

The [European Children's Rights Unit](#), School of Law and Social Justice, University of Liverpool.

Did You Know...?

- It is often overlooked that UK children represent 30% of potential trafficking victims. The EU does not ignore this fact.
- Human trafficking is a current and ever growing issue. In 2015, 40 % more individuals were identified as potential victims of trafficking in the UK than in 2014.
- EU Law prevents those with convictions for offences against children to conceal this information in another EU Member State and to work with children.

Brexit would limit the scope of child protection in cases of child trafficking and pornography since EU Law would no longer apply for UK Children.

Check out ECRU's other [Brexit Briefing Papers](#):

- [EU Migrant Children](#)
- [Forced Migrant Children](#)
- [Children's Education](#)
- [Children's Employment](#)
- [Children's Health](#)
- [Children's Family Life](#)
- [Children's Leisure and Football](#)

The Impact of Brexit on the Child Protection



What does EU do to protect children?

The EU addresses child protection through its policies and law. For example, the [European Strategy for Better Internet for Children](#) supports EU Member States to introduce online safety in school curricula.

The EU also established an EU-wide [Missing Children Hotline](#) (116 000) to report missing children.

An [EU criminal records system](#) ensures that those with convictions for offences against children in one Member State will be prevented from working with children in other EU countries. Also, the [European Arrest Warrant](#) holds pedophiles accountable for crimes, they have committed against children, following their move to another Member State.

EU Law is particularly significant for tackling child trafficking and pornography.

EU Law addresses human trafficking and gives particular attention to the protection of children. It does this by obliging the UK to adopt measures to ensure that professionals can report suspicions that a child is a victim of child abuse or exploitation. Also, EU Law requires the UK to publish information regarding convicted perpetrators exploitation of children and child pornography.

What EU agencies deal with child trafficking and pornography?

[EUROJUST](#) is an EU agency that facilitates judicial cooperation in criminal matters including child trafficking. [EUROPOL](#) is the EU law enforcement agency that includes [European Cybercrime Centre](#). This tackles internet child pornography as a priority.

What will happen if the UK stays in the EU?

The UK will continue to benefit from EU-level security, centralised records, data collection and research in these areas.

And if the UK leaves the EU?

If the UK were to leave the EU, child victims of trafficking or pornography will not be protected by the EU law. UK could develop system of cooperation through bilateral treaties and also eventually have an established cross-national cooperation with EUROPOL and EUROJUST. However, this would take certain amount of time. In the meantime, child victims of transnational crime and pornography will be left in a legal limbo without proper protection in the EU.