

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1310/08
by Piia-Noora Kauppi (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: EU-wide register to prevent child abductions to non-Hague Convention countries

There is a growing need to tackle the problem of international parental child abduction from the European union to countries not having signed the Hague Child Abduction Convention. Currently, no legal structures exist providing for the return of a child abducted to one of the non-Hague Convention countries. Moreover, non-Hague countries rarely recognise decisions of custody made by foreign courts. Consequently, the left-behind parent and the child have very little protection and recourse under present international law.

Thus, in order to prevent child abductions to non-Hague countries beforehand, there is a need to develop an EU-wide information system allowing the competent authorities in the Member States to obtain information on children at risk of abduction. The database should contain the personal details, physical characteristics and a photograph of children having been reported by the parent/guardian as being at risk of child abduction. This annually updated information shall be kept in the register until the child turns 16 or until the parent no longer fears abduction.

What will the Commission do to ensure that the serious matter of child abductions from the European Union countries to non-Hague countries is addressed? Should not an EU-wide information system on children under threat of child abduction be established?