

UNIQUE POLICE2PEER INITIATIVE COMBATS CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE ONLINE

03 Mar 2017

[Press Release](#)



Peer-to-peer file sharing makes the collecting and sharing of child sexual abuse material online easy. Law enforcement all over Europe and their partners, with the support of Europol and [EMPACT](#) are now using those same networks to combat the illegal distribution of these files by sending a message to their users. This Police2Peer action will spread a unique new message about the consequences for users when illegal child abuse files are shared^[1].

Peer-to-peer file sharing has been a major facilitator of the distribution of child sexual abuse material across the world for over a decade. Files shared from the private computers of internet users across Europe have contributed to the wide availability of this material. During this time, offenders on these networks have been investigated, arrested and convicted, individually and through national and international initiatives. Whilst this approach has had a positive impact to reduce the threat and increase prosecutions, child abuse material is still being accessed online. This new initiative is being implemented to prevent offending and to ensure those who continue to view child abuse material understand they will be subjected to a robust law enforcement response.

Law enforcement will inform users of the consequences of their illegal actions and how to seek help. "Law enforcement will no longer accept children being repeatedly re-victimised through their abuse being shared to and from users on peer-to-peer networks. Through EMPACT we are making it absolutely clear that these networks are not a safe place for those exploiting children. They may encounter the police each time they upload or download this material," says the action leader Bjørn-

Erik Ludvigsen of Norway's National Criminal Investigation Service.

Those with a problematic sexual interest in children can access a domain (<http://helplinks.eu> ) with links to help resources. No information on the visitors to this domain or the separate, individual services it links to, will ever become part of a police investigation.

Europol is an active participant in the Police2Peer action, supporting it through the hosting of resources linked to the initiative on its website. Additionally Europol will provide analytical support to partners in the initiative, quantifying its impact over time on affected networks.

More information about this initiative can be found at Europol's [Police2Peer page](#).

[1] These messages are distributed under the responsibility of the competent authorities in the participating Member States. Europol has supported this project under the EMPACT framework.

CRIME AREAS [Cybercrime](#) • [Child Sexual Exploitation](#)

TARGET GROUPS [General Public](#) • [Law Enforcement](#) • [Academia](#) • [Professor](#) • [Students](#) • [Researcher](#) •
[Press/Journalists](#) • [Other](#)

Source URL: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/unique-police2peer-initiative-combats-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-online>