

FIGURES AND TRENDS 2021

FROM HOTLINES FOR MISSING CHILDREN AND CROSS-BORDER FAMILY MEDIATORS



**Missing
Children
Europe**

General figures

Missing Children Europe (MCE) is the European federation of 31 grassroots organisations working to prevent and protect missing and sexually exploited children. MCE coordinates the network of 116 000 hotlines for missing children, a dedicated service for children (at risk of) going missing and their families; and the cross-border family mediators' network that prevents and resolves parental abductions.

Every year at least two hundred and fifty thousand children go missing in Europe. Due to the lack of comparable official statistics on missing children – the only Europe-wide report¹ is outdated with figures from 10 years ago – it is difficult to grasp the full scope of the issue or what are the current reasons why children go missing. That is why, since 2014, Missing Children Europe collects and analyses data from the hotlines for missing children and the network of cross-border family mediators.

The 116000 hotline is active in 32 countries, 22 are members of Missing Children Europe. Hotlines in 17 countries (15 NGO's and 2 governmental agencies) contributed (partial) data to this report and 28 cross-border family mediators reported about their activity in solving international parental abduction cases. Missing Children Europe collected data from: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech

Republic, France, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

The response was much lower number than in previous years, likely due to the combined impact of COVID-19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. NGO Magnolia, the hotline in Ukraine, for example, did not have safe access to its office in Kyiv and their 2021 data at the time of the survey in early March due to the bombings. While some border countries admirably managed to share their data with us, others' capacity was completely taken up with the influx of requests for support by Ukrainian refugees.

While the hotlines are generally able to give us information about the calls answered and number of cases supported, more specific data relating to categories of missing, causes, outcomes and so forth is not always collected. The data in the report therefore present a partial but nevertheless important snapshot. It is the only overview collected on an annual basis, and while it does not reflect the total number of missing children in Europe, it can help us understand the evolution of causes and effects of child disappearance. Ultimately it shows us the gaps in our system and the levers to achieve more integrated child protection.



32

organisations in Europe run a **116 000 hotline for missing children**

206

trained **Cross-Border Family Mediators** prevent and resolve parental abductions

+32 2 894 74 84

info@missingchildreneurope.eu

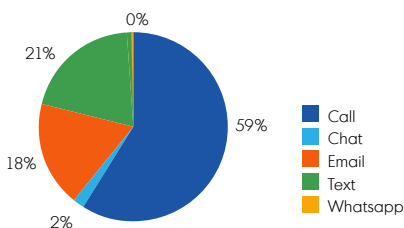
www.missingchildreneurope.eu



1. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/655b34ad-341b-4348-9e3b-38741ff40f23/language-en>

Contacts with hotlines

Calls and contact points

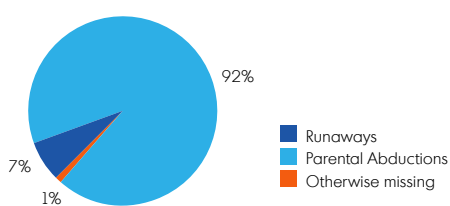


* Data from 13 hotlines

The ongoing pandemic continued to have effect on the volume of calls and the ways in which people contact hotline services. More and more children and families contact our members through other means, such as text, email and chat. The COVID-19 crisis exacerbated the need to make services accessible in this way: not everyone could speak freely while confined with family. That is why for the first time, we asked hotlines about the breakdown of all points of contact answered, rather than about calls.

14 hotlines responded to a total of **54 565 points of contact with the 116 000 hotlines in 2021**. 13 of the hotlines could give a breakdown between means of contact, of the total of 43 480 points of contact with their services in 2021. **The 116 000 number remains the most popular** way of contacting the hotlines with 25 507 calls or 59%. Other popular means to contact hotline services included 9139 texts (21%), 7747 emails (18%), 945 chats (2%), and 159 WhatsApp (less than 1%).

Prevention



* Data from 7 hotlines

In 2021, hotlines differentiating between prevention and case support reported that 13% of their points of contact were about prevention, an increase from 2019 (11%) and 2020 (3%). In 2021, prevention calls concerned mainly parental abductions (91%) and runaways (7%). These types of calls are important because effective prevention measures can protect children from harm and save limited investigation resources.

Who contacts hotlines

Adults make up a significant portion of known persons contacting the hotlines (66%), other persons contacting the 116000 services are missing children (22%), children at risk of going missing (7%) and other children, i.e. peers (5%). The percentage of children calling the hotlines has gone up compared to last year. This is possibly due to the inclusion of "other contact points". While it remains crucially important to raise awareness of the 116000 hotlines, **equal access for children to the services behind the 116000 number, also means online access and requires investment in the hotlines who cannot yet offer this.**

Important to note is that in one fourth of all cases, the identity of the person contacting the hotline is not recorded by the hotlines, or the data is difficult to retrieve.

On 24 February 2022, Russia's invasion of Ukraine led to the 116000 hotline becoming temporarily unavailable in Ukraine, as NGO Magnolia's hotline operators were forced to hide in bomb shelters. They continued their work from their place of hiding, taking reports made online via their chat services. Since February 24th, they have recorded more than 2100 cases of children going missing inside Ukraine, mostly in relation to the activities of armed forces (losing contact, injured, deceased, forcibly displaced). At the date of publication, due to the volatile situation, it was not clear how many of these cases had been resolved. After millions of Ukrainians fled the country to find safety in the EU, the membership of Missing Children Europe supported NGO Magnolia on 15 cross-border cases of children from Ukraine missing in the EU. All children were found, including 4 unaccompanied minors located thanks to the cooperation and interventions of Missing Children Europe and the network of 116000 hotlines. Please review our report on Ukraine for more information.

Cases

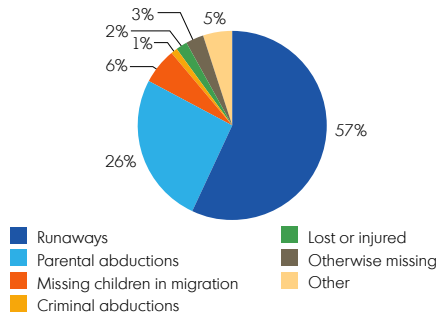
The 11 hotlines who could answer this question supported a total 7033 cases last year, of which 5020 cases newly opened in 2021 and 2013 ongoing cases from previous years. This caseload is high considering the much higher numbers of hotlines answering this question last year, 19 hotlines supported a total of 8872 cases in 2020. The share of ongoing cases has moreover increased from 23% in 2020 to 29% in 2021, leading us to the conclusion that **the ongoing pandemic continues to weigh heavily on the caseload.**

Gender

Girls constituted the majority of missing children reported (57,73%) followed by boys (42,17%) and other gender identities (0,11%).

Types of missing children cases

The types of cases reported to hotlines in 2021 can be broken down into the 6 main categories of missing children, with children who ran away or were pushed out of home or care continuing to make up 57%, the large majority, as in previous years. At a share of 26% of the total caseload, parental abductions constitute the second largest category of cases; and children in migration the third with 6%.



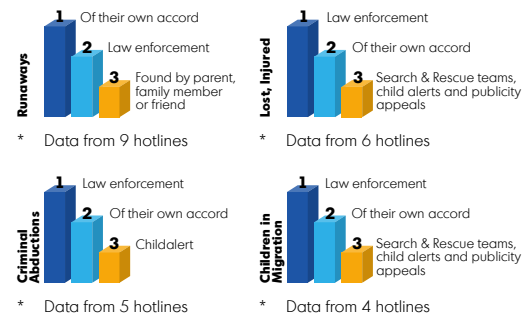
* Data from 9 hotlines

Reports of violence or abuse

This year only one hotline (Spain) was able to provide representative data on violence or abuse. Sadly, runaways made up 91% of their cases (873 out of 965) where an element of violence or abuse were reported. Other categories of disappearance where violence was reported were parental abductions (61 or 6%), criminal abductions (18 or 2%), lost injured or otherwise missing (9 or 1%) and children in migration (4, or less than 1%). These data are consistent with data from the previous two years where more hotlines provided information, but it should be kept in mind that violence and abuse often go unreported. This is particularly the case for children in migration, among others due to lack of trust.²

How missing children were found

The 116000 hotlines work closely with law enforcement who initiate and conduct investigations into finding missing children. The hotlines' role in that cooperation can include direct contact with children who are missing to encourage them to speak to a trusted person (such as Textsafe® or similar), the dissemination of child alerts and publicity appeals, and coordination of volunteer support in search and rescue operations. Asked about ways in which missing children are most commonly found, the hotlines' rankings clearly indicated that different groups are found in different ways. While alerts and publicity appeals can play a supporting role when the child is at immediate risk (lost, injured, abducted, trafficked), the role hotlines play in runaway cases often revolves more around brokering contacts between the child, the family, and local authorities to find a solution.



2. <https://missingchildreurope.eu/download/outcomes-local-hubs-lim-2021-final-version/?wpdmdl=3087&refresh=627e48b62b88b1652443318>

Hotlines sustainability and accessibility

Challenges faced by the hotline

The lack of financial resources is considered the most serious challenge, and it risks impacting sustainability and quality of the service. Lack of public awareness of hotlines and lack of human resources to operate the hotline are other challenges often mentioned. These data are consistent with data reported by the hotlines in 2020.

Sources of funding

The European Electronic Communications Code (EECC), published in 2018 shifted the responsibility to ensure enough funding is in place for the hotlines from the European Commission to national governments. Criteria include free 24/7 services, and accessibility of disabled end-users. 47% of funding for the hotlines comes from national authorities, which is an increase compared to last year (32.6%). Individual donors (10%) are the second source of funding for hotlines and trusts

and foundations (9,25%) make up the top three. It is unclear whether the higher percentage of the funding from national authorities constitutes a recovery from last year when national resources were clearly redistributed to other causes due to the pandemic. Another potential reason for this year's increase in share of national government funding is that the hotlines who were unable to participate in the survey due to the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, happen to be those that receive less funding from their respective governments. Just a little over half (53%) of the hotlines receiving funding from local and national authorities indicated that this was sufficient to ensure

Missing Children Europe calls on Member States to fulfil their obligations under the EU strategy on the rights of the child to establish (where not yet available) and improve child helplines (116 111) and missing children hotlines (116 000), including through funding and capacity building.

the expected standard of service, whereas 47% said government funding was not sufficient to help hotlines meet EECC standards.

Hotlines overall accessibility means

Hotlines provided an overview of their accessibility for children. 75% of hotlines reported being accessible to all children, including vulnerable children, children living in difficult home environments, and different groups of children such as children in migration and children from different ethnic backgrounds. The most common means of accessibility is email (75% of hotlines are accessible via email), and chat platforms (68,75%). This is an increase from last year where only 59% of hotlines reported being accessible via chat services, and shows the hotlines' agility in adapting their services to the restrictions that came with the pandemic. Other means of accessibility listed are text services, online forms and website communication.



Definition

All children who run away from or are pushed out of their home or the institution where they have been placed.³

- The most common risks identified for runaways include sleeping outdoors, having little access to food or water, and an increased exposure to violence or exploitation. Personal background also contributes to the extent of harm a child experiences while on the run. Personal background factors include neglect, sexual abuse, or an unsteady familial structure.⁴

- Research shows that running away has an impact throughout the life-course and is strongly linked to adversity in later life. For example, young people who experience homelessness in the longer term frequently describe experiences of running away. Homelessness studies suggest that running away at a young age is a strong predictor of later homelessness.⁵

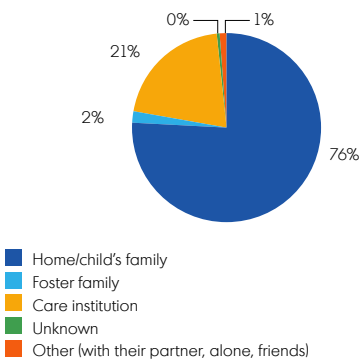
“I received fines on the train and apparently (nobody) had informed the controllers that I had run away from home. I could have been taken off the streets sooner if it had been communicated to someone or to the train staff that I had run away.”

Girl participating in RADAR project, Belgium.

Caseload, Age and Gender of runaways

Hotlines for missing children recorded 2509 new cases of runaways in 2021, making up 57% of the total new cases received last year. The youngest runaway child was 4 years old and the most common age range for runaways was between 12-17. Of the runaway cases recorded by the hotlines in 2021, 1382 (62,36%) were girls followed by 833 (37,59%) boys and 1 (0,04%) non-binary.⁶

Where do children run away from?



* Data from 8 hotlines

75,66% of runaways were reported to have ran away from home, a slight increase compared to last year's 70%, potentially related to COVID-19 restrictions on movement and social gatherings. 21,11% ran away from a care institution, and 2,35% from a foster family. The latter figure represents an increase from last year where only 0,2% were reported to have run away from a foster home. In some cases, the point of departure for runaway children was unknown.

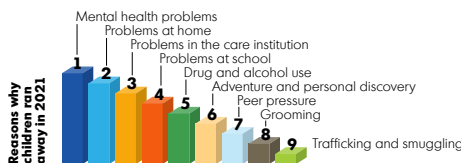
Reasons why children run away

In 2021, for the first time, mental health problems were ranked highest by hotlines under reasons why children run away, jumping up from fourth

place in 2020 and over problems at home and problems experienced in the care institution. Other common reasons included running away because of problems at school, drugs or alcohol use, adventure or personal discovery, peer pressure and grooming.

Going into more detail, per context from which a child ran away a period of heightened conflict/tension, a climate of violence and experiencing abuse or neglect were ranked as top three reasons for a child to run away from home, emphasizing once more the link between running away and violence against children. Other important reasons for running away were authoritarian parenting style and changes in the family dynamic such as a divorce or a death in the family. All these results indicate the importance of prevention work with families and children to identify support strategies before children run away.

A period of heightened conflict and the desire to re-join one's family were listed as the most important reasons for running away from an institution. Bullying and truancy were ranked as the most commonly leading to running away from school.



* Data from 10 hotlines



* Data from 7 hotlines

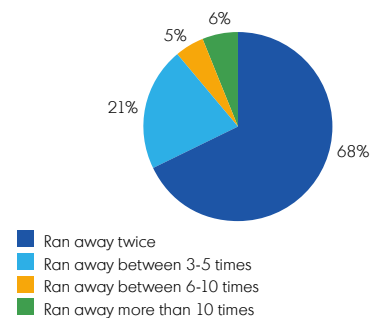


* Data from 5 hotlines

How long does it take to find runaways?

Almost all runaway children who were found, were found within 6 months – 56% within a week of their disappearance and 16% between a week and a month. 4 children were found deceased (2 within a week, 2 within a month). 16% were not found within the year.

Repeated runaways



* Data from 8 hotlines

67,69% of repeat runaways ran away twice and 21,68% ran away between 3 and 10 times. Ten children (5,75%) were reported to have run away over 10 times. These numbers demonstrate that for over 30% of cases the situation for runaways does not improve after they return the 2nd time. This calls into question the capacity of current interventions to address root causes and the needs of runaway children.

Impact of COVID-19 on mental health and caseload

60% of hotlines who responded stated that the COVID-19 measures led to an increase in their cases of runaway children, particularly once restrictions were lifted. The relative caseload of hotlines responding to this survey indeed remains higher than before the pandemic. Considering that mental health shot up in the ranking of reasons for children running away, we can assume that the hotlines' increased caseload in 2021 relates closely to the global rise in mental health problems among children and young people caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. <https://lib.ugent.be/en/catalog/rug01:001222769>

4. https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/basw_101409-2_0.pdf

5. <https://www.1800runaway.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/NRS-Longitudinal-study-full-report.pdf>

6. 128 cases were recorded as unknown by hotlines, while other hotlines did not provide any data for this question.

Missing children in migration



Definition

A child who migrated from their country of origin fleeing conflict or persecution, in search of survival, security, improved standards of living, education, economic opportunities, protection from exploitation and abuse, family reunification or a combination of these or other factors, whose presence became known to authorities or caregivers of the country in which the child arrives and whose whereabouts cannot be established.⁷

- > More than 18000 migrant children are estimated to have gone missing since arriving in Europe between 2018-2020.⁸
- > Children in migration continue to be underreported to hotlines and the police. Lack of comparable data and insufficient cooperation between cross-border authorities render addressing the disappearance of unaccompanied minors extremely challenging.⁹
- > In 2021, 617 800 applications for international protection were received in the EU+, increasing by a third from 2020 and returning to pre-pandemic levels. Self-claimed unaccompanied minors lodged almost as many applications as in 2016. About half of all unaccompanied minors were Afghans.¹⁰

"I was 14 when I arrived in Italy. I was accommodated in a shelter with Italian minors. I was the only foreign child there. The services provided were very good, but the staff didn't know how to help me with the asylum procedure. Once I tried to escape after school and took the train to go to France. Before arriving at the border, I was stopped by the police and brought back to the shelter."

Boy participating in Lost In Migration conference local hub, Italy

Caseload, age and gender

In 2021, 253 cases concerning missing children in migration were opened, this is an increase compared to last year where the new cases for this group of children was 158. The youngest missing child in migration was 3 years old whereas the most common age range for this group of children was between 3-17 years old. Of the cases reported in 2021, 93% were boys and 7% were girls. This latter figure is a decrease compared to last year where 23,8% of children in migration were girls.

Which children do hotlines work with?

While 80% of hotlines surveyed work with run-aways and parental abductions, only 47% of surveyed hotlines work with this category of missing children in migration. While external data suggests that tens of thousands of children in migration continue to disappear¹¹ and that trafficked and unaccompanied children are still much more likely to go missing than other children¹², few cases are reported to hotlines or the police, which is worrisome.

Why migrant children go missing?

Very little was recorded about the reasons why children in migration went missing in 2021. From previous research we know that bad living conditions, the desire to reunite with family, fear of repatriation, lack of trust in the system, long status determination procedures and the issue of human trafficking play a role.¹³

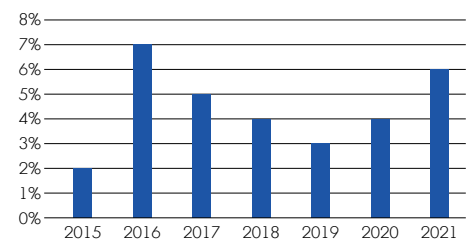
How long does it take to find missing children in migration?

Only one hotline could give a full breakdown of the time it took to resolve missing in migration cases (Belgium) with two further partial reports, but the breakdown was similar to that of the hotlines reporting a year ago with less than half of the cases opened resulting in finding the child (46% for Belgium in 2021, 43% overall in 2020). These data suggest that in the majority of cases concerning missing children in migration, the child is never found. These cases are not sufficiently prioritized and stronger cross-border cooperation in searching for these children is an absolute must.

What happens once the case is closed?

Little is recorded on the cases where missing children in migration are found but what little is reported, links to some of the reasons for going missing: two hotlines reported that children are commonly found with their family in a different country suggesting family reunifications procedures are found too cumbersome, one hotline reported they are commonly returned and later deported suggesting fear of deportation was the reason for going missing. Two hotlines report that another common result is that authorities found and returned the child to the shelter.

Evolution of caseload of children in migration



It is reasonable to assume that international travel restrictions and the closing of borders to reduce the spread of COVID-19 were responsible for the fact that last year, in 2020, we a decline in the share of cross-border cases of missing children in migration from 81% in 2019 to 66% in 2020. No such data are available this year and both in 2020 and 2021 the caseload of children missing in migration amounted to a larger share of all cases than in 2019, for example.

The EUAA also reports that "in 2021 about half of all unaccompanied minors were Afghans" which could mean that unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan seeking refuge in the EU after Taliban took over the country in September 2021, played a role in the increased caseload of missing children in migration.¹⁴ More detailed data would have to be collected from the hotlines to be able to corroborate this hypothesis.

7. <https://missingchildreneurope.eu/children-in-migration/>

8. Missing Children Europe. Over 18,000 children in migration missing in Europe between 2018-2020. <https://missingchildreneurope.eu/over-18-000-missing-children-in-migration/>

9. European Migration Network. How do EU Member States treat cases of missing unaccompanied minors? <https://emn.ie/publications/how-do-eu-member-states-treat-cases-of-missing-unaccompanied-minors-emn-inform/>

10. European Union Agency for Asylum. Latest Asylum Trends - Annual Overview 2021. <https://euaa.europa.eu/latest-asylum-trends-annual-overview-2021>

11. European Migration Network. Approaches to Unaccompanied Minors Following Status Determination in the EU plus Norway. Synthesis Report for the EMN Study. http://emn.ie/files/p_201808090907072018_emn_synthesis_unaccompanied_minors_09.08.2018.pdf

12. ECPAT UK and Missing People. Still in Harm's Way: An update report on trafficked and unaccompanied children going missing from care in the UK. <https://www.ecpat.org.uk/still-in-harms-way>

13. INTERACT Project (2019) Interact: Towards a more efficient cooperation across border for the protection of children in migration from trafficking and exploitation. Report on multi-agency practical simulations on fictional cases in Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, The United Kingdom and Sweden. Available at: <https://missingchildreneurope.eu/?wpdmdl=1324>; Summit Project (2016) Practical guidance on preventing and responding to unaccompanied children going missing <https://missingchildreneurope.eu/?wpdmdl=2253>

14. European Union Agency for Asylum. Latest Asylum Trends - Annual Overview 2021. <https://euaa.europa.eu/latest-asylum-trends-annual-overview-2021>

Parental abductions



Definition

Children being taken away to or kept in a country other than that of their normal residence by one of their parents or persons having parental authority against the will of the other parent or the other person with parental authority.¹⁵

- > Adults' decisions in matters of child abduction have a profound impact on affected children and young people. (...). For abducted children and young people to feel included, respected and taken seriously in decisions about their lives, adults should adopt a positive, confident and reassuring interaction style with children and young people.¹⁶
- > Gaining the trust of children, finding enough time for a meaningful conversation, showing children that they are really listened to and given feedback. A cross-border element to a case might enhance such difficulties of trust and time.¹⁷

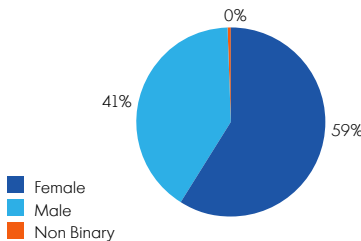
"I would not know whether to talk to a judge because I do not know how the procedure works. I think, if I had known more, I might make different choices."

Young participant in the Include project, Belgium

Caseload, age and gender

1151 new cases dealt with by hotlines involved children abducted by a parent or person with parental authority. The most common age range of children in parental abduction cases was 1-15 years while the youngest child abducted was less than 1 year old. Cases reported by the hotlines concerned similar amounts of girls and boys (49% girls, 51% boys).

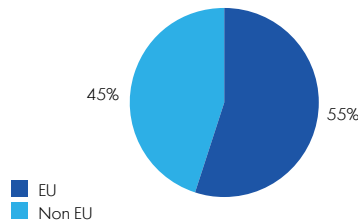
Gender of parental abductor



* Data from 6 hotlines

In over 58% of parental abduction cases, the abducting parent was reported to be female, whereas 41% of the abducting parents were reported to be male. 1 abducting parent (0,24%) was reported to be non-binary.

Location of international child abduction cases



* Data from 8 hotlines

The majority of abductions by a parent took place between EU countries (55%), whereas 45% took place between an EU and a non-EU country.

Impact of measures on parental abductions

37,5% of hotlines who responded said the measures introduced due to COVID-19 resulted in an increase in parental abduction cases. This included Spain and Italy who were heavily impacted by the COVID-19 situation. One hotline (Belgium) responded seeing a decrease in the number of parental abduction cases, while 50% said they saw no impact.

Data collected from the network of



Cross-Border Family Mediators

The network of Cross-Border Family Mediators brings together approximately 206 bi-cultural family mediators from 40 countries trained to deal with cross-border family conflicts including parental abduction. The data in this section were collected from 29 mediators in the Cross-Border Family Mediators network, regarding cases they dealt with in 2021.

Conflicts addressed

The mediators surveyed were involved in 70 cross-border family mediation cases. 28,57 % cases involved an international child abduction (9 due to a wrongful removal to another country where the child was not habitually resident, 11 due to wrongful retention in that country) 7,14 % of the cases involved an international relocation, 14,28 % of cases were related to the prevention of ICA and 7,14 % concerned visitation rights. 12,86 % of cases reported were related to other cross-border family conflicts.

Countries involved

42,85 % of all mediated cases were undertaken between two EU member states. 28,57 % involved one non-EU country and less than 2% of the cases did not involve any EU-country. For the remaining cases we received no information on countries involved. Although the Cross-Border Family Mediators Network welcomes more and more members from outside the EU, the majority of mediators and cases are still based in Europe.

Outcomes

Most mediation cases resulted in a mediated agreement (61,29 %) or a partial agreement (35,48 %). This shows the added value of mediation. However, it remains a challenge to get parents into the mediation process. Only 44 % of pre-mediation cases resulted in an actual mediation. Most couples do not get to the stage of pre-mediation. 21,42 % of cases were referred to the mediators by the Cross-border Family Mediators Network directly or via another member.

15. Gert Vermeulen. Missing and sexually exploited children in the enlarged EU: epidemiological data in the new member states. <https://lib.ugent.be/en/catalog/rug01:001222769>

16. Missing Children Europe. INCLUDE Guide to Good Practice. <https://missingchildreneurope.eu/download/include-guide-to-good-practice/>

17. Kruger & Maoli, "The Hague Conventions and EU Instruments in Private International Law" in: Schrama et al. (eds), "International Handbook on Child Participation in Family Law", pp 86.

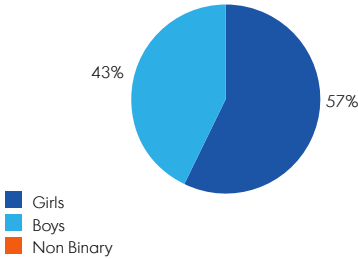
Criminal abductions



Definition

Abduction of a child by anyone other than a parent or person with parental authority.¹⁸

Caseload, age and gender



* Data from 5 hotlines

In 2021, hotlines for missing children supported 36 cases of criminally abducted children. Similar to last year, criminal abductions remain the smallest category of missing children at less than 1% of cases. 57% of criminally abducted children were girls, 43% boys.

This year the youngest abducted child was 2 years old, with the most common age range for a child to be abducted by someone other than their parent or guardian was between 12 and 14 years old.

How were criminally abducted children found

62,5% of hotlines who provided data, stated that law enforcement was the most com-

mon way that abducted children were found. Other ways abducted children were found was by returning of their own accord or after a tip from member of the public in response to an alert or publicity appeal. Child alerts¹⁹, which aim to obtain sightings and information on missing children, thus prove to play a valuable role in finding a missing child, although they should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

How many hotlines deal with criminally abducted cases

In 2021, 60% of hotlines surveyed dealt with cases of criminally abducted children. Whether a hotline works with this type of missing children or not frequently depends on the agreement in place with their national law enforcement.

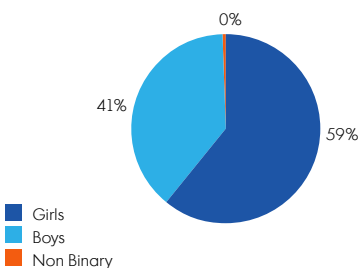
Lost, injured or otherwise missing



Definition

Disappearances of children for no apparent reason of children who may have gotten lost or hurt themselves and cannot be found immediately or whose reason for disappearing has not yet been determined.²⁰

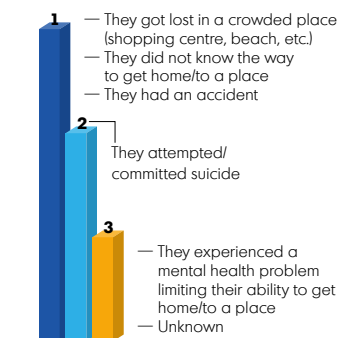
Caseload and age



* Data from 8 hotlines

78 missing children cases were recorded of children who were lost or injured. While the youngest lost or injured child was 1, the most common age range for this group was between 9-17.

Most common reasons why children were lost or injured



* Data from 7 hotlines

According to respondents, the causes of these disappearances are usually unknown. However, it is possible to identify some of the reasons why children get lost or injured, and consequently go missing. The most common reasons include experiencing a mental health problem which hindered their ability to return home, an attempted or committed suicide, experiencing an accident, or getting lost in a crowd.

Impact of COVID-19 measures on lost or injured missing children

While one hotline reported seeing a decrease in numbers of children getting lost or injured, potentially due to children staying indoors because of the COVID-19 measures in place, several others said the pandemic had little to no impact. The ranking of mental health and intention to commit suicide as top reasons for children going missing in this category is quite significant and and in line with what we saw under the category of runaways (see elsewhere in this report). These changes in ranking should be considered striking and indicative of the negative impact the pandemic had on young people's mental health.

Otherwise missing children

5,75% of cases opened in 2020 concerned otherwise missing children, where there is no information on how or why a child went missing. They are often the most traumatic for the families left behind, which stresses the importance of the 116000 network of hotlines who can provide support.

18. Missing and Sexually Exploited Children in the Enlarged EU: Epidemiological Data in the New Member States (2005), as part of the Childscope project run by Missing Children Europe

19. Missing Children Europe. Briefing on child alert systems. <https://missingchildreneurope.eu/download/missing-children-europe-briefing-on-child-alert-systems/>

20. Missing and Sexually Exploited Children in the Enlarged EU: Epidemiological Data in the New Member States (2005), as part of the Childscope project run by Missing Children Europe

Hotlines for missing children

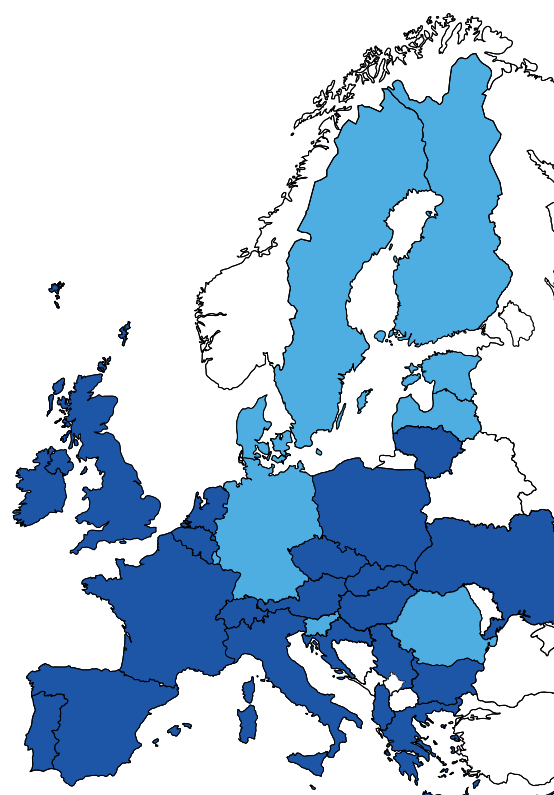
Hotlines run by members

*Albania: [ALO 116](#)
Austria: [147 Rat auf Draht](#)
Belgium: [Child Focus](#)
*Bulgaria: [Nadja Centre Foundation](#)
*Croatia: [Centar za Nestalu](#)
Cyprus: Consortium: [SPAVO & HFC](#)
Czech Republic: [Cesta z krize, z. ú.](#)
France: [Droit d'Enfance - 116 000 Enfants Disparus](#)
Greece: [The Smile of the Child](#)
*Hungary: [Kék Vonal](#)
*Ireland: [Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children](#)
Italy: [SOS Telefono Azzurro](#)
Lithuania: [Missing Persons' Families Support Centre](#)
Poland: [ITAKA](#)
Portugal: [Instituto de Apoio à Criança](#)
Serbia: [ASTRA](#)
*Slovakia: [Linka detskej istoty](#)
Spain: [Fundación ANAR](#)
Switzerland: [Missing Children Switzerland](#)
The Netherlands: [Centrum Internationale Kinderontvoering](#)
United Kingdom: [Missing People](#)
*Ukraine: [NGO Magnolia](#)

* Did not provide data for this report

Hotlines not run by members

*Denmark: [Bornes Vilkar](#)
*Estonia: [Lasteabi.ee](#)
*Finland: [Nödcentralsverket](#)
*Germany: [Vermisste Kinder](#)
Latvia: [Valsts Policija \(Latvian State Police\)](#)
*Luxembourg: [L'Office National de l'Enfance](#)
*Malta: [The Malta Police Force](#)
*Romania: [Asociația Telefonul Copilului](#)
*Slovenia: [Zavod 116](#)
Sweden: [SOS Alarm](#)



116 000

Hotline is run by members
 Hotline is not run by members

Support Missing Children Europe

Make a donation

Support Missing Children Europe in its work to prevent and protect missing and sexually exploited children. Together we can give more than hope to children and their families!

Donations via Bank Transfer
IBAN: BE43 310 165 832 401
BIC/SWIFT: BBRUBEBB

Are you a resident of Belgium, Luxembourg, or France? For donations of 40 EUR or higher, you are eligible for a tax exemption certificate.

Please, transfer to:
IBAN: BE 41 363 025 760 210
BIC/SWIFT: BBRUBEBB

Donations via PayPal or credit card

Donate with just a few clicks:
<https://missingchildreneurope.eu/donate/>

Get involved

Find out about our campaigns and fundraising events at <https://missingchildreneurope.eu/get-involved/>.

Would you like to sponsor one of our fundraising events, organise such an event or support one of our projects?

Contact us at info@missingchildreneurope.eu.

Celebrate with us on Facebook

You can celebrate your birthday, wedding, or graduation with us and encourage your friends to donate to a valuable cause. Find out how to set up a Facebook fundraiser for Missing Children Europe on www.facebook.com/fund/MissingChildrenEurope

Donate a service

We are in continuous need of kind-hearted volunteers with skills such as website development, photography, videography, translation, interpretation, copy editing and IT support. Does this sound like you? Get in touch at info@missingchildreneurope.eu

Download 404 NotFound

Help with the ongoing search to safely find missing children by downloading the free NotFound app on your website. Notfound replaces your website's useless 404 error pages with posters of missing children. Find out more on <https://notfound.org/en>.

Support young newcomers through the Miniila app

Do you work for an organisation that provides support to young newcomers in Europe? If so, add your support services to the Miniila app to help children in migration find their way to safety. More information via Miniila.com.

Special thanks to our sponsors and donors



A heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers:

Dani Oshi, Mr Alain Sannen, Mr Alain Fayard, Ariane Solvei Marsalis, Cloë Rossenbacker, the young artists (Roxibel Rodriguez, Camila Gil, and Mohammad Mohammadi) who donated their time and talent for the Celebrate with Missing Children Europe campaign, and all volunteers who supported our projects, campaigns, and the organisation of the golf event.



Co-funded by the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Missing Children Europe and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.