

Stolen babies: MEPs urge Spain to solve all alleged cases

- Create a public DNA bank for identity checks, free DNA tests for alleged victims
- Appoint a special public prosecutor dedicated to babies' abductions and illegal adoption
- Easier access to civil registries' records, hospital birth registers and church archives
- More funding for psychological support and legal assistance to victims

Spain should take immediate measures to solve all alleged cases of babies' thefts and illegal adoptions and help families reunite, said the Petitions Committee.

The Committee on Petitions approved on Wednesday a series of recommendations following their [fact-finding mission to Madrid](#) last May to investigate several petitions on babies allegedly stolen at birth by hospital personnel across Spain.

All claims should be investigated

MEPs urge the public prosecutor to investigate the claims proactively and recommend appointing a special public prosecutor for this task, as well as a "pool of judges to conduct ad hoc investigations". They also call for crimes to be prevented from becoming time-barred under statutes of limitations.

They ask the Spanish Government to create a public and dedicated DNA bank for cross-checking information about potential victims of child abduction. The DNA tests should be free and without the need for an order from a court or public prosecutor.

Access to records in civil registries, hospital birth registers as well as parishes and religious congregations, should be made easier, to facilitate investigations. MEPs encourage the ecclesiastical authorities to recognise "their potential involvement in the abduction of babies and illegal adoptions" and to apologise to the victims.

Support for victims

MEPs demand an increase to funding to assist the victims - for free psychological support, legal aid and access to information - and for both the parents and the identified children to be recognised under a special status as victims, "including the possibility to access state compensation".

The mission report and recommendations were passed with 20 votes to 9. It will now be sent to the President, for information. The EPP announced it will present a minority opinion (under [rule 52a of the EP Rules of Procedure](#)).

Quote

"This report is an important step in the process of getting answers for those affected by this scandal. The delegation heard evidence from the public authorities, the Church, petitioners and those involved in investigating the alleged theft and illegal adoption of new-borns under the dictatorship and into democracy. The Spanish government must take on board our recommendations and proactively investigate what happened, and who was responsible. I hope our report can be of help for the petitioners, who have shown tremendous courage and strength", said the head of the delegation [Jude Kirton-Darling \(S&D, UK\)](#).

Quick facts

Several cases of abducted children, most dating from the 1960s and the 1970s, have been denounced and investigated all over Spain in the last years. Most of the criminal complaints have been dismissed by the courts, due to lack of evidence, or on the basis of the statute of limitations of the alleged crimes. Some cases have also been brought to the European Court of Human Rights.

The petitioners, who [presented their case at the European Parliament in September 2017](#), claim that the parents were informed of the sudden death of the new-borns and in many cases were not allowed to see the corpses. Some hint at organised networks channelling babies towards adoption.

Further information

[Committee on Petitions](#)

[Audiovisual material for media](#)

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