

Findings and recommendations **DATA ON MISSING CHILDREN IN EU-27**



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Policy context

EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child - 15 February 2011

- significant lack of reliable, comparable, and official data on children in MS
- obstacle to develop evidence-based policies, particularly in protecting children in vulnerable situations e.g. when a child goes missing

116 000 - hotlines

- Reserved in all MS - hotline report missing children (Universal Service Directive).
- Operational in 22 countries
- EU-funding to set up and/run hotlines 2013-2014 (€ 4.5 million)

CHILD ABDUCTION ALERT

- most extreme cases of children going "missing", requiring a particularly quick response.
- SWD - Best practices for abduction alert SEC(2008)2912 final
- EU- funding (2008 EP – pilot project, 2012, 2013 EU-funding Daphne III)

EU study

Data on missing children EU -27

CONTEXT:

European Parliament - Pilot Project – Europe – wide methodology for developing evidence based policies for children's rights. 3 studies:

- Mapping, data collection and statistics on missing children in the European Union
- Data on children's involvement in judicial proceedings in the EU.
- Legislation, policy and practice on child participation in the EU

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- to build on existing data and indicators to obtain sustainable, comparable data and indicators for 2008-2010 (and 2011 where available).
- to analyse data towards improving the mechanisms involved when children go missing in the EU.

MAPPING OF DEFINITIONS, PROTOCOLS, DATA AVAILABILITY:

Definitions

- Diverse picture (runaways, abductions, age groups, etc.)

Protocols

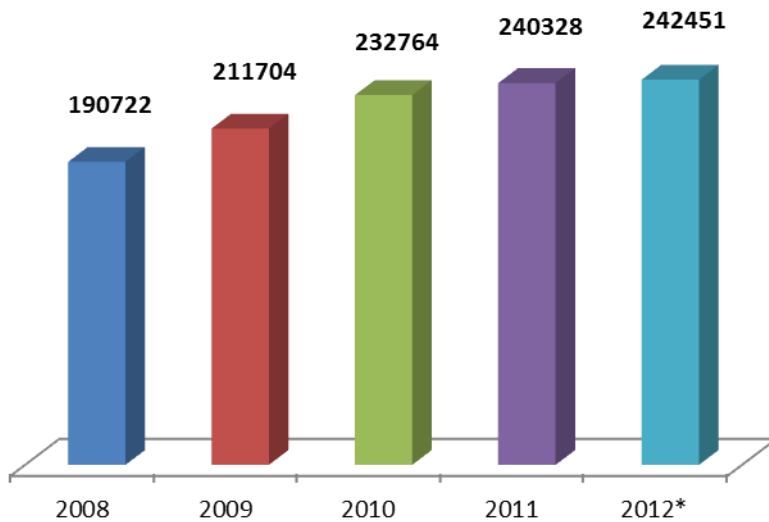
- Different focus according to approach:
 - Child welfare model: More focus on child protection, higher priority
 - Criminological model (more prevalent): no distinction with missing adults, primary focus on gravity of related crime.

Data availability

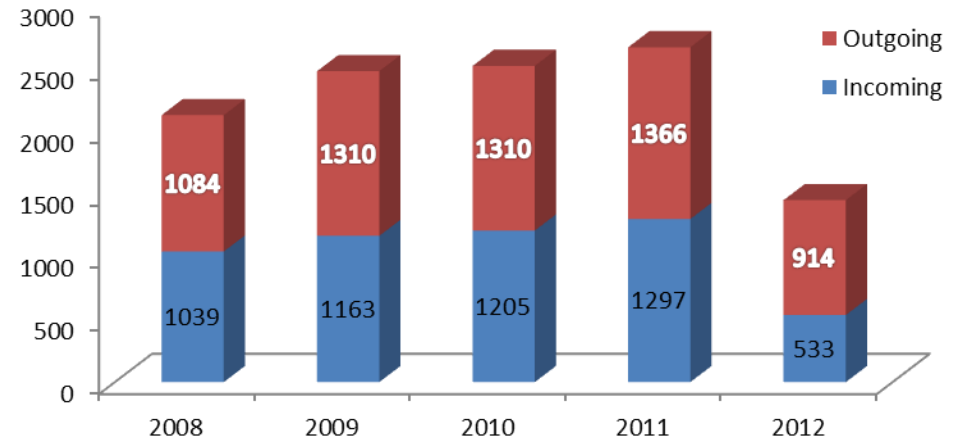
- 25 MS able to extract overall numbers of missing children
 - Primary (police) databases or dedicated secondary data bases (e.g. Missing Persons bureau UK)
 - Breakdown by gender, age (groups) obtainable in most cases
- Little or no public availability of these statistics
- Some information on convictions (if linked to criminal)
- Little to no information on any follow-up measures

OVERALL NUMBERS:

Number of cases of children reported missing in EU -27



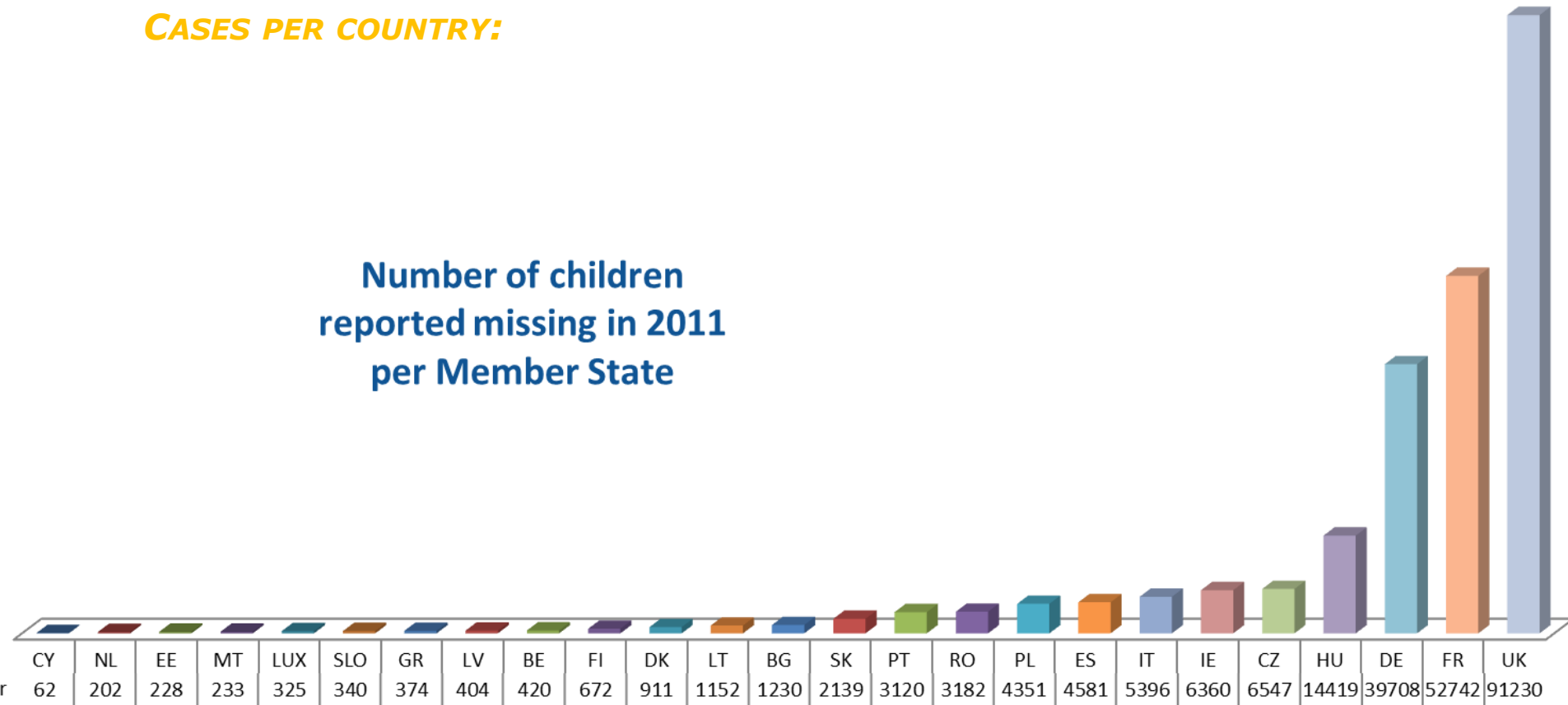
Number of international child abduction cases EU-27



* Excluding 2012 data for CY and HU which was not yet available at the time of finalisation of the study

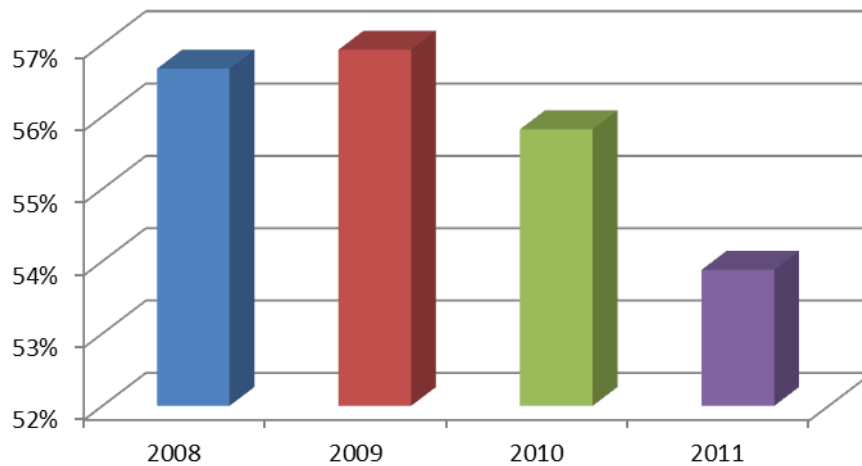
CASES PER COUNTRY:

**Number of children
reported missing in 2011
per Member State**



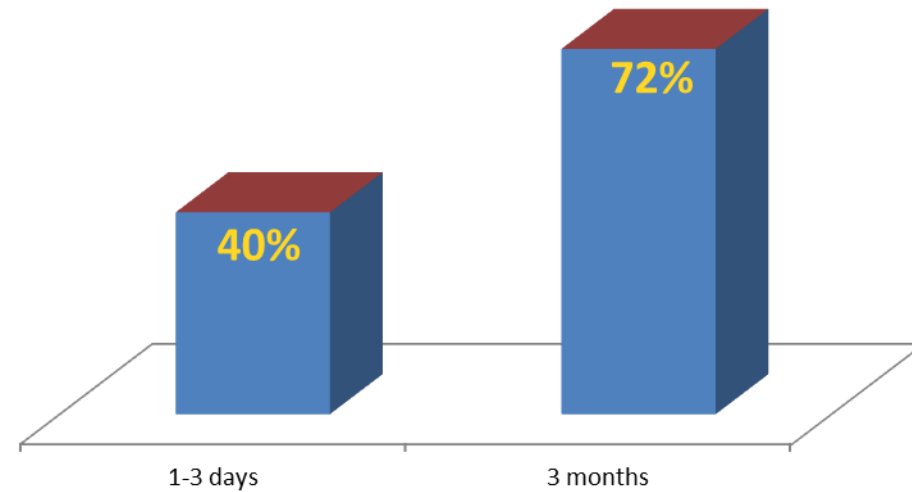
GENDER, DURATION:

Girls % of missing children*



*percentage based on data from 18 MS where gender is recorded

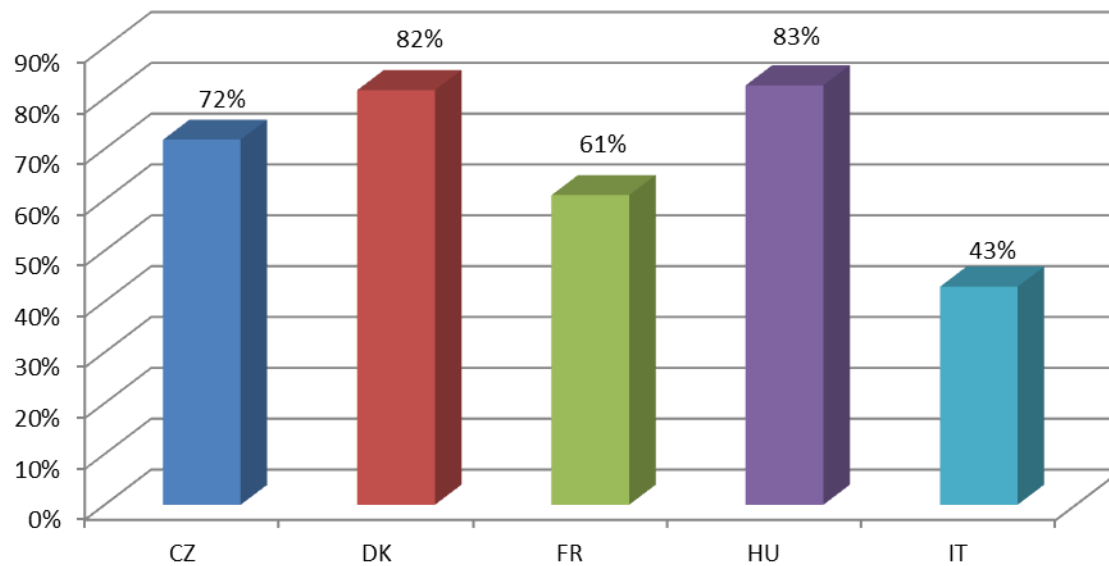
Duration of disappearance 2011*



* based on data from 8 MS (DE, EE, IT, LU, HU, MT, NL, UK)

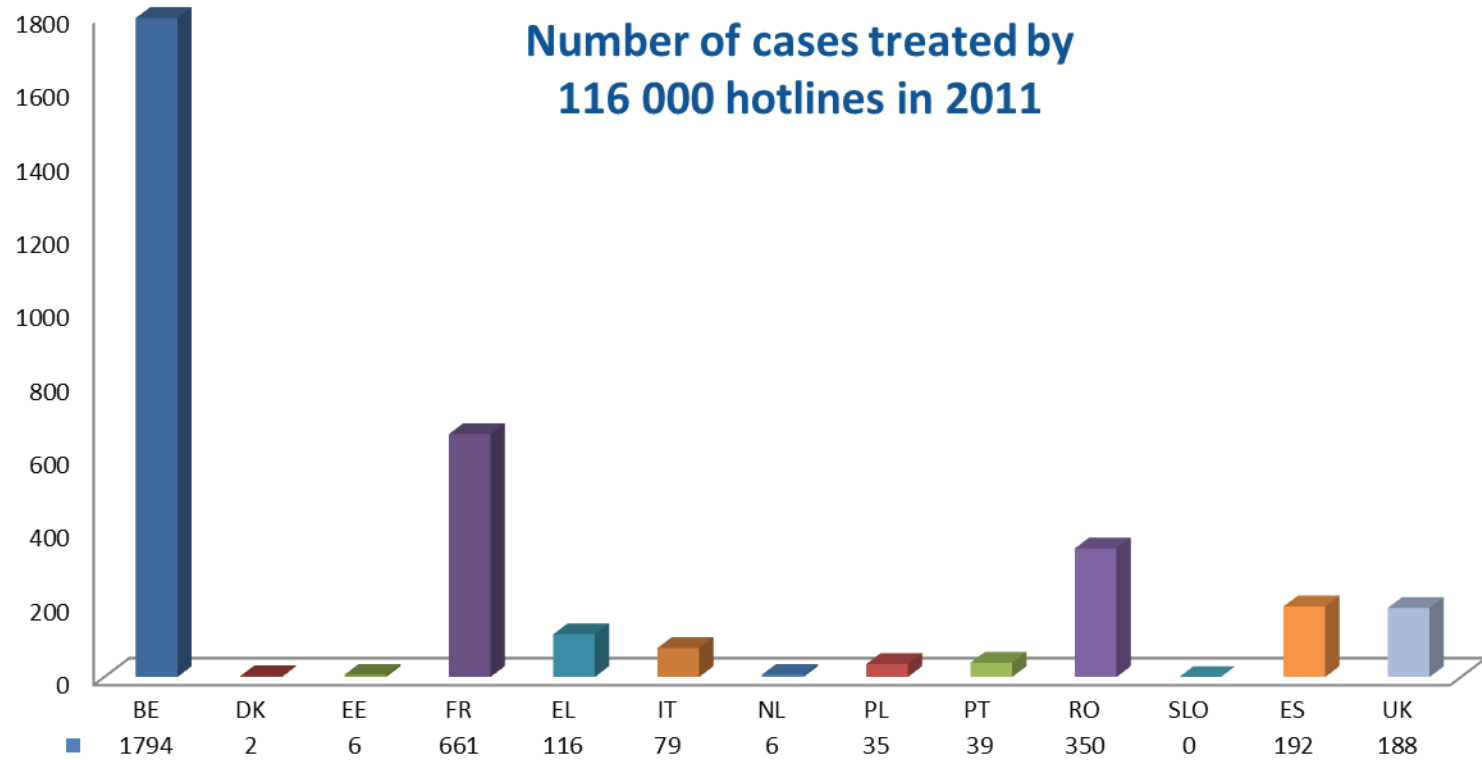
CARE SETTINGS:

Disappearances from care as % total numbers - 2011



*Limited availability of data. National stakeholders estimate similar or higher proportions in Member States where data is not available.

116 000 HOTLINES:



RECOMMENDATIONS:

Data recording practices:

- Minimum data to be recorded: year of birth, gender , nationality and migration status of the child
- Categories to be defined per type of disappearance: To distinguish at least runaways
- Additional info: setting of disappearance, organisations involved in search, outcome and follow-up

Operational rules and practices:

- No waiting period before recording disappearance (24/48 h)
- Maintaining a database and consolidating locally collected data at national level
- Establishing common procedure to enter Article 32 alerts for missing persons in SIS II and adding distinctions (parental/ third party abductions, runaways etc.)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Awareness-raising and information

- General awareness-raising about importance of timely reporting disappearances
- Raising awareness about the 116 000 hotlines and their services
- Publishing national statistics on missing children