



Read more on EU rules, including the procedure for the return of a child, at

[e-justice.eu](http://e-justice.eu)

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- Parental child abduction will be emotionally distressing for a child.
- Put your child's welfare first.
- Both parents are important for your child.



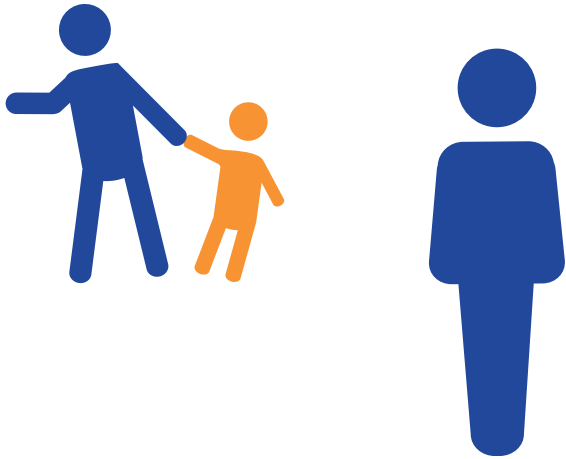
International family separation

# Cross-border parental child abduction

## What is cross-border parental child abduction?

With an increasing number of people living in European Union countries other than their own, more international families are being formed. These are notably families living in an EU country of which one or more family members are not nationals.

If you are an international couple with a child and are now separating, you will need to agree the custody arrangements for your child, including the place where the child should live.



In case you decide to return to your home country or move abroad with your child, you need to consider a solution that is in the best interests of your child.

In principle, parents should determine together where the child should live. If you take your child to live in another country without the consent of the other parent or a court's permission, you will likely be breaking the law.

## How to prevent cross-border parental child abduction

*If you want to take your child to live in another EU country or think that your partner intends to do so:*

- Try to negotiate a solution with your partner that is in the best interests of your child.
- Ask a specialised family lawyer or mediator for advice.
- You can also ask the European Parliament Mediator for International Parental Child Abduction to assist you in finding the best solution for your child.
- Contact the authority that issues identity cards or passports to prevent new travel documents being issued for your child.



If you and your partner cannot agree, a court in the EU country where your child habitually lives should be asked to decide.



## How to resolve cross-border parental child abduction

*If your partner has taken your child to live in another EU country without your consent or against a court's decision:*

- In each EU country there is a designated Central Authority, usually at the Ministry of Justice, to help bring your child back. Ask for assistance without delay.
- You can also ask a specialised family lawyer or mediator for advice.