

MEPs discuss fate of 10,000 refugee children that have gone missing

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More than 10,000 refugee children have gone missing since arriving in Europe, according to Europol. Brian Donald, the chief of staff of the EU's law enforcement agency, revealed the figure in an interview with a UK paper in January. It is feared that some of these children are being exploited by criminal gangs. Parliament's civil liberties committee discusses the issue on Thursday afternoon with representatives from Europol, the Fundamental Rights Agency and Missing Children Europe.

According to [UNHCR](#) 35% of migrants entering the EU since 1 January 2016 are children. Many of them travel unaccompanied by an adult. In 2015 85,482 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum in the EU, which is three times more than in 2014. Half of them are from Afghanistan, while 13% are from Syria.

More than 90% of migrants travelling to Europe use intermediaries, according to a [report on migrant smuggling](#) published by Europol published in February. These services are mostly provided by criminal groups.

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Find out more

- Live: watch the discussion on Thursday 21 April from 15.00 CET: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/committees/video?event=20160421-1500-COMMITTEE-LIBE>
- Top story: migration crisis: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/top-stories/20150831TST91035>
- Briefing: unaccompanied migrant children in the EU (20 January 2016): <https://epthinktank.eu/2016/01/20/unaccompanied-migrant-children-in-the-eu/>
- Europol report on migrant smuggling (22 February 2016): <https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/migrant-smuggling-eu>