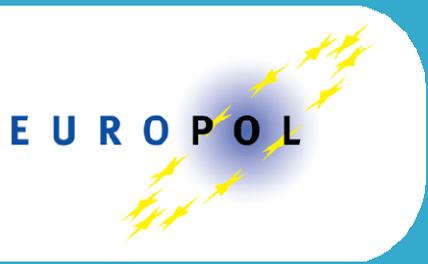


# Trans-national cooperation on Human Trafficking cases

The logo features the word "EUROPOL" in blue capital letters on the left. To its right is a stylized graphic of a globe with several yellow lightning bolts striking it from the top right.

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## A Europol perspective

Presentation to OSCE Conference Helsinki 10-  
11 September 2008

# Extent of THB in the European Union

It is unlikely that there is one Member State of the European Union that is not affected by the activities of criminals and criminal networks involved in the Traffic of Human Beings in, into and from the EU

# Overview on Trafficking Human Beings in the European Union

- THB is driven by organised crime and professional criminals
- Lucrative markets in respect of sexual and labour exploitation exist throughout the EU
- In respect of THB, the relaxation of border controls and the increased freedom of movement and travel within Europe has resulted in the following;
  - a) It has significantly reduced the opportunities for many EU law enforcement agencies to intercept traffickers and identify victims of trafficking, and
  - b) It has provided the traffickers with a relatively 'risk free or low risk area of operations'

The logo features the word "EUROPOL" in a blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic of a globe with several yellow lightning bolts striking it from the top right. The entire logo is set against a white background with rounded corners.

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# Europol's Mandate

To improve the effectiveness and cooperation of the competent authorities in the Member States in preventing and combating serious forms of international crime involving an organised criminal structure

- 27 countries
- Internal land border 13,000km
- External land border 11,000km
- Sea border 74,000km
- Diverse judicial systems and working practices
- 23 different languages
- 16 different currencies
- Population in 2007 in excess of 500,000,000
- Schengen Travel Area

# 27 Member States of the European Union

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom

# 23 official languages of the European Union

- Bulgarian
- Czech
- Danish
- German
- Estonian
- Greek
- English
- Spanish
- French
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Hungarian
- Irish
- Maltese
- Dutch
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovene
- Finnish
- Swedish

# Threats or risks posed to the European Union

Regional or national investigations into the trafficking of human beings which are not developed beyond the borders of the prosecuting state are likely to have a limited impact upon the liberty, lifestyle and other activities enjoyed by traffickers based in another country

# The involvement of organised crime

- The most frequently reported trafficking group structure is the small group with 5 or 6 members linked through either family and clan ties or those that are formed by criminals with a previous association. Groups of this nature operate at cross border level and have international links.
- Currently, the most active and frequently reported nationality of traffickers are Nigerian and Romanian
- More and more heterogeneous groups are being identified which tend to reflect the origin of VOTs and the country of exploitation e.g. Romanian and Spanish, Ukrainian and Portuguese, Lithuanian and Albanian.

# Examples of current international operations and investigations since June 2008

1. Romania –Spain - UK : Trafficking of women for sexual exploitation
2. UK – Norway – Sweden: Trafficking of men for labour exploitation
3. Romania – Ireland: Trafficking of women for sexual exploitation
4. Romania – Spain: Trafficking of children for sexual exploitation
5. Romania – Austria : Trafficking of women for sexual exploitation
6. Czech Republic – Austria: Trafficking of children fro sexual exploitation
7. Romania – Italy: Trafficking of children for labour exploitation
8. Romania – Finland: Trafficking of women for sexual exploitation

- North West Hub initiative: Trafficking of Nigerian children across the EU for sexual exploitation
- G6 Human Trafficking Initiative:
- Joint Investigation Team: Trafficking of Romanian Roma children across Europe

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# Case study: Investigation referred to Europol for support

Bulgarian organised crime group trafficking Bulgarian girls and women in the European Union for the purpose of sexual exploitation

# Links to other involved countries may not be evident

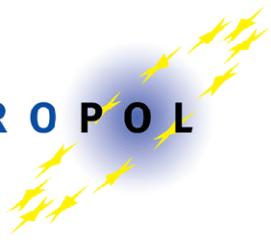
Amsterdam prosecutor sees one pimp and one victim

Hannover prosecutor sees one pimp and one victim

Brussels prosecutor sees one pimp and one victim

Multiple victims trafficked by Bulgarian OCG to western EU states





# Added value of exchanging intelligence via Europol channels

- Information and intelligence gathered from across the European Union results in identified links and 'cross matches'
- Operational meeting held at Europol with investigators and liaison officers from those countries that have been identified as being relevant to the case
- Objectives identified –
  - Identify and rescue victims where possible
  - Identify the members of the trafficking network
  - Gather evidence, arrest, prosecute and convict
- Dissemination of intelligence collection plan and tasking for specific countries and agencies
- Intelligence developed and package with recommendations provided to lead agencies

# Identifying the structure of the trafficking network

- Surveillance
- Communications intercepts
- Physical 'routine' checks on vehicles
- Tracking the money flow
- Victim testimony
- Development of intelligence

# The role of the drivers: An opportunity for intervention



- The victims are under the control of the drivers during the transportation phase
- The drivers also have a trusted role within the group, ensuring that the 'commodity' arrives in the place of exploitation.
- Drivers will have established contacts in transit countries and at border crossings
- The drivers will also know the contacts at the destination

# The drivers as money couriers

- 'Trusted' victims are used to collect money from other victims and prostitutes which is passed on to madams or pimps.
- They are also used to take substantial sums of hard cash back to Bulgaria
- The drivers have a key role in transporting these money couriers

# Intelligence package provided to investigators

- Identity of the drivers involved in transporting the commodity
- Description of the vehicles involved in transporting the victims
- The routes taken by the vehicles
- The probable date and location of the next 'border crossing'



# Potential obstacles to successful international investigation

- Dissemination and exchange of information
- Data protection
- Handling codes & tables of equivalence
- Knowledge and awareness
- Legislation
- Language barriers
- Jurisdiction
- Lack of network or point of contact
- Cultural barriers
- Capacity and resources
- Confidence
- Prosecutors
- Investigators
- Criminal procedure and working practices

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# Solutions to improving international co-operation and the effectiveness of cross border investigations

Early contact and liaison with the international law enforcement agencies that have a specific role to coordinate, support and facilitate cross border investigations into serious and organised crime

e.g. Eurojust, Europol, Frontex, Interpol, SECI,

# The good news

- Entry into force of Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings 1 February 2008
- Increased awareness and prioritisation by EU MS law enforcement agencies in preventing and combating THB
- As a result more traffickers are being detected, prosecuted and convicted
- More victims of trafficking are being identified and dealt with appropriately
- The implementation of regular data collection mechanisms are currently the subject of an EU project
- International standards and recommended good practice is recognised as the basis for a routine working practice

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# EUROPOL: The European Police Organisation



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