

Summary of the Swedish entry to European Crime Prevention Award 2015: Financial Coalition against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Child Pornography)

The Swedish Financial Coalition against Child Pornography was started in 2008, and changed its name to Financial Coalition against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in 2014.

The child sex trade, or commercial sexual exploitation of children, includes child sexual abuse material (called "child pornography" in the law), sexual exploitation of children sold in Sweden or in connection with travel, and trafficking in children for sexual purposes. New ways to sexually exploit children are generated at the same pace as the development of technology and access to the Internet. A great number of cases go unreported and individual seizures conducted by the police can contain millions of pictures and films documenting abuse. Buyers and sellers use different payment methods over the Internet to transfer money between them.

The Financial Coalition against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children was started in order to prevent this trade through the financial system. It is a unique and successful collaboration between public authorities, the private sector, and the non-profit sector.

The activities are based, among other things, on active cooperation between payment services providers, technology providers and the police, for the purpose of tracking and stopping payments before a transfer is made. Among other things, the members use a method which focuses on finding points of sale in order to shut down the seller's ability to receive payments. One advantage of this method is that it is crime prevention work which does not invade the individual's privacy.

The work is carried out in close cooperation with ECPAT Sverige and relevant public authorities and has the stated goals of detecting new routes of payment and linking up with relevant parties who can contribute to impeding payments for illegal material. The police are ultimately responsible for combating criminality. However, the financial services industry is a key player in the work of detecting new behaviours and finding solutions to stop these transactions.

The Financial Coalition's work has been very successful. At present, we believe that the cooperation between the Financial Coalition and the police, together with other global parties, has had a significant effect. For example, it is now extremely difficult to use a payment card in these contexts and the number of websites expressly for the purpose of selling child sexual abuse material has decreased radically.