Findings and recommendations
DATA ON MISSING CHILDREN IN EU-27

Guido Lanzke – February 2014
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 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

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Incoming</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>2012*</td>
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<td>914</td>
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</tbody>
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Number of international child abduction cases EU-27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Outgoing</th>
<th>Incoming</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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* Excluding 2012 data for CY and HU which was not yet available at the time of finalisation of the study.
Caso de país:

Número de niños informados como desaparecidos en 2011 por estado miembro
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:

Number of cases treated by 116 000 hotlines in 2011
**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