International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) database and additions made to more than 50 existing sequences. Ten offenders and victims were localised in 9 different countries. In addition, Europol has distributed intelligence packages to several countries to assist in the identification of victims.

These actions will ensure that many more victims have a better chance of being identified and made safe from child sexual abuse. A number of investigations are well advanced and could soon lead to positive outcomes for more victims.

Steven Wilson, Head of Europol's European Cybercrime Centre (EC3), said: *"The work that takes place in the Victim Identification Task Force at Europol is unique. The contributions by the countries and agencies firstly of child abuse material and then of their staff to collaboratively examine it for leads, inspires hope for the future of those children. The blend of global expertise, professionalism and knowledge with Europol's operational capacity and intelligence analysis brings considerable results. We are very happy to be continuing with these activities to make individual children safer. Doing that for each child makes the world safer by degrees and that is what law enforcement aim to do every day."*

Stop Child Abuse, Trace an Object

On 1 June, International day for the protection of the child, Europol launched on its website the [Stop Child Abuse – Trace on Object initiative](#). Extracts from the background of child sexual abuse images, often of bad quality, are published online with the intent of asking the general public for their help in identifying and localising the objects shown. Since the launch of the webpage, 18 000 people have sent tips to Europol. Useful leads have since been exploited and forwarded to the relevant countries and law enforcement authorities and have helped advance national investigations.

Today, ten new objects have been uploaded to the Europol webpage. To see if you can also help, go to www.europol.europa.eu/stopchildabuse.

CRIME AREAS [Child Sexual Exploitation](#) • [Online sexual coercion and extortion of children](#)
TARGET GROUPS [General Public](#) • [Law Enforcement](#) • [Academia](#) • [Professor](#) • [Students](#) • [Researcher](#) •
[Press/Journalists](#) • [Other](#)
COUNTRIES [Australia](#) • [Austria](#) • [Belgium](#) • [Canada](#) • [Denmark](#) • [France](#) • [Germany](#) • [Hungary](#) •
[Netherlands](#) • [Romania](#) • [Slovakia](#) • [Spain](#) • [Switzerland](#) • [United Kingdom](#) • [United States of America](#)

ENTITIES [European Cybercrime Center \(EC3\)](#)
ORGANISATIONS [Interpol](#)
SUPPORT & [Operational coordination](#) • [Operational support](#) • [Information exchange](#)
SERVICES

Source URL: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/ten-child-victims-of-sexual-abuse-identified-thanks-to-international-taskforce-europol>